

**City of Tekoa**  
**COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
*Monday – October 7, 2024, 6 P.M.*  
**Tekoa City Hall**

- I. CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Schulz called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.
- II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIENCE:** Mayor Schulz led in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- III. ROLL CALL:**
- MAYOR SCHULZ: present  
CM MANDI PRINCE: present  
CM MARGIE JAEGER: present  
CM PETE MARTIN: present  
CM MIKE HALE: present  
CM SHELLY AUSMUS: present  
CM DAVE TYSZ: present, arrived at 6:07 P.M., during community group comments.
- IV. AGENDA MODIFICATIONS:** C. Jaeger would like to add clarification to Deputy Clerk position posting.
- V. SEPTEMBER 23, 2024, COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES:** CM Ausmus continued public comments, she would like to have the sentence “The council did nothing illegal.” in the continued public comment section. CM Ausmus moved to pass September 23, 2024, council meeting minutes. CM Martin seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.
- VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS, PUBLIC HEARINGS AND CORRESPONDENCE:**
- A. PUBLIC COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE:** Steven Thomas commented on the discussion of the burn pile last meeting and mentioned that he felt he had been silenced. He gave the council some information from AWC re: input from staff. Steven then read a statement.
- B. COMMUNITY GROUP UPDATES:** Tammy Mendoza commented re: the Empire Theatre. The theatre board has decided to not pursue administrating the Tekoa Community Center. She also let the council know there is a music festival, “Wheatstalk,” on Oct. 26, 2024, from 2-10 P.M. Tammy invited the community.
- VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**
- A. CARGO CONTAINER ORDINANCES 895-900 PROPOSAL:** CM Ausmus explained the ordinance additions re: Cargo Containers in the various zoning districts, a definition and the proposed Container Ordinance with requested changes. CM Ausmus moved to approve Ordinances 895-900. CM Martin seconded the motion. There was discussion, particularly

whether animal shelters would be allowed. CM Jaeger, Prince, Ausmus, Martin and Tysz voted yes, and CM Hale abstained.

- B. WATER METER ORDINANCE CLARIFICATION:** CM Ausmus stated that she felt it was sufficient to leave the ordinance as is and revisit the timeframe for water being turned back on. Put timeline back on the agenda. The mayor commented on current turn-on procedures being considerate of time.
- C. BURN PILE:** CM Ausmus does not think the city should charge a fee for the burn pile. She discussed past ideas. There was discussion. CM Ausmus would like the city to do more to keep the burn pile for only the citizens of Tekoa. She would like to see signage, at least. Mayor Schulz let the council know the original arrangement for the cardboard recycling was supposed to generate money; but it wound up costing the city money, hence the \$1/mo. fee that was then transferred to funding the burn pile.

## **VIII. NEW BUSINESS:**

- A. JUB-TIM IKE: WSDOT AIRPORT PROJECT:** Tim Ike updated the council on the airport runway project progress. He went over the numbers for the grant from WSDOT and some match funds from the Port of Whitman. He submitted the Notice of Award, bid numbers, and the Engineering Agreement for Professional Services for JUB to oversee the construction. There was extended discussion.
- B. DOUG PALMER RE: BURN PILE:** Doug Palmer is happy about how the burn pile is running now. He commented on the \$1 month fee. He was unable to find anyone who had any issues with the fee, whether they used the pile or not. He commented on how well the staff works for the city, and he commented on the need to pay the city employees better. He wants to see the city move forward and not lose people. \* In his opinion, the out-of-town usage of the burn pile is better than it was. He reiterated that the burn pile keeps the city cleaner.  
  
\*Content deleted per city council direction, 10-21-2024
- C. MRSC SMALL WORKS ROSTER RESOLUTION 24-05:** Clerk Evans-Teague explained the need for the city to start using the MRSC state small works, vendor and consultant roster. There was discussion. CM Ausmus moved to approve Resolution 24-05. CM Martin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- D. SALARY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:** C. Hale explained the suggestion from the salary committee. There was discussion. The voting will happen in the next meeting.
- E. WATER/SEWER RATES FOR 2025:** The mayor spoke about not raising the sewer rate last year and the choices over the years to not raise water rates. There was discussion. CM Ausmus thought the mayor's suggestion of raising the rate \$2/mo. seemed reasonable. There was discussion. The council would like to talk with Matt Morkert before voting.

- F. AIRPORT LEASES:** CM Hale explained the current situation at the airport, and the requirements for leasehold excise tax to the state. There needs to be an upgrade in all aspects of the airport.
- G. TEMPORARY OFFICE/PUBLIC WORKS HELP:** Clerk Evans-Teague explained the need for office help now that we have no deputy clerk. CM Ausmus moved to approve 3 hours a day for temporary office help at their current rates. CM Hale seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously. The mayor let the council know the Triple D Centennial Farms easement work is starting tomorrow. He would like to bring Jeff Latkowski in for up to two weeks at \$24/hr. CM Tysz moved to hire Jeff. CM Martin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- H. ETHICS POLICY:** C. Martin introduced an Ethics Code for the City of Tekoa. He would like the council to come back with comments. There was discussion. It will be on the agenda for the next meeting.
- I. DOG LICENSES/TAGS:** CM Ausmus noted that some cities have a one-time fee for dog licenses. She would like the city to go to a one-time fee. She would like the council to think about it. Come back to the next council meeting with suggestions.
- J. CLARIFICATION FOR DEPUTY CLERK JOB:** Clerk/Treasurer Evans-Teague explained the requirement for publishing a wage range and stipend. There was discussion. CM Ausmus moved to establish a range of \$18-24 with a \$500/mo. insurance stipend. CM Martin seconded the motion. CM Hale abstained. CM Prince, Tysz, Ausmus, Jaeger, and Martin voted yes.

**IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REPORTS:**

- A. MAYOR'S REPORT:** Mayor Schulz reported on the Mayor's Roundtable in Ellensburg and the value it provides. The mayor let the council know that the city still owns Ruhl Park. He will keep the council abreast of how things are going in the research process re: the park.
- B. STAFF REPORT:** None.
- K. COUNCIL REPORTS:** CM Martin reported that he has approval for the interpretive signs at the Palouse to Cascades State Park trailhead. He is meeting with the Parks and Rec. Committee on Oct. 15, 2024, re: placement. The Golf Course Board met, and things are going forward with remodeling plans for the club house. The golf course and clubhouse are owned by the city. CM Hale reported that Small Business Saturday is November 30, 2024. Banner Bank is doing a food drive this month. CM Ausmus reported the Sam Anderson Tree of Giving sign-up is at the high school. CM Ausmus asked for printouts of the final Council Policy and Procedures Manual. That could be done when the ethics code is updated. CM Ausmus mentioned that she would like to be notified about possible events council members can attend. She clarified her stance on development and that she would really like to see a small development of some kind come in that would help Tekoa grow a little.

**X. MAYOR AND COUNCIL NEW BUSINESS AND NEW INITIATIVES:** None.

**XI. APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS AND CLAIMS:** None.

**XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION:** None.

**XIII. CONTINUED PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Todd Jensen spoke about how U-Haul is now selling the container boxes off the back of their trucks. Brad Chandler noted that McDonalds and SEL both have starting wages of \$18/hr. He also mentioned that ethics issues can be clarified by unions. Brad spoke about the poverty statistics put out recently for Whitman County, stating that northern Whitman County is now the least economically viable county in the state. He also stated that in terms of development companies, there is no one who will come in and build less than 100 units. Steve Haxton spoke as a resident about bringing in business or affordable housing. He would like to see Jet A at the airport (Jet fuel). There was discussion. CM Ausmus asked about his suggestions for tiny homes. There was discussion. Tiny homes will be on the next meeting agenda.

**XIV. ADJOURNMENT:** CM Ausmus moved to adjourn the meeting. C. Hale seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Mayor Schulz adjourned the meeting at 8:18 P.M.

**APPROVED:**

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Roy Schulz - Mayor

**ATTEST:**

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Eliza M. Evans-Teague– Clerk/Treasurer