

WALLA WALLA CITY COUNCIL
Work Session Minutes
September 21, 2020

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

Present: Councilmembers Yazmin Bahena, Riley Clubb, Myron Huie, Ted Koehler, Steve Moss, Susan Nakonieczny, and Mayor Tom Scribner.

Absent: None

City staff in attendance: City Manager Nabel Shawa, City Attorney Tim Donaldson, Public Works Director Ki Bealey, Deputy City Manager Elizabeth Chamberlain, Human Resources Director Pam Taylor, and City Clerk Kammy Hill.

Also present: Ad hoc recycling task force members Barbara Clark and Shelly Shelin.

2. ACTIVE AGENDA

A. Presentation of ad hoc recycling committee's recommendations.

Public Works Director Bealey reviewed:

- History and volatility of the recycling commodities markets.
- Establishment of the ad hoc recycling task force.
- Task force recommendation:
 - System Reset — Eliminate plastics as an accepted recycling material:
 - Phase I — Limit items to paper, cardboard, tin, and aluminum cans to reduce contamination.
 - Phase II — Add plastics of highest value when contamination has been reduced.
 - Education — Implement a public information campaign.
 - Monitor — Periodically monitor and report to Council.
 - Re-evaluate — Reconsider the current collection system in 2023 if contamination continues to be a problem.
 - Allow the Committee additional time to investigate legislative considerations and report back to Council in November for possible inclusion with the City's 2021 Legislative Priorities.

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- Next steps:
 - Consider formal acceptance of the ad hoc recycling task force recommendations on October 14, 2020.
 - Solid Waste Advisory Committee approval to remove plastics from list of acceptable recycling material (November 5, 2020).
 - Submit amended recyclable list to Department of Ecology for approval.
 - Create/proceed with outreach and education (Issue request for proposals, October 19, 2020).
 - Monitor and report back to Council in six months.
 - Re-evaluate the system in 2023 if contamination is not reduced.

Council commended and thanked the members of the ad hoc recycling task force; and discussed the task force recommendations.

Barbara Clark, Task Force Member, commented on the phased approach to make the recyclable commodities more valuable.

Sandy Shelin, Task Force Member, suggested that manufacturers be made to take their containers back.

B. Tattoo policy discussion.

City Attorney Donaldson reviewed:

- First amendment rights and swastikas.
- Regulating public employee speech, including tattoos.
- Tattoos and public employment.
- Examples of tattoos for music bands, sports teams, school pride, and those that have changed or have variable meanings. This increases the difficulty in determining whether tattoos may be considered offensive. Policies must survive vagueness, whether they are too narrowly drawn, or overly broad.
- The hiring process for the Police Department and disqualification of candidates that are unfit.
- City-wide personnel policies and anti-harassment policies.
- Conclusion:
 - The City has general policies that prohibit harassment or display of offensive and objectionable materials at work.
 - The Walla Walla Police Department screens applicants with tattoos and has a specific tattoo covering policy.

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- On -duty tattoo covering policies have been generally upheld.
- No authority could be found for public employers to regulate employee tattoos off-duty.
- Recommend against adoption of policy that disqualifies applicants solely on basis of tattoos.

Human Resources Director Taylor concurred with City Attorney Donaldson's recommendations.

There was discussion on:

- Establishing a positive culture and expectations of City employees.
- Inability to draw an absolute line as to what is offensive and morally objectionable.
- Due to the hiring process for police officers, any ill-intent would be discovered, and the candidate eliminated from being employed.
- Complexity of the issue of tattoos and free speech. Legal advice from Municipal Research and Services Center is the same as the advice provided by the City Attorney.
- Importance of educating employees on the culture of the City organization.
- All citizens may not be totally satisfied with the current law, but the legal advice is sound and should be respected.

3. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

4. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:19 p.m.