

October 18, 2022

This special meeting of the Jerome City Council was called to order by Mayor Davis at 5:00 p.m. While council chambers were open to the public, the meeting was also held by teleconference and the public was encouraged to continue with social distancing. The video conference was conducted via Zoom and was made available to all members of the public in a format that allowed all participants to hear the meeting, including all deliberations by members of the Council and other speakers addressing the council, whether in person or via virtual connection, and to comment if so desired, all of which was noted in the agenda, email, and notices at council chambers and on the city's website.

Present: Mayor David M. Davis, Councilman Chris Barber, Councilman Jason Peterson, Councilman Brent "Oop" Johnson and Councilman Bryan Craig.

Also present were staff members: City Clerk Bernadette Coderniz, Legal Counsel Ted Larsen, City Administrator Mike Williams, City Engineer Tyson Carpenter, Wastewater Maintenance Supervisor Brad Henry, Public Works Director Brian Ahrens, IS Director Carlos Hernandez, Finance Director Ross Hyatt, Accounting and Budget Manager Lori McCrae, Library Director Linda Mecham, Human Resources Manager Esmeralda Chavez, Fire Chief Mike Harrison, and Police Captain Anthony Gratzler.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Mayor Davis led the audience in recitation of the pledge of allegiance.

INVOCATION:

An invocation was given by Pastor Gary Terrell with the Freewill Baptist Church.

POLICE STATION TOUR:

The meeting recessed at 5:03 p.m. for a tour of the new police station. The meeting reconvened at 5:42 p.m.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

Those items contained in the consent calendar are as follows:

1. Approve the minutes of the October 4, 2022 regular meeting
2. Approve payment to Lombard-Conrad Architects for Jerome Police Station Phase 2 in the amount of \$4,395.00
3. Approve payment to Starr Corp for Jerome Police Station Renovation in the amount of \$276,608.65
4. Monthly Department Reports
5. Approve Claims

20-20 Autoglass \$628.46, Air St. Luke's \$90.00, Amazon Capital Services \$336.18, Ambiente H2o Inc. \$2,243.14, American Construction Supply & Rental \$203.68, Analytical Laboratories Inc. \$949.71, Andersons Inc \$543.36, Arlene's Flowers \$132.99, Boise Office Equipment \$30.25, Bonneville Blue Print Supply \$1,139.00, Books Galore Inc. \$1,539.27, Boot Barn \$150.00, Bound Tree Medical \$1,221.78, Brodart Company \$98.66, Bryan Clayton \$62.98, Bullock Automation and Electric \$1,615.00, Cdw Government Inc. \$1,187.40, Center Point Large Print \$94.08, Century Link \$1,787.18, Centurylink

Business Services \$45.81, Chase Paymenttech \$2,092.24, Chief Duane Rubink \$13.72, Cintas Corporation \$1,058.97, City of Jerome \$910,715.40, Civicplus \$4,084.10, Con Paulos Inc. \$1,380.11, Creative Culture Insignia LLC \$996.50, Crozier Coachworks \$1,500.00, Culligan Soft Water Service \$163.50, D & B Supply \$5,311.10, D&S Rental Properties LLC \$46.23, Dell \$20,299.79, Don's Irrigation LLC \$6,501.00, Ednetics Inc \$76.49, Emergency Responders Health \$1,730.00, Farmore of Idaho \$1,756.13, Ferguson Enterprises Inc. \$598.35, Fred Kenyon Repair Inc. \$1,668.87, Freedom Electric Inc. \$3,092.72, Freedom Mailing Services Inc \$2,242.89, Garrett & Company Inc \$726.29, Gem State Plumbing \$160.00, Gem State Towing and Recovery \$100.00, Gem State Welder's Supply \$148.70, Greatamerica Financial Services \$165.00, H.D.Fowler \$3,771.37, Hanson Janitorial Supply Inc. \$119.08, Harvey's Office Plus \$567.98, Heglar Creek Electric LLC \$4,138.75, Hme Inc. \$2,144.48, Home Depot Credit Services \$544.00, Hydro Specialties Company \$7,020.30, Icrmp \$291,935.00, Id Electric Motor Service Inc \$9,648.32, Idaho Construction Supply \$394.96, Idaho Materials and Construction \$9,059.97, Idaho Power Co. \$98,389.13, Idaho State Police \$1,825.00, Idaho State Tax Commission \$151.58, Ingram Book Company \$1,331.06, Intermountain Gas Company \$1,481.67, J & J Enterprises \$1,826.49, Jerome Chamber of Commerce \$15.00, Jerome City Fire Fighters Assoc \$75.00, Jerome City Water Department \$16,152.97, Jerome County \$24,464.39, Jimenez Auto Repair LLC \$2,088.47, Kaminsky Sullenberger & Associates Inc \$750.00, Katie Lynn Hastings \$70.52, L.N. Curtis & Sons \$6,443.00, Lease Accelerator Inc \$2,500.00, Les Schwab Tire Centers Inc \$2,926.92, Lexipol LLC \$2,652.00, Lexisnexis Risk Solutions \$32.00, Linda Mecham- Library Director \$29.34, Local Highway Tech Assit.Council \$180.00, Lombard-Conrad Architects P.C. \$4,395.00, Magic Valley Hydraulics & Repair LLC \$21.44, Magic Valley Labs \$15,767.00, Marie E Allred \$120.00, Mason's Trophies & Gifts \$48.80, McHugh Bromley PLLC \$785.41, Metroquip Inc. \$75.00, Mike's Repair \$581.14, Mountain View Spraying Inc \$72.00, Mower Office Systems \$128.99, Munimetrix Systems Corp. \$89.98, Napa Auto Parts \$1,163.63, Northside Canal Co. \$5,000.00, Northside Military Museum \$5,000.00, Overdrive \$3,000.00, Overhead Door Company of TF Inc \$707.50, Pacificsource Administrators \$1,444.73, Pipeco \$1,452.25, Platt \$195.23, Premium LLC \$6,930.00, Pro-Flame Inc \$80.38, Project Mutual Telephone \$322.94, PSI Environmental Services Inc \$22,797.26, Pumpteck LLC \$6,415.51, Quadiant Leasing USA Inc \$899.58, Rainbow Book Company \$202.95, Rescueconnection Software \$348.00, Ridley's Food & Drug \$98.15, Rodda Paint Company \$2,409.52, Ross Hyatt \$157.25, Sassy Software Solutions LLC \$67.50, Sawtooth Veterinary Services \$65.00, Signed Sealed & Delivered \$64.91, Skaggs Companies Inc. \$166.88, Smith Promotions \$147.50, Something More \$184.70, Southern Idaho Solid Waste \$8,270.03, Starr Corp \$276,608.65, Stormwind LLC \$1,980.00, Symbolarts LLC \$290.00, Tacoma Screw Products Inc \$169.89, Thatcher Company \$8,793.25, The Fire Store \$1,231.38, Tim Hunt \$14.29, Times News \$1,131.43, Tlc Rental \$1,200.00, T-Mobile \$580.91, Tore Up \$25.00, Traffic Safety Supply Co Inc \$300.99, Treasure Valley Coffee Inc. \$203.08, Trojan Uv \$4,172.85, U.S. Bank Equipment Finance \$475.39, Ugs Medical \$231.86, Underwood Recycling \$74.15, Univar Solutions USA Inc. \$5,757.50, US Bank Credit Card \$9,922.29, Valley Wide Cooperative \$21,999.50, Verizon Wireless \$3,421.01, Weidner & Associates \$4,431.00, Western States Equipment \$4,001.02, Western Systems \$672.57, Western Waste Services \$2,107.25, Wickel Tire Inc \$4,694.37, Willow Hill Supply Company \$386.50, World Rug Outlet LLC \$500.00, Xpress Bill Pay \$1,148.33, Zions First National Bank \$1,800.00.

Councilman Barber made the motion to approve the consent calendar as presented. Second to the motion was made by Councilman Craig. After consideration, the motion passed unanimously by the following vote: **AYES:** Councilman Craig, Councilman Barber, Councilman Peterson, and Councilman Johnson. **NAYS:** None.

CITY OF JEROME 2023 BENEFITS PACKAGE:

Ms. Chavez spoke of the benefits package and stated staff had budgeted a 10% increase for the medical insurance renewal; and the Pacific Source medical came in at a 15% increase. Funding to cover the 5% unbudgeted amount is proposed to come from a combination of

reserves and open employee positions throughout the year. The Benefits Committee carefully reviewed various options from other carriers to determine the best option for both the employees and the City. Ms. Chavez noted there was no increase in renewal premiums for LifeMap benefits. This includes life insurance, long-term disability, and VSP vision. The committee recommended that the City continue with LifeMap. There was a slight increase to the Employee Assistance Program. She stated the committee also recommended the \$300 wellness exam contribution to the health reimbursement account (benefits card). With the increase in medical costs, Ms. Chavez stated the committee recommended the dependent medical premium funding be increased to 65%; the current funding is 60%. The additional 5% will come from one-time employee benefit reserves received from previous years' premium rebates. Because this is one-time funding, staff would need to budget this amount for future years. Ms. Chavez stated the committee also recommended continuing with the \$50 charge for medical insurance per month with the understanding that employees can reduce this amount to \$0 if they are tobacco-free and receive an annual wellness exam.

In summary, the benefits committee recommended the following for the 2023 plan year:

- Continue with Pacific Source for our medical plan;
- Continue with Blue Cross for our two dental plans, PPO and Willamette;
- Continue with LifeMap for our life insurance, long-term disability and vision plans.
- Continue with PacificSource Administrators (PSA) for the administration of the FSA, HRA plans, COBRA, and deductible buy-down.
- Continue with BPA Health for the administration of the Employee Assistance Program;
- Increase the dependent medical premium funding to 65%;
- Continue the \$50 monthly charge for employees for medical insurance. However, this can be reduced back to \$0.00 if the employee and spouse, if on our insurance, are tobacco free and complete their annual wellness exam;
- No change to the health insurance deductible buy-down program;
- No change to the \$300 HRA reward to employees, including spouses on medical, for getting an annual wellness exam

Upon inquiry by Councilman Barber, Rhonda Bartholmew with HUB Insurance stated the insurance rate increases are seen across the board with all groups. She noted that there were few employee claims during COVID, and in the last sixteen months there has been an uptick in claims utilization. She stated the loss ratio for the City is currently at 125%, which represents a large increase in claims. Last year's insurance premium decrease took into consideration the claims from the previous year (aka COVID). Councilman Barber inquired about a long-term plan for budgeting large increases, and Ms. Bartholomew stated they look into this annually. She noted that she has emphasized to the benefits committee the importance of longevity and long-term relationships with one carrier which, in turn, allows for the ability to talk down rates. Building a long-term relationship with Pacific Source can help them to help the City keep claims down. She also stated there will be quarterly meetings with management to explore solutions to prolong high increases. She further stated Pacific Source has agreed to give \$5,000 to the Wellness portion of the program provided the City continues with Wellness meetings. Many of the claims she sees with her large accounts (including the City of Jerome) could be avoided with better health practices.

Councilman Barber made the motion to approve the benefit package for medical, dental, life, long term disability, and vision insurance, approve PacificSource Administrators (PSA) to administer the Cafeteria, HRA plans, COBRA and the deductible buy down program; approve BPA Health to administer the Employee Assistance Program, authorize the Mayor to execute the renewing contracts, and approve the increase of the dependent medical premium funding to 65%. Second to the motion was made by Councilman Craig. After consideration, the motion passed unanimously by the following vote: **AYES:** Councilman Craig, Councilman Barber, Councilman Peterson, and Councilman Johnson. **NAYS:** None.

COUNCIL REPORTS:

Councilman Craig spoke of the City's Personnel Policy Manual and the option of giving employees an additional holiday off to coincide with other local government entities and businesses. He recommended the policy be revised to include Columbus Day. Extensive discussion ensued regarding this recommendation, and topics of the discussion included: keeping the day after Thanksgiving as a regular paid day off; the number of paid holidays staff currently has; Columbus Day as a federal holiday (closures at the County, post office, banks, etc.); the generous benefits package currently offered to staff; doing something for staff by giving the additional paid holiday; the City being fully operational on Columbus Day as a trade for the day after Thanksgiving off and the number of years this trade has been in place; possibly placing this item on a future Council agenda; speaking with department heads and other staff members prior to making a decision; how the additional closure would affect the City; the amount of activity at City Hall on Columbus Day (it has not been tracked); paying "holiday pay" for those obligated to work on scheduled holidays; and, the consequences of an additional holiday and how it could affect the budget.

Councilman Craig also inquired about I-pads for Council rather than laptops. Mr. Hernandez stated he can get them ordered, and Mr. Williams stated the laptops are sometimes cumbersome. I-pads would cost less to purchase and maintain, and would allow for taking notes. Councilman Peterson stated he has no opinion on one or the other, and Councilman Johnson is neutral as well.

Councilman Johnson spoke of the continuing problem with concrete left by TDS Telecom and the inability to get in or out of his parking space. Councilman Craig spoke of the amount of sinking holes, and Councilman Barber spoke of cement discs throughout town. Mayor Davis recommended that Mr. Ahrens document everything he sees, and Councilman Johnson spoke of the need to get the mess cleaned up. Mr. Ahrens stated the company should be doing the concrete work soon.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Mr. Williams thanked council for renewing the benefit package including the increase of the dependent match to 65%. He stated staff has been conservative in estimated premium increases throughout the years, but this year the increases exceeded the estimates. Mr. Williams noted that, despite the current economy and inflation, Council approved pay raises plus the \$2,000 one-time supplement. Without increasing the dependent premium match many employees would not have benefited from the recent pay raise, and Mr. Williams further expressed appreciation to Council for the renewal approval.

Staff will be presenting a grant administration agreement with Region IV Development Association at the next Council meeting, and Mr. Williams stated staff is seeking match dollars

for a new Urban Renewal Area (URA) project including the replacement of the streetscaping on Main and Lincoln, Avenue A and Alder Avenue. Staff believes additional funds can be obtained from the Department of Commerce. Requirements of the Community Development Block Grant include a certified grant administrator, and Mr. Williams stated RIVDA is most likely the only agency that will respond to the request for the administration work.

Mr. Williams has been meeting with Mr. Carpenter, Mr. Ahrens and Streets Supervisor Ron Hendricks on road priorities, and information will be presented to Council at a future meeting. The presentation will include major road projects, top priorities, and options for Council to consider in designing road projects. He emphasized the importance of ensuring the Council's priorities match staff's recommendations.

The new park to be located in URA Area 5 south of town is currently in the design phase, and Mr. Williams expects a preliminary design will be presented at the next Council meeting for feedback. The preliminary design will also go before the URA and Jerome Recreation District boards, and Mr. Williams is hopeful that construction can begin in the spring. Upon inquiry by Councilman Peterson, Mr. Williams stated the only time restraint is the need to either spend or commit American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds by 2024 without violating requirements associated with those funds.

Mr. Williams spoke of Council's interest in revising policy related to park use and reservations, and property procurement. He advised that a committee for the park use and reservations policy has been created; staff will present options and potential policy revisions to Council at a future meeting. Additionally, finance staff have been looking into revisions to the procurement policy that will also go before department heads for consideration. Both groups are expected to have policy recommendations before year-end.

Mr. Sanchez has been out of the office and is back full-time. Mr. Williams commended Mr. Henry, Thomas Mong and other wastewater staff members for keeping up with operations in Mr. Sanchez's absence.

Ms. Chavez announced that the Planning and Zoning Commission is in need of board members to fill one vacancy; another vacancy is expected very soon. Councilman Barber suggested the possibility of reducing the number of commissioners as there are currently seven expected to sit on the board. Mr. Williams spoke of the need to research why the City has seven commissioners on the board (possibility of the need based on the City size) and why the meetings start at 7:00 p.m. He noted that Ms. Chavez and Ms. Covcic have been working with the board to change the start time to 6:00 p.m. although one commissioner may have an issue with an earlier start time. Councilman Barber commented that changing the start time of the meeting might encourage more volunteers, and Mayor Davis commented on the term of appointment with six years' commitment. Mr. Williams stated he will research this further, and Mr. Larsen stated he was unsure of the statutory requirement related to term length. Councilman Peterson commented that board members can resign at any time regardless of the terms. Mr. Williams spoke of a resolution prepared for a future Council meeting regarding a new start time for Planning and Zoning.

Ms. Mecham announced the Jerome Public Library was one of thirteen libraries chosen to be part of the telehealth program. A privacy pod and computer will be installed for public use at no cost to the library.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being nothing further to discuss, Mayor Davis adjourned this October 18, 2022 special meeting of the Jerome City Council at 6:18 p.m.

By:

Mayor David M. Davis

Attest:

Bernadette Coderniz, City Clerk