

**WALLA WALLA CITY COUNCIL**  
**Work Session Minutes**  
**May 11, 2015**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Cummins called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Present: Councilmembers Jim Barrow, Barbara Clark, Chris Plucker, Allen Pomraning and Mayor Jerry Cummins. (Councilmember Barrow arrived at 4:07 p.m.)

Absent: Councilmembers Dick Morgan and Mary Lou Jenkins.

City staff in attendance: City Manager Nabel Shaw, Public Works Director Ki Bealey, Development Services Director Elizabeth Chamberlain, City Engineer Neal Chavre, Principal Engineer Frank Nicholson, and City Clerk Kammy Hill.

**2. ACTIVE AGENDA**

A. Port of Walla Walla's broadband franchise discussion.

City Manager Shaw explained the City and Port have paid to have fiber optic conduit installed as part of the downtown Alder Street project. One of the issues necessary to address is who will be responsible for operating and maintaining this fiber optic conduit. The Port of Walla Walla has expressed an interest and if the City Council has no objections, staff will begin negotiating a franchise agreement with the Port.

Jim Kuntz, Port of Walla Walla Executive Director, and Todd Brandenburg, PocketilNet Communications President, reported the public wants reliable broadband internet service. In order to be competitive in economic development, this has become a required piece of infrastructure. The Port has contracted with Magellan Advisors to prepare a broadband expansion feasibility study to broaden the reach of the fiber optic network.

There was discussion on:

- Downtown businesses would gain improved reliability and competitive pricing through this fiber optic conduit.
- How internet connectivity works.

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- The placement of fiber optic conduit and feasibility for installation throughout the City. The focus will be on providing broadband internet services to core commercial areas.
- How long fiber optic will remain relevant with changing technologies.
- The need for a franchise; return on investment for improvements; and potential for competition with existing businesses.
- Importance of providing equity in service for those needing it in comparison to business decisions requiring a return on investment.

Mayor Cummins invited public input.

Representatives of Baker Boyer Bank commented on the need for reliability, security, and redundancy for business internet services in Walla Walla.

Public Works Director Bealey described the potential benefits of fiber optic connectivity for traffic signal coordination.

City Manager Shawa mentioned the need to identify funding for future fiber optic conduit installation in roadway construction projects.

It was the consensus of a majority of Council to have staff begin negotiations with the Port of Walla Walla for a franchise agreement within the City related to the provision of fiber optic broadband services.

### **B. General Sewer Plan Presentation and Overview.**

Public Works Director Bealey described the importance of having a good sewer master plan and introduced Alex Fazzari with JUB Engineers.

Mr. Fazzari provided an overview of:

- General objectives in developing the master sewer plan.
- Key findings.
- Confidence in the data.
- Final deliverable product.

There were comments on:

- The importance of studies such as this one to make data-driven decisions for future budgeting of improvements and services.
- The importance of having good data available to rely on in developing plans.

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Mayor Cummins invited public input.

Richard McFarland, 3731 Middle Waitsburg Road, Walla Walla, thanked JUB Engineers for their presentation and suggested the City hire Mr. Fazzari to make community presentations.

Public Works Director Bealey recognized the work by the City's GIS staff in collecting and having data available.

City Manager Shawa acknowledged the foresight of the City Council in authorizing the investment in these types of studies.

### **C. East Isaacs Avenue Latecomers' Agreement.**

City Manager Shawa reviewed some of the problems encountered in trying to administer the Isaacs Avenue latecomers' agreement. This particular latecomer's agreement is deterring potential economic development in the East Isaacs area. Staff recommends the City Council rescind this agreement.

There was discussion on whether refunds should be issued to those who have already paid the latecomer fees in this area.

Mayor Cummins invited public input. Nobody chose to address Council at this time.

It was a consensus of a majority of Council to have staff put this item on a future Council agenda for rescission.

### **3. OTHER BUSINESS**

Mayor Cummins reviewed a letter brought forward by the Mill Creek Coalition to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regarding securing Federal funding for necessary improvements to Mill Creek. Unless there are objections by Council, it is his intent to sign the proposed letter on behalf of the City.

There was discussion on:

- The accuracy of the letter and the need to proceed.
- This is a key step in securing Federal funding for a study and then construction for the Mill Creek channel.

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- The potential for failure of Mill Creek flood control and impact to property.
- Staff work and other in-kind contributions can be used towards the required matching dollars for Federal funding.

It was the consensus of a majority of Council for Mayor Cummins to sign the letter on behalf of the City. Copies of the signed letter will be provided to Council.

### **4. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:46 p.m.