

## MINUTES REGULAR SOAP LAKE CITY COUNCIL MEETING

September 6, 2023

### CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Agliano called the regular council meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

### ROLL CALL

Council Members Present: Bryson, DuPuy, Rushton, Slipper, Taylor, Wellein and Woodhouse.

City Staff Members Present: Police Chief Cox, Fire Chief Baker, City Planner Kovach, City Attorney Norton, Finance Clerk Treasurer Wade and Administrative Assistant Siebert.

### AGENDA ITEMS

- **REPORT OF CITY OFFICERS**
- **CONSENT AGENDA**
  - A. Regular Council Meeting Minutes – August 16, 2023
  - B. Claim EFTs & Claims #22624-22674 in the amount of \$183,028.13
  - C. Payroll EFTs & Claims #26372-26375 in the amount of \$28,208.82
- **MAYOR’S MESSAGE**
- **REPORTS OF STANDING/SPECIAL COMMITTEES**
- **PUBLIC COMMENT**
- **OLD BUSINESS**
  - A. City Hall Operating Hours
  - B. DRAFT: An Ordinance of the City Council of Soap Lake, Washington, Amending Sections 17.20.050 and 17.30.050 of the Soap Lake Municipal Code to Adopt Building Setbacks from Soap Lake Based on Historic Data (1078’ Elevation)
- **NEW BUSINESS**
  - A. Fence Permit – Variance
  - B. Cleaning Invoice 4342
  - C. Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Soap Lake and Friends of the Lower Grand Coulee
- **EXECUTIVE SESSION** – RCW 42.30.110(1)(i)- Memorandum of Understanding for Payroll Date Change: One for Police Department and One for Public Works – collective bargaining, contract negotiations
- **EXECUTIVE SESSION** – RCW 42.30.110(1)(g) – Performance of a public employee – City of Soap Lake employment Agreement for City Clerk – Finance Director
- **NEXT ORDINANCE #1339; NEXT RESOLUTION #1001**
- **COMMENTS**
- **ADJOURNMENT**

### REPORT OF CITY OFFICERS

**Fire Chief Baker** – Chief gave an update on recent grant monies that the department has received and what the monies would go toward. One FEMA grant in the amount of \$590,000.00 will be used for a full-time recruiter for the next 5 years, a new digital sign that will allow for public announcements, uniform upgrades and training expenses. Other grants received have been used to update computers, fire hoses and vehicles. As the 2023 budget is being reviewed and planning has started for the 2024 budget, some shortfalls have been identified. There will be a LID levy on the November ballot. If passed, the tax monies raised will bring the district back up to what the state allows for collection and help with budget funding for the next several years. Other programs helping with revenues are the EMS transport program and actively participating in state incidents as agency assists. The department responded to 63 incidents last month with 34 calls in the City. Of these calls, 24 were EMS calls with 18 transports. The department also completed 121 hours of training. They are hosting an Open House on September 23<sup>rd</sup> from 10 am – 2 pm, and all are invited to stop by.

**Police Chief Cox** – the department conducted interviews yesterday and will be making a conditional offer soon. Calls for welfare checks are up. The department used the Drone recently to help locate a lost hiker in the Lake Lenore area. Soap Lake PD will host the Trunk r Treat event again this year on Halloween from 5 pm – 7 pm in front of the PD and City Hall.

**City Planner Kovach** – New permits for August: 1 single family residence, 1 remodel and 2 re-roofing projects. The SMP will soon enter the 60-day public comment period and once this is completed will be sent to the Department of Commerce for review. The SMP should be ready to adopt near the end of December. Planner Kovach provided councilmembers with a handout showing calculations of different planning/building fees and how they are calculated.

**Volunteer Code Enforcement Officer Ross** – reviewed open and closed code enforcement cases.

**Finance Clerk Treasurer Wade** – said that training for the new employees was going well. The City’s website now includes a form for submitting public record requests. She is working on the end of the month numbers for the budget. And, the City received three reimbursements on grant monies totaling over \$440,000.00.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

**M/Taylor, S/Bryson**; to accept the consent agenda as presented. **Motion carried unanimously.** Councilmember DuPuy asked that the MOU’s for the payroll date change and the employment agreement be moved to executive sessions. It was agreed that these items would be moved to executive sessions.

### **MAYOR’S MESSAGE**

Mayor Agliano wanted to make a correction to her comments during the August 28, 2023 special meeting. She had said that the monies from permit fees go into the capital fund. However, the monies go into the general fund. She provided the “Job of a Councilmember” to the two new councilmembers. She requested that new business (A) Fence Permit be removed

from the agenda and be sent to City Planning Department first. She reminded residents that SLMC 8.24.130 and 8.21.090 state that the property owners are responsible for noxious weed control on their property, the side walk or gravel parking area in front of the property, and in the alley way. A reminder for the Prevention Coalition's survey: please go on-line and complete the survey. They need 100 residents to respond. This survey qualifies them for funding. And, lastly, the Mayor asked for volunteers to help serve on committees. There is a volunteer page on the City's website for more information.

### **REPORTS OF STANDING/SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

Economic Development Committee – Alex Kovach announced the next meeting is tomorrow at the Community and Senior Center at 1 PM.

Lake Liaison Committee – Councilmember Taylor gave a reminder for the public hearing for the ORW will be on September 19<sup>th</sup> at the Community and Senior Center. You can go to [thelake.org](http://thelake.org) to make a public comment until September 20<sup>th</sup>.

Councilmember Bryson said the last meeting for the Creative District was August 24<sup>th</sup>. A mural will be done downtown. If you would like to donate toward the cost, you can visit the Friends of the Lower Coulee website to submit a donation. She also attended a zoom meeting on short term rentals and research on this topic is ongoing.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Susan Carson – on behalf of the Chamber, she wanted to thank everyone that participated in the Moonlight Paddle event. And, a reminder that this is the last week that the Tourism Center will be open for the year. The Chamber is starting the planning for Winterfest Event.

Susan Carson, 114 Gladiola St – she is disappointed with City Staff that the sidewalk area on E Main has not been addressed.

Eileen Beckwith, 33 Dogwood N – she addressed concern over the behavior of Councilmember DuPuy during recent Council Meetings.

Thomas Paine, 626 Aster St S – he would like to see contact information for Councilmembers listed on the City's website. He questioned why the Public Works Supervisor was not in attending the Council Meetings. He referenced the out-of-control noxious weeds on the Samis owned properties around town and would like to see them maintained better. He does not agree with having City Hall closed on Fridays since they are full staffed.

Burr Beckwith, 33 Dogwood N – expressed his concern over the recent actions of Councilmember DuPuy during Council Meetings. He would like to see Council take action for Councilmember DuPuy challenging City Planner Kovach's competency.

Igor Lukashevich, 727 Aster St – he is a builder by trade and is disappointed in the recent fee hikes imposed by the City. He feels that there was a lack of communication from the City on the fee increase. He encouraged the City to keep their fees competitive with surrounding areas.

Judith Gorman, 207 Ginkgo St – She has witnessed volatility amongst Councilmembers and/or Mayors over many years of attending Council Meetings and does not feel that Councilmember DuPuy's actions went as far as others have in the past. She does feel that the fees charged for permits should be in line with what other Cities have in order to bring in

necessary revenue for the City's budget. She encouraged residents to give public comment on the ORW and support the effort to stop the degradation of the Lake water.

Ric Carlson, 227 Maple St N – expressed concern over what he heard took place during the last Council Meeting, with possible bullying by Councilmember DuPuy. He asked Councilmembers if they had considered what the impact of raising the permit fees would have on the area's contractors/builders.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

- A. City Hall Operating Hours – The Mayor explained that the training period was complete and she would like to reassess the open business hours for City Hall. She suggested City Hall to be open to the public from 9am – 4pm Monday through Friday, thus giving staff one hour in the morning and one hour in the afternoon to reconcile accounts (from 8-9 am and from 4-5 pm). **M/Rushton, S/Slipper**; move to have City Hall open to the public from 9 am – 4 pm Monday through Friday. **Motion passed.** Councilmembers Woodhouse, Wellein and DuPuy voted Nay. Mayor Agliano asked City Attorney Norton to amend the ordinance addressing City Hall business hours of operation. This amended ordinance will be brought back to Council at a later meeting for Council review and approval.
- B. DRAFT: An Ordinance of the City Council of Soap Lake, Washington, Amending Sections 17.20.050 and 17.30.050 of the Soap Lake Municipal Code to Adopt Building Setbacks from Soap Lake Based on Historic Data (1078' Elevation) – Councilmember Slipper addressed this extensively, stating that the drafted ordinance is unacceptable and challenged several of the “whereas” statements as unverifiable and incorrect. He asked that this item be tabled. **M/Slipper, S/Rushton**; to table discussion for this draft ordinance and the required scheduling of a public hearing. **Motion passed.** Councilmembers Taylor and DuPuy voted Nay.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Fence Permit – Variance- item removed from agenda.
- B. Cleaning Invoice 4342 – Mayor discussed the extra billing charged for cleaning feces from the West Beach Public Restroom. After Councilmembers discussion of all the vandalism and problems with this restroom, Mayor Agliano will address the billing with the contracted cleaning company. In the future, Council would like to be notified of vandalism and plumbing problems with photos being sent to City Staff at the time of discovery.
- C. Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Soap Lake and Friends of the Lower Grand Coulee – **M/Bryson, S/Taylor**; to approve the memorandum of understanding between the City of Soap Lake and Friends of the Lower Grand Coulee. **Motion passed unanimously.** This MOU is a step toward the future resolution needed for the continued development of the Soap Lake Creative District.

### **Executive Session:**

- A. RCW 42.30.110(1)(i)- Memorandum of Understanding for Payroll Date Change: One for Police Department and One for Public Works – collective bargaining, contract negotiations
- B. RCW 42.30.110(1)(g) – Performance of a public employee – City of Soap Lake employment Agreement for City Clerk – Finance Director  
 Start: 7:23 PM for 15 minutes  
 Extended 5 minutes  
 Extended 5 minutes  
 Extended 5 minutes  
 Closed: 7:53 PM  
 Action taken: **M/Bryson, S/Slipper**; motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding for Payroll Date Changes for the Police Department and Public Works staff. **Motion Failed.** Councilmembers Rushton, DuPuy, Woodhouse and Wellein voted Nay.  
 Action taken: **M/Bryson, S/Slipper**; motion to approve the City of Soap Lake Employment Agreement for City Clerk- Finance Director. **Motion passed.** Councilmembers Rushton, Woodhouse and DuPuy voted Nay.  
 \*\*\*\*\*City Attorney Norton asked Councilmembers to provide her with an explanation for not accepting the MOUs for the payroll date change so she could take this information back to the Teamster’s Union and renegotiate the MOU. After discussion, Councilmember Rushton expressed interest in changing her vote. Mayor Agliano asked for a motion to revote.  
**M/Bryson, S/Taylor**; motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding for Payroll Date Changes for the Police Department and Public Works staff. **Motion passed.** Councilmember Woodhouse voted Nay. Councilmember DuPuy abstained.

**Next Ordinance #1339; Next Resolution #1001**

**COMMENTS**

Councilmember Slipper visited the beach area after the Holiday weekend and was pleasantly surprised by the new public works employee busily cleaning the area.

Councilmember Bryson also spoke with this new public works employee and commented on how nice he was.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**M/Wellein, S/Bryson**; move to adjourn at 8:06 PM. **Motion carried unanimously.**

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Michelle Agliano, Mayor

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Jody Siebert, Administrative Assistant