

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2008
CITY HALL
22710 E. COUNTRY VISTA DRIVE
7:00 P.M.**

INVOCATION

Given by Council Member Crump

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Mayor Van Orman, City Council, and Staff

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Van Orman called the meeting to order at 7:02 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Council Member Jenkins	Doug Smith, Director, Community Development
Mayor Pro Tem Sayrs (absent)	Ann Swenson, Executive Assistant
Council Members Owens (absent)	Brian Asmus, Chief of Police
Council Member Crump	Sean Boutz, City Attorney
Council Member Schuler	
Council Member Olander	
Council Member Langford	

Council Member Crump moved to excuse Council Member Owens & Mayor Pro Tem Sayrs, seconded by Council Member Jenkins. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Van Orman informed everyone that Judi Owens was elected President of Public School Employees, and offered congratulations to her.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Mayor Van Orman asked to add STA Board appointment as item B under the Unfinished / New Business section of the agenda. Council Member moved to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Council Member Jenkins. Motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

Council Member Crump moved to approve the October 21, 2008 City Council Meeting minutes as amended, seconded by Council Member Langford. Motion passed unanimously.

Council Member Crump moved to approve the October 28, 2008 City Council Workshop minutes as amended, seconded by Council Member Jenkins. Motion passed unanimously.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Dennis Scott, 1009 N. Tanglewood, Liberty Lake commented that he came to tonight's meeting "simply to correct the record." He said, "Two years ago, I requested the City consider placing sidewalks from the end of the Trailhead up to Knudsen along Country Vista Road, as it is the only portion of a major arterial within the City that doesn't have sidewalks on both sides. I was declined by Mr. Smith, with the point made that there are too many large trees, and the disruption of the roots would probably kill the trees, and also the reason was that the residents that live along the sidewalk route did not support the proposal, and also an existing path provides the same route and improvements have been made to improve the access. There is no existing path on that side of Country Vista. So, a couple weeks ago, I once again asked for consideration of the same thing. I received the same email from Mr. Smith, and I also received one from you, Mayor. The portion of the record that I would like to correct is the situation is unfortunate considering that this should have been a requirement when the county approved this development to connect existing sidewalks. There are a lot of things that this developer that created the area of Meadowwood did that weren't in the standards –the trees, the streetlights – and you weren't taking them down. You are a City now and you have a responsibility to look out for the citizens.

The other comment was, inconsistent with what Mr. Smith said, I remember the conversations with home owners in the Garden Ridge Development being adamant regarding the imposition of sidewalks right next to their backyards. Well, Mayor, I know you may not take my word for it, so just one late afternoon I went around and knocked on every door within the Garden Ridge area; there are 81 homes there. Unfortunately, only 39 of them were home. Everyone that answered the door signed this petition that, number one, said we would gratefully appreciate sidewalks there because we consider crossing Country Vista Road hazardous, even with the consideration of the light that you are going to put at the new crosswalk at Eagle Bend Road. By the way, there is no crosswalk at Dural, which is the other outlet to Garden Ridge. So your choices are walk in the grass or the snow, if it happens to be plowed, walk in the bike lane, or J-walk as far as Dural goes, or go all the way down to Eagle Bend and cross on a crosswalk that is located by a curve, and I'm telling you it's not safe, especially when you look at the age of the people who are going to cross that street; they will not cross that street when it is dark, okay? I would like to turn these 39 signatures in to verify what I've said and five of those people that were adjacent to where the sidewalk might be located which, by the way, would be 20 feet from their property, said no one from the City has ever asked them their opinion. I would like to have the City reconsider that issue of sidewalks along Country Vista."

Mr. Scott then submitted the petition to the Liberty Lake City Council regarding the above comments.

MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

Council Member Crump provided a Finance Committee report. The committee reviewed vouchers, which included terminology questions, splitting the cost between the City and Liberty Lake Sewer & Water District for the joint leaf cleanup effort, and the final payment, minus retainage, for Rocky Hill. Councilman Crump said the Finance Committee will bring forth budget amendments on December 2nd, with a final vote on December 16th. The amendments will look at Rocky Hill, streetlight, tourism promotion revenue, and closing of two funds; the City Hall Reconstruction Fund and City Hall Project Fund. Councilman Crump said that Finance Committee members discussed bringing forth budget amendments quarterly or semi-annually, rather than waiting for the amendments at the end of the year. He reported that the City's 2007 annual audit has been completed; there were no findings, no management letters, and only two recommendations.

Council Member Schuler reported that she attended a Spokane Heroes Program earlier this evening. The program supports the soldiers and veterans. She said a concert fundraiser for the Program will be held November 21st at the Big Easy.

Mayor Van Orman reminded everyone that Liberty Lake is hosting a food drive for Second Harvest. She invited the City Council to team up with her to challenge the City staff to see who can collect the most food for the food bank.

Mayor Van Orman reported that she attended a transportation dialogue meeting regarding capital and M&O, which is a legislative item that will be brought to Olympia in January. She and Mayor Pro Tem Sayrs attended an Open House for Safeco Insurance; which joined with Liberty Mutual. The Mayor attended the Spokane Regional Convention and Visitors Bureau's annual meeting, where regional success was shared and economic development was discussed, and also attended an annual economic forecast summit; forecast projections are very lean for 2009. Mayor Van Orman reminded everyone that SCTU will hold a financial education seminar at City Hall on November 20th, at 6:00 p.m. and dinner will be provided. She said that Community Cable has now been switched to Comcast, and an Open House is slated for November 20th from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. Mayor Van Orman is scheduled for an interview prior to the Open House. The Liberty Lake Advisory Group met this morning. Doug Tweedy, a regional labor economist, gave presentation during the meeting and most information regarding Liberty Lake was very positive. Liberty Lake is great for business growth with the travel corridor providing easy accessibility. The job ratio here is 62.2% compared to 42% in Spokane County. The Mayor also attended an Open Government Workshop today.

Mayor Van Orman then asked for City Council confirmation for Dan DeNike to sit on the City's Planning Commission. Earlier this year, the City Council appointed Mr. DeNike as a non-voting adjunct member for the Planning Commission. Councilman Olander moved to confirm Dan DeNike as a Planning Commissioner, seconded by Council Member Crump.

A brief discussion was then held regarding the makeup of the Planning Commission. Doug Smith, Director of Planning and Community Development, said the Planning Commission is currently comprised of seven members; six are City residents, one outside member. Mr. Smith reported that with Council's confirmation of Mr. DeNike, there will be no non-voting members remaining on the Commission, and that posting for the vacated adjunct position will be shortly after January, 2009.

Mayor Van Orman called for the vote. Motion to confirm Dan DeNike as a Planning Commission member passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS

Council Member Crump moved to accept the Consent Agenda, which included vouchers totaling \$241,096.74 through November 4, 2008, as well as vouchers totaling \$354,909.19 through November 18, 2008. Council Member Schuler seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Check number sequences for vouchers through November 4th were: 10420 through 10462 and total check number sequences for October payroll were 4974 through 5040. Check number sequences for vouchers through November 18th were 10463 through 10524.

PROCLAMATIONS

Ann Swenson, Executive Assistant, read a proclamation into the record, resolving that the City of Liberty Lake proclaims November 18, 2008, the First Day of the Reusable Bag Era.

ORDINANCE FIRST READ

Ms. Swenson read Ordinance No. 171 into the record, adopting a budget for the period of January 1, 2009 through December 31, 2009 appropriating funds and establishing salary schedules for established positions.

PUBLIC HEARING

Mayor Van Orman opened the public hearing regarding the City budget at 7:26 p.m.

Councilman Jenkins questioned Section 2, specifically adopting positions, salary schedules and adjustments. He said it was noted during the Public Safety meeting that Reserve Officers were included on the salary schedule in Exhibit B, but that the City does not pay reserve officers. He said by adopting the ordinance, the union contract would be violated. Mr. Smith clarified the City traditionally has not paid reserve officers and it was a matter of heritage that those schedules had remained within the ordinance. He said that it was an oversight and staff should have eliminated the compensation of the steps since reserve officers do not get compensated, nor is there any money in the budget to pay for it.

Jessica Platt, Administrative Services Manager, said she was pleased to introduce Ordinance 171, adopting a budget for 2009. She said the ordinance is a culmination of months of hard work by the Mayor and City staff. She gave a history of the budget

process, which began in July, and the need to comply with RCW 35.33.057. She revisited the Mayor's proposed budget, and again emphasized that it is a conservative approach to meeting service needs of the residents in Liberty Lake and focusing on doing more with less. The proposed 2009 budget does not call for additional FTEs and includes four capital projects; two of which are primarily funded with grants and donations. The total proposed budget is \$12.6 million dollars, with the General Fund totaling \$6.5 million dollars.

After Ms. Platt reviewed responses to questions posed by Councilmembers Crump and Jenkins since last City Council meeting, and further discussions took place, Mayor Van Orman invited public comment. No comments were received. Mayor Van Orman closed the Public Hearing at 8:45 p.m.

ORDINANCE SECOND READ

Ms. Swenson read ordinance 170 into the record, levying the regular property taxes for the City of Liberty Lake for the year commencing January 1, 2009 to provide revenue to the provision of City services as set forth in the City budget.

Council Member Jenkins moved to approve Ordinance 170, seconded by Council Member Crump.

Ms. Platt informed the Mayor and Council of the City requirements to hold a public hearing for consideration of the regular property tax levy and that the levy must be certified by November 30th. She said the 2009 levy is a regular property tax increase over the 2008 amount of \$1.6 million of \$16,388, which is 1%. She asserted that even though the wording says "property tax increase", this does not mean that the levy rate is going up, but will actually decrease from \$1.58 to \$1.53 per \$1,000 assessed value.

She indicated that assessed values for the City of Liberty Lake have generally remained flat this year, and most property owners will see a decrease in property taxes with the passage of the levy. Ms. Platt reported that since Ordinance 170 was introduced on October 20th, the City has received a revised estimate from the Spokane County Assessor's office. The City's assessed value has increased slightly, which decreases the levy rate from \$1.54 to \$1.53. She gave a breakdown of the distribution of property taxes, ranging from Central Valley School district receiving the most at 35%, and County General Cons Futures at .37%.

Ms. Platt advised that if this Ordinance does not pass, an Ordinance be should be adopted to bank the 1% in order to secure the highest lawful levy rate for assessed valuation.

PUBLIC HEARING:

At 8:55 p.m., Mayor Van Orman opened the public hearing regarding the property tax levy. She acknowledged two letters which were received in opposition of the 1% increase. Mayor Van Orman then invited public comment; no comments were received. The Mayor then closed the Public Hearing at 8:56 p.m.

Mayor Van Orman then called for the vote by a show of hands. In favor: none; opposed: unanimous. Motion failed.

Council Member Crump commented, "times are tight, but we're taking on more and more services, which do come at a cost." He asked that the Council be mindful and prudent in all aspects in what it does, and to remember that operation and maintenance is extremely important. He suggested more can always be done with less, but cautioned "at some point you start giving up what you can do".

WORKSHOP DISCUSSIONS

There were no workshop discussions.

UNFINISHED / NEW BUSINESS

Request from Friends of Pavillion Park (FOPP): FOPP President, David Himebaugh, read a copy of a letter, dated November 7, 2008, to the Mayor and City Council. The letter stated FOPP is a non-profit organization, comprised of volunteers, which promotes activities for Liberty Lake residents, and requested \$25,000 for the 2009 season. Mayor Van Orman then opened the floor for discussion.

Council Member Schuler inquired what FOPP's budget was for 2008. Mr. Himebaugh reported that the 2008 budget was \$110,000, which included all in kind services, and the 2009 budget is \$95,000. Council Member Olander reminded the Council that FOPP had asked for \$40,000 from the City's 2008 budget and he voted against the request. He said he would still not be inclined to support the Board's request, but felt the Mayor offered a good compromise with the recommendation of \$10,000 for FOPP from the lodging tax/tourism promotion fund. Councilman Jenkins expressed his support for FOPP and said, "I think this is the core of what makes Liberty Lake great."

Bob Schneidmiller, 1029 N. Tanglewood Lane, Liberty Lake, then approached the City Council. Mr. Schneidmiller is president of the local Kiwanis Club. He spoke in support of FOPP. He said that by FOPP allowing Kiwanis to bring its mobile vehicle to their events, they earn between \$10,000-\$12,000 per year. He said that "any additional funds that can be of help to FOPP, the Kiwanis, feels are very, very important."

Mayor Van Orman agreed that events are part of economic development and that the City truly appreciates all the Friends of Pavillion Park does for the community.

Spokane Transit Authority (STA):

Mayor Van Orman said Liberty Lake officials have been asked represent small cities on the STA Board for a two-year term. She said normally the Mayor sits on the board, and asked the Council to allow her, with Mayor Pro Tem Sayrs as an alternate, to share the position on the board. The position also represents the Spokane Regional Transportation Council.

Councilmember Crump moved to confirm Mayor Van Orman and/or her designee to sit

on the STA Board as a representative of small cities, seconded by Council Member Jenkins. Motion passed unanimously.

Comcast:

Council Member Crump commented on Comcast's Open House, which will be held downtown on November 20th. He would like to meet locally, and asked the Mayor to carry the invite for Comcast to come to Liberty Lake when she meets with them for her interview on 11/20.

Budget:

Doug Smith, Community Development Director, once again extended the offer to receive any further budget questions by City Council members.

Council Member Olander said he would like follow up to Council Member Jenkins' previous suggestion of establishing a process for budget priorities. Mayor Van Orman concurred that it is a great idea; this will be discussed at the next City Council meeting.

Council Member Langford asked for clarification of the procedure for franchise agreements with the cable company. Mr. Smith explained the process. He said the City attorney is currently reviewing the company's standard agreement, and a draft agreement will be brought back to the City Council for its review and suggestions.

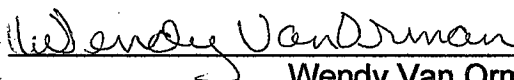
CITIZEN COMMENTS

Commissioner Steve Skipworth, 1419 North Lancashire Liberty Lake, spoke on behalf of the Liberty Lake Sewer & Water District. He thanked the City Council and employees for the cooperative workforce that happened this weekend. He said it was a great partnership between the City and the Water District, and it worked out really well for the leaf pickup. He reported that last year 6300 bags of leaves were picked up, compared to over 9,100 bags this year.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:37 P.M.

These minutes are approved on December 2, 2008



Wendy Van Orman, Mayor
City of Liberty Lake



Notes and Transcription by Ann Swenson, Executive Assistant. This Council meeting was also audio taped. Anyone desiring to listen to the recording may contact the City Clerk