

WALLA WALLA CITY COUNCIL
Work Session Minutes
January 7, 2019

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

Present: Councilmembers Yazmin Bahena, Riley Clubb, Jerry Cummins, Myron Huie, Steve Moss, Tom Scribner, and Mayor Barbara Clark.

Absent: None

City staff in attendance: City Manager Nabel Shawa, Deputy City Manager Byron Olson, City Attorney Tim Donaldson, Fire Chief Bob Yancey, Finance Director Jean Teasdale, Public Works Director Ki Bealey, Development Services Director Elizabeth Chamberlain, Human Resources Director Pam Taylor, Transportation Engineer Monte Puymon, Accounting Supervisor Liz Moeller, and City Clerk Kammy Hill.

2. ACTIVE AGENDA

A. Ambulance Services Utility.

Staff reviewed:

- This ambulance utility is necessary to keep the service financially feasible and until the exploration of a regional fire authority is completed.
- Establishment of occupancy classifications.
- Rate and account implementation considerations: flat fee or through an equivalent residential unit (ERU). The ERU is what will be proposed in the ordinance to establish the ambulance utility.
- The ambulance utility fee will be billed through the City's utility billing system.
- An exemption will be granted for people receiving Medicaid-covered in-home or inpatient services.
- The proposed ERU for 2019 is \$3.50 per month increasing to \$6.00 per month in 2020.
- The public hearing is scheduled for the January 23 City Council meeting.

There was discussion on:

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- Assessment for assisted living facilities and nursing homes at a per bed rate rather than at the ERU rate.
- Cost to operate the ambulance service versus revenue.
- Provisions in the draft ordinance. This ordinance was provided as a working copy and will be changed to correctly reflect the classifications and method of assessing the fee.
- Changing the words "poor and infirm" in the proposed ordinance.
- Charges for public schools versus private schools.
- Based on the occupancy classifications, staff estimates there are approximately 17,000 ERU's citywide.
- Estimated revenue from the ambulance utility in 2019 is approximately \$700,000 to \$735,000. This will not eliminate general fund support for the ambulance fund.
- The countywide emergency medical service property tax levy will be up for a renewal vote in 2020.
- The ambulance utility is anticipated to be a short-term fix for the next two years to maintain the current level of services while establishment of a regional fire authority is explored.

B. Poplar Street corridor study.

Transportation Engineer Puymon reported the goal of this study is to configure the Poplar Street transportation corridor to improve safety for all users.

Scott Mansur, DKS Associates, reviewed:

- Project schedule. The goal is to come back before the City Council in February with a recommended design alternative.
- Development of alternatives, screening, and community/stakeholder involvement in the process.
- Boundaries of corridor study.
- Four alternatives were developed in addition to the "no change" alternative. These alternatives have been narrowed down to two: the "no change" and Alternative 1, reducing travel lanes to three and having a buffered bike lane.
- Intersection design options including roundabouts at Alder/Park Street and Alder/Palouse Street.
- The twenty-four completed surveys are consistent with what has been heard at the community and stakeholder meetings.
- If Alternative 1 is chosen, it will have to be modified for the corridor between 7th Avenue and Colville Street to remove the bike lane buffer in order to maintain existing street trees.

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- The preference is Alternative 1 to improve safety and grant funding eligibility. There are very limited grant opportunities for the no change alternative. Alternative 1 also scored highest.
- Input is being sought on whether any of the traffic signals at 1st, 3rd, or 4th Streets should be removed. Traffic analysis does not support their need, but they do serve an important purpose for pedestrians.

There was discussion on the projected cost difference between the two alternatives; possibility of inclusion of a curbed buffer between 7th Avenue and Colville Street; and the phased approach to the project.

C. Sleep Center relocation.

City Manager Shawa reported the sleep center was only to remain at the Service Center site for one year but staff extended the time to a second year while seeking alternative sites. The sleep center has been a significant improvement in the ability to serve the homeless. With the passage of the ordinance making illegal to sleep/lie in the vicinity of the sleep center, complaints and problems have been greatly reduced.

An alternative location at North 15th Street and West Rees Avenue has been found and Walla Walla County has agreed to help fund relocation and operational costs. Work to be performed at the new site includes: utilities, fencing, relocation of purchased portables with foundations, electrical, and landscaping.

There was discussion between staff, Council, and Chuck Hindman with the Alliance for the Homeless, regarding the benefits of the site, trespassed individuals, and whether there should be an area for overflow or trespassed persons.

City Manager Shawa reported that staff would be contacting all adjacent properties to notify them of the relocation of the sleep center to the site.

3. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

4. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:42 p.m.