



McCleary Regular City Council Meeting

Wednesday, January 08, 2025 – 6:30 PM
McCleary City Hall & Zoom Virtual Meeting

Minutes

Call to Order/Flag Salute/Roll Call

Meeting called to order at 6:30pm.

Agenda Modifications/Acceptance

Motion made by Councilmember Dahl, Seconded by Councilmember Schiller to accept the agenda.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Simmons, Councilmember Huff, Councilmember Schiller, Councilmember Dahl, Councilmember Klimek

Special Presentations

None

Public Comment - Agenda Items Only

No Public Comment

Consent Agenda

Motion made by Councilmember Klimek, Seconded by Councilmember Dahl to accept the consent agenda.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Simmons, Councilmember Huff, Councilmember Schiller, Councilmember Dahl, Councilmember Klimek

1. Accounts Payable Dec 15-18, 2024 Ck Numbers 54047-54135 Including EFT's Totaling \$418,994.38
2. Accounts Payable Dec 19-23, 2024 Ck Numbers 54136-54147 Including EFT's Totaling \$34,889.90
3. January 10, 2024 Minutes
4. October 23, 2024 Minutes
5. November 6, 2024 Minutes
6. December 4, 2024 Minutes

Updates

7. Staff Reports - Water & Wastewater, Fire Dept, Public Works, Police & Activity, Finance, Light & Power, Building Department

Councilmember Dahl inquired about information in one of this week's staff reports. She asked if a charcoal filter system has ever been looked into with regards to the city's wastewater treatment processes, and what the advantages of such a system might be. City Administrator Martin indicated he would speak with the head of the Water Treatment Department, to obtain additional information regarding this subject, to be provided at a future council meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem Huff expressed appreciation to Police Chief Miskell for the information provided in his staff report. Huff noted it has been some time since council has received information about police activities, after the departure of the previous police chief. Huff then asked if Chief Miskell to review Eagle Tovar's employee records, and let council know how many hours he is volunteering as a reserve officer.

Councilmember Schiller asked if Public Works could follow up on a complaint regarding a large pothole in the alleyway between Pine and Oak streets; he'd like to see it filled with gravel.

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Councilmember Dahl asked for verification as to whether the position of Police Clerk had been posted. Chief Miskell indicated there has been a number of applicants for the job, and he is in the process of setting up interviews at this time.

New Business

None

Old Business

8. Mayor Pro-Tem Discussion

Each January, the appointment of a Mayor Pro Tem occurs. Current Mayor Pro Tem Huff indicated he was willing to stay on, unless other Councilmembers had an interest in filling the role. All councilmembers indicated they were satisfied with Huff's performance. A motion was made by Councilmember Simmons, Seconded by Councilmember Schiller to retain Councilmember Huff as the Mayor Pro Tem.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Simmons, Councilmember Schiller, Councilmember Dahl, Councilmember Klimek. Voting Abstaining: Mayor Pro Tem Huff. Motion passed.

9. Council Committee Assignments

Councilmembers each volunteered to be on various committees, which are as follows:

Public Works - Councilmembers Schiller and Klimek

Finance - Councilmembers Dahl and Simmons

Policy - Councilmembers Dahl and Simmons

Chehalis Basin - Councilmember Schiller

Public Safety - Mayor Pro Tem Huff and Councilmember Dahl

Communications - Mayor Pro Tem Huff and Councilmember Klimek

Negotiations - Councilmember Klimek

10. 2025 Council Meeting Schedule

There was a brief discussion regarding transparency given the proposed meeting schedule for council in the 2025 year. Winter holidays and summer months were taken into account, along with personal obligations of the City Administrator and Clerk-Treasurer, which conflict with various scheduled meeting times. After alterations were made to the schedule to accommodate these issues, a motion was made by Councilmember Klimek, Seconded by Councilmember Dahl, to accept the altered meeting schedule.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Simmons, Mayor Pro Tem Huff, Councilmember Schiller, Councilmember Dahl, Councilmember Klimek. Motion passed.

11. Fire Department Updates

Fire Chief Pittman is still waiting to hear back from East Grays Harbor as to whether they want to continue with the current emergency services contract as written, or vacate it. As such, the meeting with the attorney has been delayed until later next week. He indicated that Fire District 12 is on the same time frame, and are still comparing what Olympic Ambulance brings to the table before their meeting on January 16th.

12. Teamsters Contract

As there was no further discussion on this matter, Mayor Pro Tem Huff asked to take a motion to adopt the contract with the Teamsters Union, as written. A motion was made by Councilmember Simmons, Seconded by Councilmember Schiller. Voting Yea: Councilmember Simmons, Councilmember Huff, Councilmember Dahl, Councilmember Klimek. Voting Nay: Councilmember Schiller. Motion passed.

13. Public Records Policy Discussion

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There was a brief discussion amongst Councilmembers, regarding this topic. Councilmember Simmons recounted how this policy (based on the city of Montezano's public record policy), had previously been brought before council last summer, but failed to pass. Simmons noted he was initially against the policy as proposed, for various reasons. He wanted other Councilmembers to know he has reconsidered his position after further investigation, and is now in favor of it.

Councilmember Klimek stated he too has reviewed the policy recently, and feels it would be good for the city.

Madison Pleasant (City Attorney), mentioned state legislation had changed since last year, creating difficulties getting up to speed with the fee schedule and body cameras, noting that they were very expensive and time consuming. However, she pointed out other exemptions on the list (things the city doesn't have to disclose), and stressed the importance of having a good policy to protect McCleary from frivolous lawsuits.

Councilmember Simmons noted it was because of the changes mentioned by Madison, he felt the policy was now much easier to read and understand than it was six months ago.

14. Cost Allocations Discussion

Councilmember Simmons asked what needs to be done to get this process started. City Administrator Martin informed council that Tara Dunford (City CPA) was out of country on vacation, but would be back at the end of the month. Cost allocations are the first thing on his agenda to discuss with her once she returns.

15. Council Meeting Location Discussion

In the past, crowd sizes had grow to the point that there wasn't sufficient room to accommodate the public at city hall during council meetings. Mayor Pro Tem Huff noted that in the recent months, crowd sizes have decreased, and overcrowding no longer appears to be an issue. Huff stated as long as council chambers continue to be able to accommodate public crowds, he sees no reason to move council meetings to the community center. Other council members agreed with Huff's reasoning and no further discussion regarding this topic occurred. Council meetings will remain at City Hall for the time being.

Ordinances and Resolutions

None.

Public Comment - City Business Only

One citizen signed up to make a public comment; Lucas (unknown last name). Lucas told council about a neighbor who has been feeding feral cats for years. Over this time, she has taken in at least 10 strays, many of which have gone on to have multiple litters of kittens. Lucas claims although his neighbor has taken ownership of these cats, she does nothing to keep them in her home, on her property or prevent them from reproducing. According to Lucas, the number of cats she cares for has become so large, that it is attracting opossums and raccoons to the neighborhood. The cats are also leaving feces and urine in his yard and on his patio furniture. Their claws are also causing damage to his vehicles and furniture. Lucas has contacted Fish & Wildlife as well as Animal Control to address this issue. According to Lucas, these agencies have told him there's nothing they can do and the situation must be addressed on a city level. Lucas pointed to current city ordinances, noting they only address dogs as public nuisances, with no mention of cats. Lucas did some research and provided council with copies of ordinances from several other cities, that address cat problems. He asked council to either amend current city code or develop a new ordinance specifically to address cats as a nuisance.

Mayor Pro Tem thanked Lucas for his comments and the copies of other city ordinances and empathized with Lucas' frustration with the issue. Huff indicated council will review the information provided, along with current city ordinances, and speak to the city attorney to develop code that will aid Lucas in resolving this issue.

Executive Session

None.

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Council Comments

Councilmember Klimek asked everyone to keep the people of Los Angeles, CA in their thoughts and prayers at this time, in light of the recent devastation caused by wildfires.

Councilmember Simmons let everyone know he will be unable to attend the next scheduled council meeting.

City Administrator Comments

Administrator Martin wished everyone a happy new year. He expressed thanks to councilmembers for all their recent hard work to get the budget passed, new union contracts negotiated and other important city matters. Martin reported three individuals applied for the open position of police clerk. The previous police clerk has been helping out on a very limited basis during this vacancy, and will continue to do so until the position is filled and the new person can be trained.

Martin noted Clerk-Treasurer Jamie Vinyard has recently taken over all of payroll processing. The state audit remains ongoing, and Jamie recently spent a day answering the auditor's questions regarding payroll documents and processes. Martin noted the auditing process has highlighted a need to alter certain accounting procedures, in order to improve recording and tracking in the future. Vinyard has already begun implementing additional systems to address these issues.

Councilmember Dahl inquired as to whether McCleary's current payroll policy is sufficient. Martin and Vinyard both feel it is outdated, noting that current policy and procedures have made it difficult to find necessary information, which should be easy to locate.

Mayor Pro Tem Huff asked if there was a timeline for the audit to be complete, and why it was taking this long, since it was originally estimated the forensic portion of the audit would be finished by Thanksgiving. Vinyard let council know that some of the delay was the result of personal scheduling issues on the part of the auditor, due to repeated illness. Martin verified the forensic portion of the audit has been completed.

Councilmember Klimek asked when council can expect the final report. Vinyard explained the normal auditing process is usually a weekly check in with the auditor, but that due to personnel turnover and transition, the current administration had been unable to locate certain files, slowing down the process. She believes next week should allow the auditor an opportunity to complete her findings, but was uncertain as to how long it will take for the city to receive a final report. Martin explained to council that once the auditor completes her report, it must still be reviewed by her supervisor before she meets with administration to provide findings and recommendations. She will then present her final report to council. Martin again noted the need for policy changes to prevent such audit setbacks from occurring in the future.

Administrator Martin informed council the meter readers, which are used by both power and water departments, are failing. A request for proposal (RFP) has been started. It is estimated it will cost \$40,000-\$45,000 to replace the current reader system. Martin reminded council this expense had been planned and accounted for in the budget.

Martin also reported that administration is currently working on a resolution to survey the city's inventory and prepare it for state surplus, and the police department has started the legal process to remove an RV from treatment plant property and have it destroyed. The abandoned vehicle was towed there some years ago, as a short-term solution to leaving it on the street.

Lastly, Martin provided an update on plans to build an enclosure at the treatment plant. The contractor the city initially spoke to provided an unreasonably high quote. Therefore, the city is speaking with other contractors, to obtain additional quotes.

Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Councilmember Klimek, Seconded by Councilmember Schiller. Voting Yea: Councilmember Simmons, Councilmember Huff, Councilmember Schiller, Councilmember Dahl, Councilmember Klimek. Meeting adjourned.

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