

CITY OF WAPATO

Regular Council Meeting
Minutes of June 17th, 2024

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Margaret Estrada called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

- a. Welcome by Mayor Margaret Estrada
- b. Flag Salute Led by Council Member Frank Jaime

ROLL CALL:

- a. Council Members in attendance: Chuck Stephens, Rita Alvarado, Frank Jaime, Ken Workman, Oscar Gonzalez, Elizabeth Villa, and Caroline Solis.
- b. City Staff in attendance: Interim Clerk Alondra Juarez, Fire Chief Bob Clark, Public Works Director Jeff Schumacker. Police Chief: Craig Janis
- c. Others that were present: Mid Valley TV Sean Davido, City Attorney: Julie Norton.

Public Hearing:

None

MEETING AGENDA:

Additions & Deletions. Mayor Margaret Estrada called for the approval of the meeting agenda. Council member Caroline Solis motioned to approve the meeting agenda. Council member Frank Jaime seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

MEETING MINUTES:

Minutes from June 3rd ,2024, were presented for approval. Mayor Margaret Estrada called for the approval of the June 3rd meeting minutes. Council member Jaime Frank made a motion to approve meeting minutes. Council member Chuck Stephen's seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Mayor Margaret Estrada called for the approval of the consent agenda. Council member Rita Alvarado made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Council member Jaime Frank seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

Francis Ayris: On behalf of the American Legion Commander, would like to thank the Chief and council member Rita for Volunteering and helping with the flag set up. The Lion's club is having a lasagna dinner at the American Legion on June 22nd from 1:00pm- 5:00. Proceeds will be for this year's harvest festival. She wants the council and mayor to go out and attend more activities, to demonstrate to public, that they care for the City and are involved.

Judy Owens: Would like to request for city to have more public safety for the students and kids who are outside waiting for a bus should not be seeing homeless in the streets smoking foils. Addressed that council has the power to fix that.

Gina Ramos: Would like to follow up with Judi's comment and remind council and the city employees work for the citizens of Wapato. Also wanted to mention that she has previously asked for the council packets to be provided to the public. Gina would like to be informed of what the council is voting on, where money is being used and what city ordinances are about. She wanted to mention that it is rude for department heads to have their backs on the public. It's very hard to hear and would like to suggest for them to separate or go up to the podium to speak. Wanted to mention that stop lights were very dangerous the day of the fire. She almost witness three car accidents, and she almost got hit as well. She doesn't know what the city plan was, but she didn't see anyone out. She didn't see any police officers making rounds. It was so dark out there you couldn't even see. She stated, "I was just looking for some type of figure, and didn't see anyone's presence". "Don't forget, don't forget to be mindful you guys work for us the citizens of Wapato, you guys answer to us, really". She mentioned that she can't even get an answer back from the council, because they point to Jeff or other head of departments for answers. She states she doesn't want to put anyone on the spot, but she will put them on the spot. Gina then proceeded and called on Council member Elizabeth Villa. Gina commented, "You think it's funny Elizabeth? Maybe you shouldn't be on the City Council, maybe you should take it a little bit more serious". Gina stated the city has business owners, new business coming into town. Gina stated, "Wapato is Never going to thrive, NEVER, unless you guy start taking care of business."

Kiona Dick: Has been coming for over 13 years to the city council meetings. Change-agendas used to be put out for the public, she would like to request for agendas to be available to grab agenda at the entrance. Request for more clarification or receive a spreadsheet. Had some concerns about the fire that happened over the weekend. Went to the casino during the power outage but when she was going home at 1:00am she mentioned that she did see a Police officer spot lighting the business on the Main Street. Asking the council to consider having a game plan for emergency situations like that. Would also like the city to have an evacuation plan. Kiona also wanted to mention that some of the council meetings only last about 20 minutes, but only Rita and Frank would know how the meetings went.

Ken Contrail: Ranch owner would like to have city council to consider annexing some of his land and neighbors that live on the west side of town. He would rather pay property taxes to the city of Wapato instead of Yakima County. He recently purchased a ranch and if there is a possibility of annexing that side of town he would love to help.

Elizabeth Martinez: Has a question about close meetings (special meetings). Wanted to know if they are open meetings for the public and why sometimes they didn't allow the public to be in some of the meetings. City Mayor Margaret Estrada explained to her that special meetings are open to the public and posted online. These meetings are to go over information or questions council members might have. Mayor also explained to Elizabeth that executive meetings are close to the public and discuss information the city lawyer has for council. Elizabeth also wanted to mention that there is people smoking foils in the doorway in the business, alleys, and almost burnt down their business.

Judi Owen's spoke in behalf of Cookie: would like to know, Why can't they have a monument of Yakama nation at mou at the Wapato cemetery. Would like to ask city employees to be careful mowing the grass at the Cemetery, the grown is so uneven. They can also damage headstones.

OLD BUSINESS:

- A. Liquor License Los compadres: PD chief spoke on the concerns for Los Compadres sports bar. 48 calls for service since January 2023. Since those calls there have been shots fired calls, overdose, warrant arrest, vehicle thefts and 911 from January 2023- present. Other bars in the city are not close to the calls 911 gets from Compadres sports bar. Council member Chuck would like to know, what about the calls we don't get? The Chief mentioned that he can't answer those calls if they don't get them. He can only speak on the calls they receive. Mayor Margaret Estrada called to motion to proceed. Council member Ken workman motioned. Council member Elizabeth Villa seconded.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Liquor License Restaurant San Juan: Chief Craig Janis spoke on this business and mentioned that he has no calls on this business. Mayor Margaret Estrada called to motion to approve. Council member Frank Jaime motioned to approve. Council member Oscar Gonzalez seconded. Motioned carried.

B. Liquor License American Legion Russell Barrett Post 133: Police Chief reported no calls of service. Council member Rita Alvarado motioned to approve. Council member Chuck Stephen's second motion. Motion carried.

C. Liquor License Don Cameron: Mayor Margaret Estrada motioned to approve liquor license for Don Cameron, also mentioned this business has no calls. Council member Caroline Solis motioned to approve. Council member Frank Jaime seconded. Motion carried.

D. Consolidated permit review ordinance: Mayor called for approval on Consolidated permit review ordinance. Council member Rita Alvarado motioned to approve. Council member Oscar Gonzalez second motion, motion carries.

E. Ordinance adopting building permits fee updates: Council member Rita Alvarado motioned to table Ordinance adopting building permit fee updates. Council member Chuck Stephen's seconded. Motion carried.

F. Approval for new Office Furniture- New Police station, Arpa Funds: Craig Janis spoke, asking for desk for officers and is trying to get out of the building they are in. Asking for specifically \$10,000.00 total amount. Council member Rita Alvarado motioned to approve. Council member Caroline Solis seconded. Motion carried.

G. Proposal Band on Specific Alcohol Sales: Police Chief Craig Janis would like to propose and inform the council to have cheap alcohol band. Won't allow businesses to sale cheap liquor with high alcohol content. This is something that will take time and would like address this, there is a lot more work, meetings and research to address this. Council member Rita Alvarado motion to table proposal band on specific Alcohol sales. Council member Chuck Stephen's seconded.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Police Chief: Craig Janis

Since the first of June they have responded to 258 calls, with only six officers. Some of these calls were for the fire incident. Wished he could have more officers to be there. Had a lot of decisions to make as he only had so many people and staff to respond to 258 calls. If he had more officers than the people would see more on patrol, however he is trying to work with what he has. Of those calls 172 were actual cases, four assaults, a weapon offense, two burglaries, four domestics, one rape, nine traffic stops. Officers are out there working, Chief would like to ask the public for their support. If they see them show them support because they also hear the negative, Chief is trying to have them out in patrol as much as he can. Police Chief also reported that the department also participated in a multi-agency operation. During that time, they made 60 traffic stops, seized 150gm of marijuana, 244gm of methamphetamine, 900mg of fentanyl powder, 1,103 fetanil pills. Total Seized, \$72,830.00. Has also received approval for \$5000.00 for training from Washington State Traffic Safety Commission. Has also received approval for more flock cameras that will be added and moving around, that will cost \$6,000.00, Yakima County has reimbursed us \$24,000.00 for the additional flock cameras that will be going back to our budget. Has been working with Noah's Ark, it has been struggling but it's something they can do about Noah's Ark. As of January 2023,

301 calls for service. That is a lot of calls for only six officers. The Chief has been working with Mr. Silva from Noah's Ark. The Police Chief has been having contact with the homeless in the city, he tries to have them moving around to avoid any overdose. Is trying to have Noah's Ark enforce their policies. Council member Oscar Gonzalez asked the Police chief, "for the city this size how many officers does he recommend having? The chief responded, "double the size". Council member Oscar commented that is something we need to work on as a city. He mentioned it can be possible; he can look for grants.

Interim Clerk: Alondra Juarez

Elderly discount applications have been reviewed and updated. They will be effective this new billing period on June 28th, 2024. We have successfully submitted the annual report to the State Auditor's Office. The state Auditors Are scheduled to be in the office all day July 8th.

Fire Chief: Bob Clark

Would like to thank the Police Chief for his hard work. Update on fire, the fire started on north Camas and spread to Donald Wapato Road. There was a wall of fire that shut down Donald Road. Wapato Police department responded and helped evacuate all the homes that were around. They tried protecting everything they could, only one home was lost in the fire. The closest it got to the city limits was about a third to half a mile from the city. They were in contact with the commander of district 5 which works outside of city limits. Why the city loose power? Power lines become proactive, what power companies are doing now is being proactive and they are de-energizing lines in the area where you have mayor brush fires. To help firefighters not have to fight additional fires. The power outage at the City of Wapato was done on purpose by pacific power. They were able to re-energize those lines. Fire Chief also mentioned that there was a major problem in Zillah up on rattlesnake road, they lost 10,000.00 acres. They were able to receive resources from all over the state. No additional homes were lost, and there were no injuries. As of today, they have responded to 35 calls for service. Hosted 100 second graders at the station and had them stop at the police station and public library. Mayor Margaret Estrada mentioned one of the questions that was in the audience participation. "We know the fire was out of City limits but if it were to be in the city what repercussions would the city do"? The chief responded, " we have what is called office of emergency management of Yakima County, we coordinate with them when fires are threatening us. Emergency management will work with fire command and will locate an area they want those notifications sent to. For example, the amber alerts letting people know they need to start packing and evacuating the area. They work as a unified command with the office of emergency, Wapato Police department, Fire district 5, Yakama Nation fire management. Have plans to use the community center if it's not at harm's way, there is plans to use the Wapato school district, busses, Yakima transit, evacuate emerald care. The city does have a plan.

Public Works Director: Jeff Schumacker

The city will begin street stripping starting the first of next week. Will start on both Camas Ave and will work its way Wapato Ave, down to 1st street. To council man Gonzalez the baseball field waterline is back on, has also added new black sand on the fields. News for all, city clean-up for July 13, at the train depot. As soon as we know we will have that posted on the website and city. Area from 1st to 4th street will start to get work done, has a scheduled meeting tomorrow at 1. The full water line will be rebuilt. The water line is 7 years old. Barricades were out and stop signs were out when the fire occurred. The city currently still has portable stops signs.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Margaret Estrada called for the adjournment of the meeting. Council member Rita Alvarado made a motion to adjourn. Council member Chuck Stephens seconded. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned.

Margaret Estrada, Mayor

Alondra Juarez Interim Clerk