

Town of Garfield
PUBLIC HEARING AND TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
July 9, 2008

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Jarrod Pfaff called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Jarrod Pfaff, Andrew Flodin, Larry Hunt, John Kuehner, and Rob Watkins.
Also present: Assistant Public Works Director Perry Brown; Clerk/Treasurer Annie Pillers; Police Chief, Jerry Neumann; and Officer Brian Dentler.

GUESTS: Brian Conklin, Jana Mathia–Whitman County Gazette, Patrick O'Neill, and Kevin Pickron.

PUBLIC HEARING-Revenue Sources 2009: The mayor opened the public hearing at 7:00 pm. He presented information on tax collections for the general fund for 2008 and 2009. He noted the current tax collection for 2008 is \$53,776. The town is proposing the 1% property tax increase which yields \$534, plus a 2.5% property tax increase for banked capacity not previously taken which generates \$1,337 and property taxes on any new construction. It was clarified the banked capacity is one- time. The mayor also discussed the proposed annual street levy, requesting \$55,000 at an estimated \$3.02 per \$1,000 valuation. There was no public comment or questions on the proposed revenue streams. The mayor closed the public hearing at 7:02 pm.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:

A. Patrick O'Neill – Whitman County Commissioner Candidate – District 2: Mr. O'Neill addressed the council, noting that he had filed for the District 2 commissioner position the first week of June. He is running against Jerry Finch. He took a moment to introduce himself and shared that he had a 35-year career in the airlines industry. He moved into Whitman County when his daughter was attending school at WSU. He grew up on a dairy farm in Wisconsin. He talked about wanting to improve communications between the commissioners and Whitman County residents, having commission meetings rotate locations around the county, providing better accountability, and developing a coalition between the county and town governments to improve services and reduce costs. He noted if elected, he would be attending town council meetings when possible.

SWEARING-IN NEW COUNCIL MEMBER: Mayor Pfaff sworn in new council member Andrew Flodin.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Robert Watkins **MOVED** the minutes of June 25, 2008, be approved as written. Larry Hunt seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT: Perry Brown reported:

1. Waterline Extension: The crew laid and buried 180 feet of pipe, including valves. They are at a standstill now. The developer has the price for the materials he will need to purchase.
2. Sidewalks: 2 blocks of sidewalk have been taken out to Spokane Street. They hope to get to the railroad tracks this week. They will need to cut pavement and put in curbs. They will be fixing pipes where they cross the sidewalk. There is a 4' fire hydrant that will be replaced with a 5' fire hydrant that is in stock.
3. Community Service: The community service workers completed painting the street curbs and painted stripes in the fire station to assist in backing in trucks. The concrete transition near

the library and alley was painted yellow. The curb stripes in front of the fire station are red to indicate no parking. The gazebo and picnic benches were painted today.

4. Public Safety Building Location: The new proposed location is 200' x 300'. No price has yet been determined.

5. Street Improvements: The crew is waiting until the paving crew is in town. Regarding the bridge at McGregor's, only the ends need to be redone. One side is from the end to the tracks and the other side is just a small transition area. When the paving company is in town they will talk with them about this and a patch on south hill and 8th and Adams. Perry noted the crack sealing around town has been done, tarred and sanded. It is anticipated the state will be coming soon. Perry confirmed 3rd Street from the clinic to the school will get chip sealed. No work was proposed for the downtown area, hoping to get a big grant.

6. Water meters: The cemetery has a meter. It was read last month and will be read this month. The fire station does not have a meter yet.

7. Park water valve: The valve appears to be working better. They still have been unable to locate it. Right now it is off because of a broken sprinkler at Gazebo. The crew will try to locate the valve before the summer is over.

8. Tire Recycling: Friday Perry will be taking a load of tires to Whitman County.

9. Ditch mower: The tractor parts came in for the ditch mower. It was filled with oil yesterday and should be read to use soon.

POLICE DEPARTMENT:

Chief Neumann provided council with the bi-monthly activity log, noting activity was slower in the last two week. He introduced the new officer Brian Dentler. Chief Neumann confirmed the junk car letters went out this week and folks have been given until the 16th or 26th. Council agreed this was the last notice and if folks didn't avail themselves to the free removal of vehicles, the cars would be ticketed and towed, if necessary. If a person signs up for the free county removal this fall, that's okay and the car can remain until then. Council talked asked about speed enforcement. Brian confirmed he had been issuing warnings so far.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Utility Rates Mayor Pfaff talked about the water, sewer and garbage funds and the current rate structure. He noted the rates are not keeping up with costs nor allowing for necessary reserves. He talked about possible increases of \$2 for water, \$1 to \$2 for sewer and \$3 for garbage. Suggestions included increasing the overage for both water and garbage, establishing a sliding scale based upon weight for garbage, and considering a water rate scale based upon conservation but not to discourage green lawns. Council noted the increase in fuel costs for garbage transport and talked putting a scale on the garbage truck. October or November was proposed as the target date for rate increases. Mayor Pfaff talked about how Garfield compares to other communities for both utility rates and levies. John Kuehner did not have an issue with the levies as people get to vote on those matters.

APPROVAL OF WARRANTS/TREASURER'S REPORT:

1. Local Government Investment Pool: Council gave consensus to have the mayor update the local government investment pool forms authorizing the new clerk-treasurer to conduct business for the town.

2. Utility Account: Council was updated about a discrepancy over a move out date for a utility customer. The city attorney was contacted and recommended not pursuing due to mitigating circumstances. Larry Hunt **Moved** not to pursue charges of \$165.22 for acct #551 due to a discrepancy over the move out date. John Kuehner seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

3. CDBG #4: Mayor Pfaff presented CDBG grant reimbursement #4 prepared by Progressive Engineering for the public safety building planning grant. Larry Hunt **MOVED** that the mayor be authorized to sign the public safety building study CDBG grant reimbursement request #4. Larry Hunt seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Farm Hydrant Use: Council agreed use of the farm hydrant could be used for public purposes by construction/paving firms using the already established rate. Perry Brown noted with the backflow device there was no concern with any backflow issues..

5. Recycle Center Grant: Annie noted she would be meeting with Whitman County and the DOE the next morning on the proposed \$9,500 recycling center grant for asphalt at the mixed metals recycling area. She confirmed the grant was a 75%/25% match.

Larry Hunt **MOVED** to approve the following bills presented to council for payment. Rob Watkins seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Warrant Register: #8542-8564 Claims: \$16,358.73, Payroll: \$4,921.14 TOTAL: \$21,279.87

ADJOURNMENT: Andrew Flodin **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m. Larry Hunt seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Jarrold Pfaff, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Annie Pillers, Clerk/Treasurer