

Town of Garfield
PUBLIC HEARING AND TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Town Hall – November 28, 2012

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Jarrod Pfaff called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Jarrod Pfaff, Larry Hunt, Daymon Marple, Sharon Schnebly, Tim Southern and Mark Young. Staff – Police Officer Joe Merry, and Clerk/Treasurer Annie Pillers. **GUESTS:** Garth Meyer, Whitman County Gazette.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Larry Hunt **MOVED** the minutes of the public hearing and regular council meeting of November 14, 2012, be approved as written. Sharon Schnebly seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

POLICE REPORT: Officer Joe Merry addressed council, noting that 2 of the junk vehicle abatements were completely cleaned out. The department is in the middle of 4 other cases, 2 are at the trailer court. The department will provide another update the first of the year and likely one more will be cleaned up. There is a formal letter to be issued in first original case at the trailer park. This is not related to the junk vehicle ordinance but the notice to the landlords that a violation has occurred. The notices begin a track record and show an incident happening. The department is working slowly with the landowners on 3 or 4 vehicles they own.

Officer Merry also reported, based on the Palouse council's decision, Officer Dentler will go to $\frac{3}{4}$ time in January. Garfield will continue to get its 5 hours per day. Joe will be working 12 hour shifts. Based upon other reductions in the budget across the board, the Palouse clerk projects a \$7,000 at the end of next year. Officer Merry left the meeting at 7:09 PM.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT:

1. **Sealed Bids for Surplus Chipper Bids** – Mayor Pfaff opened and read the two bids received for the surplus chipper. Asa Casacavilla \$7,125 and Max Hale \$8,595. Larry Hunt **MOVED** to accept the bid of \$8,595.00 from Max Hale of Kamiah. Mark Young seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

FINAL PUBLIC HEARING: - 2013 PRELIMINARY BUDGET: Mayor Pfaff opened the 2013 Preliminary Budget Public Hearing at 7:12 PM. Mayor Pfaff discussed the new public works assistant's raise suggesting that council give him a raise effective January 1st. He noted the town does not have an existing policy on raises or cost of living increases (COLA). Past practice has been to give raises the first of each year. He said because there is no policy in place, for now the town should continue as in the past with this raise and in 2013 come up with a policy. In the past this was done with Perry hired in the middle of the year and Annie too. The current budget proposal includes a 3% raise for the employees, except Perry because he already got a raise with his new position and that was the agreement. Mayor Pfaff made several suggestions including tying the raises into the Consumer Price Index (CPI) or a salary raise schedule, noting it can't just be at the whim of council. Sharon Schnebly talked about doing raises on the employee's anniversary date and a raise based upon CPI or a percentage if the CPI is negative. Daymon Marple asked if the raise was factored into the budget and the mayor confirmed it was. The salary would go from \$3,334 to \$3,434. The Mayor noted Robby Johnson had done nothing to not get it and not giving the raise would send the wrong message. Mark Young talked about developing a policy in 2013 that would be put in writing for 2014. Discussion continued on perhaps a salary schedule or scale that gives the employees something they can look at and see where they will be. Mark Young asked what if there were issues. Mayor Pfaff said for performance, yes, it could be spelled out in the policy. Larry Hunt indicated he was not aware the town didn't have one. Daymon Marple talked about a base level and glass ceiling with so much per year until as high as it goes. Sharon Schnebly suggested building in something that says once you've completed probation then you get X amount after 6 months or a % on January 1st and then yearly thereafter. It was noted a cost-of-living increase is different than a performance raise. Mayor Pfaff agreed and suggested council hash that out later. Mark Young noted it was not necessary to

reinvent the wheel and perhaps getting samples of policies/schedules from Stephen or other Washington contacts. Council agreed. Daymon Marple **MOVED** the town clerk and the public works assistant receive a 3% raise effective January 1, 2013. Mark Young seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Pfaff then discussed the garbage fund, noting he had not paid attention to it in 2 years and that it has lost \$10,000 in those 2 years. He said at first he thought it was a math screw up, but with insurance, diesel, and Bias up, plus recalibrating liability with property and L&I claims, every cost has gone up in the last few years, including tipping fees. The fund is not going broke, but it needs to be fixed. He talked about a \$3.00 rate increase. Daymon Marple noted council approved a \$1.00 rate increase for water. Mayor Pfaff said it would go from \$26 to \$29 and be in the ballpark with Empire and Pullman. He said he was okay with the \$3.00 or taking a \$1.00 off the water reserve and \$.50 off sewer. Sewer reserve would go from \$12,900 to \$10,000 and Water from \$19,000 to \$15,000. That leaves \$1 in garbage. He said he was okay with any combination for whatever works. Sharon Schnebly said it was going to hurt the town in the long run, robbing Peter to pay Paul. Mayor Pfaff said it would depend on how active the town wanted to be. It would cut down on the time to get cash matches for grants. Sharon Schnebly further noted she was concerned about shorting water and sewer. Mayor Pfaff said the garbage rate was right in there. The Association of Washington Cities state survey's average was \$33.80 with the town at \$26. The highest rate in the state was \$112, just for water. The sewer average rate was \$46.05 with the town at \$38 and the state high at \$156. Mark Young suggested the council bite the bullet. Larry Hunt agreed with this. Sharon Schnebly said taking it out of other places was not the solution. Other options considered included \$5,000 from reserves in 2013 and in 2014 with a \$1.50 rate increase in 2013 and 2014. Mark Young **MOVED** the garbage rate be increased by \$3.00 per month effective 2013. Larry Hunt seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously. Mayor Pfaff noted water and sewer were holding with the inflation factor, and that it was his fault he didn't notice the garbage fund.

Annie Pillers reported that the Building Inspector was asking for \$30 a month towards a cell phone as Palouse would no longer be providing one. It was confirmed the inspector gets an independent contractor fee of 75% of the permit fee. Council chose not to authorize the \$30 a-month expenditure.

Mayor Pfaff closed the public hearing at 7:39 pm and reconvened the regular council meeting.

Mark Young asked about the building going at one unit in the trailer court. The building inspector had been contacted. The clerk was asked to call the inspector back on this issue and to also invite him to the December 5th council meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Wind Turbines – Mayor Pfaff asked about the status of the wind turbine zoning and suggested council kick back to the planning commission, the issues of setbacks, height, etc. and let them decide and give their recommendations to council. The existing information was general, while the county's zoning regulations were specific. Council agreed to return this to the planning commission for recommendations.

2. 3rd Street ADA Ramps – Mayor Pfaff confirmed the concrete was poured today at the post office.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Garbage Truck on Private Drives - Larry Hunt discussed the private drive to Joan Wride's house and that the garbage truck backs into her area and it is tearing her property up. Larry took some gravel up a couple of weeks ago. It's very soft. He was going to talk with Perry about backing up the drive way or pull up and backing straight out. The other option mentioned was having the property owner bring the cans down to the street as going up her driveway is a convenience for her. Sharon noted maybe backing out was a safety issue in order not to hit something. It was agreed the garbage truck tears roads up and that it is leaving divots on 5th Street.

2. California Street Water Line Repair – Daymon Marple reported being contacted by the property owner of the Quonset hut on California where the water line repair was made. That area is pretty deep and has

sunk. It needs to have more gravel and dirt into it. Perry will be contacted about this.

FINANCIAL:

1. Approval of Checks: Sharon Schnebly **MOVED** to approve the following bills presented to council for payment. Mark Young seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Check Register #10706-10711 plus EFTPS	Payroll: \$6,684.84	
Check Register #10712-10715	Claims: \$2,272.41	TOTAL: \$8,957.25

FIRE DEPARTMENT: Council discussed the joint meetings with the Rural Fire District and the discussions of a joint board. Discussions will continue at the next Rural Fire District meeting on December 5th.

ADJOURNMENT: Larry Hunt **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 7:56 pm. Sharon Schnebly seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Jarrod Pfaff, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Annie Pillers, Clerk/Treasurer