

**SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
WEDNESDAY JUNE 1, 2011
CITY HALL
22710 E. COUNTRY VISTA DRIVE**

INVOCATION

Given by Council Member Owens

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Mayor Van Orman, City Council, and City Staff

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Van Orman called the meeting to order at 6:09 p.m.

ROLL CALL

City Council Members:

Mayor Pro Tem Crump
Council Member Kaminskas
Council Member Langford
Council Member Romney (absent)
Council Member Schuler
Council Member Beckett
Council Member Owens

City Staff:

Ann Swenson, City Clerk
Doug Smith, Community Development Director
Sean Boutz, City Attorney
Brian Asmus, Chief of Police
Amanda Tainio, Planning & Bldg Svcs Manager
Michelle Griffin, Recreation Coordinator
Andrew Staples, City Engineer
Ann Marie Gale, City Treasurer
JoAnn Jenkins, Administrative Assistant
Eleanor Folsom, Accounting Technician

Mayor Pro Tem Crump moved to excuse Council Member Romney, seconded by Council Member Schuler. Motion carried unanimously.

WORKSHOP DISCUSSIONS

Internal Audit Review – Canfield / RFQ

Mayor Van Orman introduced City Engineer Andrew Staples, who read the June 1, 2011 staff memo to the mayor and city council. The memo explained 12 full-time city staff members met to discuss team perceptions, concerns, or ideas they would like to

express to the council in response to an article published in today's edition of the Splash. The memo outlined the following points:

1. City staff strives to provide the best service to the public, and articles like the one published in the Splash today hurt the city's credibility.
2. City staff must work together as a team in order to function as lean as it does, with the best people in the correct positions.
3. City staff is aware of the HR process, and do not believe there is an issue, however, if the City Council does, city staff supports a no-cost or low-cost audit solution.
4. Should council members be interested in city staff's candid opinions, staff is receptive to answering any questions the council may have. The city staff feels the City Council does not trust them and articles like the one published can erode the city staff's trust in its council.

In closing, Mr. Staples thanked the mayor and council members for considering staff's comments.

Council members then addressed the staff's concerns. Council Member Owens, long-time council member, stated she has the utmost faith in the city staff. She does value, very highly, city staff. She noted she has not had the opportunity to read the article referenced in today's Splash.

Mayor Pro Tem Crump, who also had not read the article, stated he appreciates the staff. He said it takes extraordinary teamwork to make the budget cuts over the past couple of years and continue to provide service with the lean staff. He asked for city staff's input on a no-cost or low-cost internal audit solution. Mayor Pro Tem Crump indicated the goal is to find out how the staff is doing.

Mayor Van Orman then turned the floor over to City Attorney, Sean Boutz. He reported about the city's current risk management company, Canfield and Associates, conducting the internal audit review. He pointed out Canfield's business is much broader-based than just an insurance carrier, risk management provider, and litigation defense. He said during his conversations with Canfield representatives, he discovered Canfield would consult with an outside source at a very limited or no cost to the city. He cautioned against the cost it would be to hire an outside private third party to conduct a staff audit because of the time it would take to interview individual city staff members, review policies and procedures, and generate findings or reports.

Council Member Schuler clarified that the request to conduct staff interviews in a non-bias manner is meant to "put at ease a lot of concerns that have been coming to the council and to members of the council from various city staff." She said it was not aimed at cutting down or demeaning the staff, but rather to support the staff and alleviate some of the gossip, as well as protect the city, and make sure the current internal HR practice is the best way to handle issues.

The council supported utilizing Canfield's services, and Attorney Boutz will contact the consultant to work out logistics.

Form of Government Discussion

Council Member Owens moved to reconsider the vote taken during last week's city council meeting to draft a resolution requesting a change of form of government on the November ballot. She stated she does not support the change of form of government and does not feel it is incumbent upon the council to support the measure. She said if a citizen action comes forward, that is their right. Mayor Pro Tem Crump seconded the motion for purposes of discussion.

Mayor Pro Tem Crump clarified his understanding of the council's vote; that it was not to put the change on the ballot, but rather bring back a draft to discuss the resolution.

Council Members Schuler and Kaminskas discussed randomly talking with members of the community about the change of form of government. Council Member Schuler found many were surprised that these discussions were taking place at the council level and responses were not in favor of the change. Council Member Kaminskas reported she found the opposite reaction, however, and citizens she had spoken with said they would support the change.

Mayor Van Orman voiced the alternative to the council moving forward with the resolution, and talked about the process available to the citizens for establishing a petition to get the proposal on the ballot to change the form of government. Mayor Van Orman pressed the council to look after the community and, "let's make sure that we are not doing a knee-jerk reaction, but something that really is thoroughly thought of." She also expressed concern about the timing of this issue, considering four council seats are open for election, as is the mayor's seat.

Attorney Boutz then reviewed different scenarios that would affect the mayor's role both with current governance form and a change to a council/manager form of government.

Councilman Beckett suggested the council put itself on the record and cast a vote in order to "really make this issue move on, or at least take the next steps forward."

At the conclusion of the above discussion, Council Member Owens withdrew her motion.

Mayor Van Orman then turned the floor over to receive citizen comments. Prior to receiving citizen comments, Mayor Pro Tem Crump announced he would have to leave the meeting early due to another obligation, but in no way meant any disrespect to any of the speakers and apologized for the need to leave during comments.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Louise Quirk, 23012 E. Dutchman's Lane: announced she does not live in the city, but did read the article in the Splash. She said, "It's like making a rule so you don't get to let one person run or it is because you're afraid that one person is going to win." She asked the council to make their decision "from the brain and not emotion", because the brain will make rules that are good for the community.

Jim Doster, 103 Lindeblad Lane, Liberty Lake, WA: stated he would not say right now one way or the other which way the change of form of government should be voted on. He supports the opportunity for public discussion and a vote on the Liberty Lake government change. He commented discussion and debate need to take place outside of City Hall, outside of the mayor's office, and outside of the council chambers. He said letting the people vote and decide is true democracy. Mr. Doster said those who do not support open discussion and public debate have either a problem with the democratic process or have hidden motives.

Steve Peterson, 719 N. Lancashire Lane, Liberty Lake, WA: talked about character traits that have been talked about at the beginning of city council meetings over the past six months; fairness, honesty, due diligence, trustworthiness, integrity, and leadership. He stated his issue is not so much about the vote, but rather standing behind the vision and mission that were created 11 years ago. He talked about why the council/strong mayor form of government was originally established – to develop and provide service with integrity. He commented, "The community is best served with a strong mayor, who can provide the vision and leadership that drives the decisions the community makes, and the council sits on, into action."

Ron Ragge, 116 N. Lindeblad Lane, Liberty Lake, WA: reported when he had spoken during the last council meeting, he was very happy that the council was going to allow the public to have their voice be heard. He commented, "Yet tonight I am kind of hearing just the opposite and it is a little disturbing." He said the idea of an election is to improve the city for all of the citizens. Mr. Ragge believes Liberty Lake has a very good council. He said the council should be in charge, should direct what happens, and have the right to fire a city manager if city manager does not perform well. He then spoke about several issues which he felt were not handled well under the current form of government, including HR issues and the Condition 22 situation. Mr. Ragge again advocated for a city manager and implored the council to allow the citizens to vote and not "get stuck in the idea" that what was in effect in the past is best suited for today.

Shanna Hale, 121 N. Lindeblad Lane, Liberty Lake, WA: stated her impression was that a council member's responsibility was to listen to the public; not go with individual ideals or emotions. She said by allowing the public the opportunity to vote shows that council members do listen to the public as well as promote honorability as a council member. Ms. Hale advocated for a proposition to be included on the ballot.

Steve Skipworth, 1419 N. Lancashire Lane, Liberty Lake, WA: said he is the president of the Liberty Lake Sewer and Water District's board of commissioners, so understands both sides of the debate. He said a city administrator is missing and, "we need to get an administrator back in place here again." He suggested there is a sense that there is a little bit too much micromanaging happening, and it is being felt by staff. He suggested if staff had a good strong leader in an administrator, who is hired by and who reports to the council, things would settle down. He spoke in opposition of changing the current form of government.

Bill Quirk, 23012 E. Dutchman's Lane said he is not a member of the city, but has enjoyed listening to the discussion. He suggested if it only takes 160 people to sign a petition to get a proposition on the ballot, that is a pretty good test to see if people are interested in changing their form of government. He proposed putting the onus on the people who say they want to change their government.

Review of Draft Resolution

Council Members then discussed the draft resolution in their packet, which provides submission to the voters of the city a proposition of whether the city should adopt the council/manager form of government and request the Spokane County Auditor to call a special election. They determined information would be provided on the city's website that provides information which compares and contrasts the mayor-council and council-manager forms of government. They also decided a final resolution would be brought back for action during their regularly-scheduled June 21st council meeting.

Review Job Descriptions – Finance Director & City Administrator Positions (Ordinance 35)

Mayor Van Orman then opened for floor for the council to discuss and review the job descriptions for a finance director and city administrator.

Council members first reviewed and discussed the finance director job description. They requested modifying the proposed job description to include advanced proficiencies in Microsoft Office Products under the knowledge section, and adding a masters degree under the preferred criteria section. Staff will make the requested modifications and present this for council action during the June 7th City Council meeting.

At 7:19 p.m. Mayor Pro Tem Crump left the meeting.

Council members then reviewed and discussed the city administrator job position. They talked about the timing of hiring a city administrator during an election cycle, possibly hiring on an interim basis or even on a contractual basis. Council members discussed the assumption of the city administrator duties by the Community Development Director during the last several years, whether placing the Community Development Director into an interim city administrator role would provide any change or improvement, how it

would affect his already busy responsibilities, and whether or not it would free up the mayor's time to execute her other responsibilities.

Council members then talked about their support to fund the position. They discussed funding for an interim position, the idea of not increasing the Community Development Director's current salary, should that decision be made for a promotion, but rather providing a stipend for the interim duties commensurate with the additional duties, recruiting for an interim city administrator outside of current staffing, and timing.

After no further discussion, Mayor Van Orman invited citizen comments.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Charmaine Peterson, 719 Lancashire Lane, Liberty Lake, WA: said she sat in attendance, listening to council comments about how much they appreciate city staff, but yet city staff feels as though they do not have a lot of self worth because of how they are treated, and it saddens her. She then read a letter into the record from the golf pro who was given the option of either resigning or getting fired, and being put on a 3-day administrative leave. Mrs. Peterson said she has been approached by no less than 45 golfers who have stated they have never worked with anyone they liked more than this golf pro. She again expressed her sadness about the situation.

Ron Ragge, 116 N. Lindeblad Lane, Liberty Lake, WA: stated tonight's meeting is a classic example of why a city manager is needed. He said he would like to see a central person here full time and suggested that would solve a lot of problems and provide good city government.

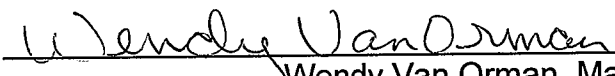
Council Member Schuler announced the Liberty Lake Police Department now has a fence in place behind the building.

At 7:55 p.m., Mayor Van Orman called for a five-minute recess before entering into a Executive Session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION / ADJOURNMENT

At 8:00 p.m. Mayor Van Orman called adjournment into Executive Session as per RCW 42.30.110(h) to discuss personnel. No action was taken. At 8:15 p.m. Mayor Van Orman called the regular council meeting back to order and immediately adjourned.

These minutes are approved on June 21, 2011.



Wendy Van Orman, Mayor
City of Liberty Lake

Ann Swenson

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