

WALLA WALLA CITY COUNCIL
Work Session Minutes
February 22, 2022

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

Present: Councilmembers Brian Casey, Rick Eskil, Ted Koehler, Steve Moss, Susan Nakonieczny, Gustavo Reyna (virtually), and Mayor Tom Scribner.

Absent: None

City staff in attendance: City Manager Nabel Shawa, Deputy City Manager Elizabeth Chamberlain, Parks & Recreation Director Andy Coleman, Technology Services Director Chris Owen, Public Works Director Ki Bealey, Police Chief Scott Bieber, Human Resources Director Pam Taylor, Civil Engineer Adam Klein, and City Clerk Kammy Hill.

Also in attendance virtually: Steve DiJulio, Legal Counsel with Foster Garvey.

2. ACTIVE AGENDA

A. Presentation on the City's approach to cybersecurity.

Staff provided an overview of the Technology Services department, security statistics/facts, incidents and consequences, and safeguards against cyber-attacks. There was discussion on insurance against cyber-attacks, remote access, and security on City-owned devices.

B. Pioneer Park pedestrian improvements.

Staff outlined the various pedestrian improvements needed at Pioneer Park. The top four projects are:

- McKinley Street shared use path.
- Whitman Street sidewalk infill.
- Division and Whitman Street intersection improvements.
- McKinley Street parking.

The construction estimates for these four projects total \$585,000. Total cost for all the improvements is estimated at \$972,500. If budgeted in the general fund, the priority projects would be designed in 2024 and constructed in 2025.

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Council concurred with the top four projects. There was brief discussion on funding for the improvements. Council suggested installation of a stop sign at the intersection of Division and Whitman Streets to slow the speeding traffic.

C. Civil Service Exemptions.

Staff reported the City of Walla Walla is the only City of its size in Washington State that still has the Police and Fire Chiefs under Civil Service. By removing the Chief positions from Civil Service, the entire management team would all be on a level playing field. All the management team report directly to the City Manager. Having the "extra layer" of Civil Service can be very disruptive to an organization. With the current Chiefs retiring, this seems to be the optimum time to remove the positions from Civil Service.

There was discussion on:

- Why the State legislature authorized the removal of police and fire chiefs from Civil Service in 1987.
- Illegal actions by the City Manager could still be addressed through the courts as a violation of public policy. The City Manager is directly accountable to the City Council.
- Previous Police Chiefs were in favor of being included under Civil Service to protect them from political pressures.
- Structure of the City of Walla Walla.
- Current climate in the Police Department. This action will only lead to more uncertainty and instability and won't change how the department is run.
- The Civil Service Commission only has a role in the testing and qualification of candidates, and any public appeal of disciplinary or termination actions.

3. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

4. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:02 p.m.