

**WALLA WALLA CITY COUNCIL**  
**Work Session Minutes**  
**December 5, 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, and Mayor Tom Scribner.

Absent: None

City staff in attendance: Deputy City Manager Elizabeth Chamberlain, Public Works Director Ki Bealey, Development Services Director Preston Frederickson, Planner Jon Maland, Fire Chief Bob Yancey, Deputy Fire Chief John Knowles, and City Clerk Lisa Neissl.

Also present: Paul Didelius of Columbia Rail; Tim Meliah and Sam Jackle of Walla Walla Anchor Community Initiative; Matt Covert of LDC-virtually; and Alex Fazzari of JUB Engineers, LLC.

**2. ACTIVE AGENDA**

- A. Discuss the rail line that runs through downtown Walla Walla, east to the Port of Walla Walla.

Staff provided information on the rail line and the request to determine where the line is terminated in the city.

Paul Didelius of Columbia Rail would like to see the rail maintained West of Touchet Street for purposes of community involvement for events, etc.

Pat Reay, Executive Director of the Port of Walla Walla spoke regarding the position of the Port Commissioners.

There was discussion on:

- Uses of the line, historical and future.
- Removal of tracks.
- Rail banking / Abandonment.
- Considerations of the Port.
- Use of land if line removed, such as a path or trail.
- Pedestrian traffic in an industrial area.
- Considerations of Whitman College.

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### B. A Way Home Washington Program.

Tim Meliah and Sam Jackle gave a presentation on the efforts to address youth and young adult homelessness in the Walla Walla Valley as well as some other communities in the State. They spoke about the various partners in the Anchor Community Initiative and provided data on results to date and future plans.

There was discussion on:

- How the city can help with policy and funding sources.
- Flexibility of the program to work with the individual community.
- Coordination with the Foster Care System.
- Access to services and case management.
- Continued support after housing.
- Input from the youth involved.
- Program sustainability.

### C. Potential Municipal Code Amendments to Chapters 20 and 21 pertaining to raising SEPA exemption thresholds.

Staff and consultant Matt Covert of LDC, reported on proposed code amendments that were identified in the Regional Housing Action Plan. It was noted that this proposal is intended to remove procedural hurdles for new housing and is common among many cities. Various other processes that are intended to maintain protections were explained. Staff requested direction on Council with regards to determining what the new thresholds should be.

There was discussion on:

- The timeline to act on the amendments.
- Duplicity in the permitting and SEPA processes with new local development regulations.
- Public notice and comment process.

### D. Update on Regional Wastewater

Alex Fazzari of JUB Engineering gave a presentation on the feasibility study on a regional wastewater facility.

There was discussion on:

- Needed upgrades at both College Place and Walla Walla treatment plants.
- Funding decisions that need to be made by College Place.

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- Timelines for making decisions for moving forward.
- Effect on capacity of Walla Walla plant of having College Place effluent piped to Walla Walla.
- Potential future formation of a regional wastewater utility and position of the Department of Ecology regarding this.
- Development of interim user agreement to accept College Place treated effluent.
- Costs of financial consultant to develop the interim user agreement.
- Feasibility of utilization of biogas produced at the plant.
- How new law regarding food waste will play into the plan.
- Grant funding that may be available for "green projects".

**3. MEETING ENDS**

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 6:05 p.m.

Approved:

Attest:

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Mayor

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City Clerk