

WALLA WALLA CITY COUNCIL
Work Session Minutes
May 20, 2019

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Clark called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. in the Fulton Community Room, 54 E. Moore Street.

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, Public Works Director Ki Bealey, Finance Director Jean Teasdale, City Engineer Neal Chavre, Customer Service Supervisor Rachel Warren, Utilities Engineer Frank Nicholson, Environmental Engineer Leah Fisk, Civil Engineer Adam Klein, and City Clerk Kammy Hill.

2. ACTIVE AGENDA

A. Low income utility discount program.

Andy Baker, Project Manager with FCS Group, reviewed the additional data on the number of households that can be served at a range of discount levels; and the utility tax increase necessary for funding the program at the various levels.

There was extensive discussion on how the application of the discount might apply to low-income renters that do not receive a utility bill; and applicability of discount to utility customers in the urban growth area and Section 8 housing voucher customers.

Bob Castoldi, Director of Energy Assistance for the Blue Mountain Action Council, suggested increasing the income level for eligibility and advertising for additional participation. There are currently 517 clients in the energy assistance program with 117 having a City utility bill. Increased participation could also include allowing a discount for those that qualify for the energy assistance program.

There was additional discussion on expanding the program to all low-income utility customers.

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A majority of Council indicated they would like to have additional discussion at a Work Session to gain a better understanding of how the program might be expanded; contact with other cities on expanding program participation; and program funding. Staff reported the earliest this issue could be brought back at a Work Session is July.

- B. Professional services contract with Transpogroup for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) self-evaluation and transition plan.

Civil Engineer Klein reviewed the need to have an updated ADA self-assessment and transition plan for continued eligibility for Federal funding. This self-assessment and transition plan will address facilities in the public rights-of-way. The last self-assessment and transition plan was prepared in 1994 for City buildings only. A proposed contract with Transpogroup to prepare the ADA self-assessment and transition plan is on the Council agenda for consideration on May 22, 2019.

There was discussion on staff being unable to prepare the plan due to existing workloads and expertise; and the scope of the proposed contract is only for the public right-of-way dues to the costs to address all City facilities and programs.

- C. Biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) at the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Public Works Director Bealey reviewed:

- Wastewater Treatment Plant capacity for biochemical oxygen demand is a monthly maximum of 10,814 pounds per day.
- On April 19, 2019, Cliffstar (Refresco) requested an increase to their permit limit of 590 pounds of BOD per day. The assessment was completed, and their permit will be approved.
- On May 6, 2019, Mainstem Malt requested a permit for 495 BOD pounds per day.
- Average increases and trends in BOD at the Wastewater Treatment Plant over the years.
- Estimated BOD capacity remaining at the Wastewater Treatment Plant if both the Cliffstar (Refresco) and Mainstem Malt requests are approved. Staff and the treatment plant operators have concerns with the potential for reaching maximum capacity.
- Staff is proposing to limit the five-year permit for Mainstem Malt to one-third of their requested 495 BOD pounds since their plan is to

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only have one-third of the equipment installed during this five-year period. Staff will also work with the Port to address the BOD increase due to the number of wineries at the Port's airport property and plans to reserve capacity for additional residential and commercial growth. A plant evaluation will be done in 2020 to determine necessary improvements to meet BOD capacity demands.

There was discussion on the rate surcharges for high levels of BOD and whether there is any policy action for the City Council. Staff indicated this is just an informational briefing for Council at this time.

3. OTHER BUSINESS

Councilmember Scribner reported a meeting with Councilmembers and City Council candidates is being set up for June 5 at 4:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers and provided an overview of the intent of this meeting.

4. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:03 p.m.