

**WALLA WALLA CITY COUNCIL**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**August 11, 2021**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Scribner called the meeting to order at 6:30 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: Deputy City Manager Elizabeth Chamberlain, City Attorney Tim Donaldson, Fire Chief Bob Yancey, Finance Director Jean Teasdale, Development Services Director Preston Frederickson, Parks & Recreation Director Andy Coleman, Human Resources Director Pam Taylor, Deputy Fire Chief Eric Wood, Deputy Fire Chief John Knowles, Senior Planner Jon Maland, and City Clerk Kammy Hill.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**3. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Sharon Schiller, Walla Walla, felt that West Rose Street was very unsafe for motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians and suggested the Council reconsider the lane configuration.

Thomas Mair, Walla Walla, asked for more community involvement in the development of an urban forest master plan.

Gayle Budorff, Walla Walla, commented on the recent development of the urban forestry management plan and how it is essentially just a pruning cycle and is missing many components of a good plan.

Eduardo Rodriguez, Walla Walla, expressed concerns with the lack of sidewalks and street lighting in some neighborhoods in Walla Walla and asked the City Council to provide these services and treat all neighborhoods equally.

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**4. ACTIVE AGENDA**

A. Ordinance No. 2021-23 adopting a regional housing action plan.

Staff reviewed:

- House Bill 1923 and grant received for preparation of the plan. The City of Walla Walla was the project leader.
- Plan development and public outreach.
- Stakeholder committee.
- Review of the draft regional housing action plan by the Planning Commissions of the participating cities.
- Public hearing before the City's Planning Commission.
- Key plan components – housing needs assessment; public outreach; financial analysis incentives; recommendations.
- Results of the housing needs assessment.
- Recommendations include reconciling housing needs with land supply and recommending updates to the Countywide Planning Policies to facilitate development of affordable housing.

Mayor Scribner invited public input.

RL McFarland, Walla Walla, read comments from Dorothy Knudson regarding the sale of Rancho Villa mobile home park and enacting measures to offer tenants first right of refusal to purchase the land. Mr. McFarland asked why the County and Port of Walla Walla were not involved in the study. Staff explained the grant only covered involvement by cities.

There was discussion on the expectations of other jurisdictions; the process for County involvement; how fast the public can expect to see an improvement in affordable housing stock; the need for additional multi-family housing; and increasing the land available for multi-family developments.

**Councilmember Koehler moved to adopt Ordinance No. 2021-23. Councilmember Moss seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried with 7 yes votes and 0 no votes.**

B. Resolution No. 2021-112 approving the recommendation from the Hearing Examiner regarding the preliminary plat for Harvey Ranch Estates, a 235-lot subdivision located at Lower Waitsburg Road.

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Planning staff reviewed the history of actions for this property; the boundaries; preliminary plat; public comments; review of the proposed plat; and conditions of approval.

Mayor Scribner polled the City Council for any conflicts of interest or appearance of fairness issues. None were reported.

There was discussion on:

- Overview of the hearing examiner process.
- Minimum density.
- Phased development of 40-50 new homes per year.
- Diversity in size of units and lots.
- Utility capacity and any latecomer's agreement.
- Public safety response times.
- Street trees are required for final plat approval.
- No City responsibility for errant golf balls.

Engineering staff reviewed:

- Current conditions.
- Traffic analysis considerations and challenges.
- Proposed transportation mitigation measures.
- Developers cannot be required to fix existing transportation problems. The City can only ask for mitigation measures that are a direct result of the development.
- The final mitigation measures are:
  - Developer to reconfigure subdivision and dedicate right of way for the interchange (from subdivision property only).
  - City acknowledges that neither the US12/Clinton/Lower Waitsburg Road interchange nor the Wilbur intersection projects are funded, and schedules are undetermined.
  - As an interim mitigation measure, developer to improve Middle Waitsburg Road to the Blue Mountain Drive intersection. This work is in lieu of \$217,900 cash payment for Wilbur/US 12 level of service impacts.
  - Developer to complete full frontage improvements for the west side of Lower Waitsburg Road (including in front of corner parcel).
  - Developer to make minor improvements for bicycle and pedestrian safety concerns.

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There was discussion on:

- The existing traffic concerns and need for improvements at the Clinton Street/US Highway 12 intersection.
- The intersection doesn't serve that many people, so it is unlikely to receive state or federal infrastructure funds.
- Improvements for bicycle and pedestrian safety.
- No plans for a neighborhood park. The golf course and Veterans Memorial Pool are both within walking distance.
- Ensuring safety for children in the neighborhood.
- Safety and improving conditions for the Clinton/US Highway 12/Lower Waitsburg Road intersection.

**Councilmember Moss moved to adopt Resolution No. 2021-112.**  
**Councilmember Huie seconded the motion. The motion carried with 6 yes votes and 1 no vote by Mayor Scribner.**

- C. Public hearing and Ordinance No. 2021-24 establishing an ambulance services utility.

Staff outlined:

- Reasons why an ambulance utility fee is being considered.
- Strong support of citizens for fire and ambulance services.
- Rate is proposed at \$12.65 per utility account beginning January 1, 2023. Paper handouts on the rate study are available.
- Revenue and expense summaries for fire and ambulance services.
- Ambulance utility fee comparison.
- Why the ambulance utility fee is necessary to be able to continue to provide the services expected by residents. The ambulance utility fee and revenues are anticipated to cover almost fifty percent of the program costs with the other fifty percent paid through the general fund.

Mayor Scribner declared the public hearing open.

Sharon Schiller, Walla Walla, asked what the cost per household was to be and whether the needed revenue could be collected through a sales tax increase. Staff explained the ambulance utility rate is \$12.65 and the only other way to continue to provide ambulance services is to reduce other general fund program costs. Ms. Schiller expressed concerns with the increase in the cost of living.

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There being no further public testimony, Mayor Scribner declared the public hearing closed.

Council expressed their individual opinions on funding ambulance services and imposition of an ambulance utility fee.

At 9:14 p.m., Mayor Scribner announced it appears the meeting will go past the allotted time.

**Councilmember Koehler moved to extend the meeting past 9:30 p.m. Councilmember Moss seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried with 7 yes votes and 0 no votes.**

**Councilmember Moss moved to adopt Ordinance No. 2021-24. Councilmember Bahena seconded the motion. The motion carried with 6 yes votes and 1 no vote by Councilmember Huie.**

The meeting recessed for a break at 9:17 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 9:25 p.m.

- D. Resolution No. 2021-113 authorizing a professional services contract with Hewitt in the amount of \$567,325 for design and construction management of Heritage Square Rebuild Project.

Staff reported this is a contract with Hewitt, the designer for the Heritage Square rebuild, to prepare the construction plans and perform construction management services. There are several contract specialties for the water feature, stage & lighting, and restroom. There are no local firms that can perform this work, but several local firms will be used for certain parts of this project. This contract is estimated to be twenty-three percent of the total construction cost, which is within normal standards.

Mayor Scribner invited public input.

Jim Sanders, owner of Public House 124, spoke in support of the project and felt a better use of the park area will outweigh any loss of parking spaces.

Matt Seeliger, owner of property on other side of park, echoed the comments made by Mr. Sanders.

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There was discussion on the project components, project completion, designing restrooms for family use, and contract cost.

**Councilmember Moss moved to adopt Resolution No. 2021-113.  
Councilmember Clubb seconded the motion. The motion carried with 6  
yes votes and 1 no vote by Mayor Scribner.**

- E. Resolution No. 2021-114 authorizing the purchase of a new cot and power load system from Stryker to be installed in an existing advanced life support ambulance in an amount not to exceed \$46,816.47.

Staff reported Council had authorized the use of American Rescue Plan Act funds for the purchase of a cot/power load system. This system allows one staff member to load patients into the ambulance and reduces injuries to staff. There was brief discussion on the installation of the system into a front-line ambulance and relocation of the equipment when the ambulance unit is replaced.

Mayor Scribner invited public input. No member of the public chose to address the City Council on this issue.

**Councilmember Clubb moved to adopt Resolution No. 2021-114.  
Councilmember Nakonieczny seconded the motion. The motion  
unanimously carried with 7 yes votes and 0 no votes.**

- F. Ordinance No. 2021-25 amending Municipal Code Section 2.33.030 to increase the number of members on the Civil Service Commission to five, decreasing the term of office from six years to three years, limiting service to two terms, and changing a quorum from two members to three members.

Staff reviewed the background on the Council study of the Civil Service Commission.

Mayor Scribner invited public input. No member of the public chose to address the City Council on this issue.

Council expressed their individual opinions on the proposed changes to the Civil Service Commission.

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**Councilmember Koehler moved to adopt Ordinance No. 2021-25. Councilmember Moss seconded the motion. The motion carried with 5 yes votes and 2 no votes by Councilmembers Huie and Nakonieczny.**

Mayor Scribner appointed Councilmembers Bahena, Moss, and Nakonieczny to an ad hoc committee to work on recruiting members and the testing process.

G. Approval of minutes of the July 26, 2021, Work Session and the July 28, 2021, regular meeting.

**Councilmember Moss moved to approve the minutes of the July 26, 2021, Work Session and the July 28, 2021, regular meeting. Councilmember Nakonieczny seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried with 6 yes votes, 0 no votes, and 1 abstention by Councilmember Bahena.**

**5. COUNCIL MEMBER MEETING REPORTS**

Councilmember Moss reported attendance at the Solid Waste Advisory Committee meeting; the agenda setting meeting; and the Work Session.

Councilmember Huie reported attendance at a Jim Bock radio show interview; and the Work Session.

Councilmember Bahena reported attendance at the Work Session.

Councilmember Nakonieczny reported attendance at the Work Session.

Councilmember Clubb reported attendance at a Common Roots Housing Trust Board meeting; the Metropolitan Planning Organization Board meeting; and the Blue Mountain Action Council Executive Officer search.

Councilmember Koehler reported attendance at a meeting with Columbia County Commissioners; and the Work Session.

Mayor Scribner reported attendance at the Planning Commission meeting; a presentation of the National Night Out proclamation; the agenda setting meeting; a meeting with Arborist Kyle Clemens; a lunch meeting with City Manager Shawa; a meeting with property owners regarding neighborhood problems on Locust Street; the Work Session; the

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special meeting; the Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee meeting; a lunch meeting with Fire Chief Yancey; the Mill Creek Coalition meeting; and the Library Board meeting.

**6. UNFINISHED AND NEW BUSINESS**

**Councilmember Nakonieczny moved to appoint Jerry Cummins to the Transportation Benefit District Improvement Committee for a term expiring June 30, 2024. Councilmember Bahena seconded the motion. The motion unanimously carried with 7 yes votes and 0 no votes.**

Council acknowledged an email regarding the sale of the Rancho Villa Mobile Home Park and asked that this issue be added to the work of the ad hoc housing committee. Staff reported that Comprehensive Plan amendments are also being considered that may help address the preservation of mobile home parks as affordable housing.

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

**There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:10 p.m.**