

MINUTES REGULAR SOAP LAKE CITY COUNCIL MEETING

November 15, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pro Tempore Taylor called the regular council meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

ROLL CALL

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

City Staff Members Present: Police Chief Cox, City Planner Kovach, City Attorney Norton and Administrative Assistant Siebert.

Mayor Agliano attended.

AGENDA ITEMS

- **REPORT OF CITY OFFICERS**
- **CONSENT AGENDA**
 - A. Regular Council Meeting Minutes – November 1, 2023
 - B. Budget Meeting Minutes – November 8, 2023
 - C. Special Meeting- Emergency Council Meeting Minutes- November 13, 2023
 - D. Claim EFTs & Claims #22805-22833 in the amount of \$86,342.89
 - E. Payroll EFTs & Claims #26392-26399 & 22803 in the amount of \$32,944.72
 - F. A Resolution Declaring Certain Personal Property Surplus and Authorizing the Sale and or Disposal Thereof
- **MAYOR'S MESSAGE**
- **PUBLIC HEARING**
 - A. 2024 Preliminary Budget
 - B. Ad Velorem Tax
- **REPORTS OF STANDING/SPECIAL COMMITTEES**
- **PUBLIC COMMENT**
- **OLD BUSINESS**
- **NEW BUSINESS**
 - A. An Ordinance Fixing the Amount of Taxes to be Levied in the Sum of \$161,580.43 and Levying the Same Upon All Taxable Property, Both Real and Personal, in the City of Soap Lake, Washington, for Collection in 2024
 - B. FY23 COPS Grant
 - C. Range Dues – Ephrata Sportsmen's Association
 - D. WEMS Grant & Acceptance of Interagency Agreement
 - E. Budget proposal
 - F. Changing Authorized Signatures on Banner Bank Account
- **NEXT ORDINANCE #1341; NEXT RESOLUTION #1003**
- **COMMENTS**
- **ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Pro Tempore Taylor asked that items (A) and (B) under Old Business be removed from the agenda and add items (E) and (F) to the agenda for this evening.

CONSENT AGENDA

M/Bryson, S/Wellein; to accept the consent agenda as presented with items under Old Business removed and items under New Business added. **Motion carried unanimously.**
Surplus resolution is numbered 2023-1003.

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Mayor Pro Tempore Taylor thanked the Public Works Employees for their hard work getting the lift station repaired in a timely manner. She feels confident in the repairs that were made. She announced that Finance Director Wade's last day of employment with the City will be tomorrow, November 16th.

PUBLIC HEARING

A. 2024 Preliminary Budget

Opened at 5:35 PM

Mayor Pro Tempore Taylor presented the preliminary budget with a 5% increase in revenues and 5% decrease in expenditures across the board.

Comments received from two residents:

Judith Gorman thanked Councilmembers for taking time to review this budget and was hopeful that they will dive into the details

Thomas Page wanted Councilmembers to table the budget until next year and does not believe raising revenue should be passed along to taxpayers.

Closed at 5:42 PM

B. Ad Velorem Tax

Opened at 5:43 PM

Mayor Pro Tempore Taylor explained that this is the process for the City to accept collected tax revenue from Grant County and will be formally accepted by ordinance.

No public comment

Closed at 5:44 PM

REPORTS OF STANDING/SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Councilmember Bryson reminded everyone of the meeting tomorrow. The results of the survey will be presented and discussed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Susan Carson, on behalf of the Chamber – reviewed the schedule for Winterfest activities coming up on December 2nd.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

- A. An Ordinance Fixing the Amount of Taxes to be Levied in the Sum of \$161,580.43 and Levying the Same Upon All Taxable Property, Both Real and Personal, in the City of Soap Lake, Washington, for Collection in 2024 – **M/Wellein, S/Rushton**; to approve the ordinance fixing the amount of taxes to be levied in the sum of \$161,580.43 and levying the same upon all taxable property, both real and personal, in the City of Soap Lake, Washington, for collection in 2024. **Motion carried unanimously.** This is the ad valorem tax and becomes ordinance number 2023-1341.
- B. FY23 COPS Grant – **M/Rushton, S/Bryson**; to accept the FY23 COPS grant and authorize Chief Cox and Mayor Pro Tempore Taylor to sign. **Motion carried unanimously.** This grant reimburses the City for officer payroll. It is for a total of \$125,000.00 over three years.
- C. Range Dues – Ephrata Sportsmen’s Association – **M/Wellein, S/DuPuy**; to accept the contact and authorize Chief Cox to sign. **Motion carried unanimously.** This contract is for 2024 and cost is \$450.00.
- D. WEMS Grant & Acceptance of Interagency Agreement – **M/Bryson, S/Woodhouse**; to accept the grant for \$45,000.00 from the Washington State Traffic Safety Commission and authorize Chief Cox to sign the grant and agreement. **Motion carried unanimously.** This grant can be used to reimburse officer payroll for participating in WTSC programs such as seatbelt patrols, soft driving emphasis and DUI emphasis.
- E. Budget proposal – Mayor Pro Tempore Taylor had discussed this proposal earlier during the introduction of the public hearing for the preliminary budget.
- F. Changing Authorized Signatures on Banner Bank Account – **M/Bryson, S/Woodhouse**; authorize the removal of Finance Director Ruth Wade from any current City of Soap Lake Banner Bank accounts effective on November 17, 2023 and adding Councilmember Allen DuPuy and Deputy Clerk Brooky Olson as authorized signers on any current City of Soap Lake Banner Bank accounts effective November 17, 2023. **Motion carried unanimously.** These changes are necessary due to changes in staff employment and current election results.

REPORT OF CITY OFFICERS

Fire Chief Baker- thanked everyone for supporting Proposition #1 on the recent November ballot. This will allow the department to upgrade fleet, repair/upgrade their building and update the website. They are in the planning stages for their 2024 budget and their five-year strategic plan. In October they responded to 53 incidents of which 28 were in the City and 25 of those were EMS calls resulting in 23 transports. They also handled 1 gas leak, 1 vehicle fire and 1 smoke check which was deemed an illegal burn. The EMTs completed 164 training hours. 545 incidents year to date.

City Planner Kovach – explained the need to review and update the City’s Comprehensive Plan. Keeping this current allows the City to apply and qualify for grant funding of projects. He outlined 3 possible options for this process: 1) have a third-party consultant review with a

possible \$30,000.00 cost to the City; 2) have the consulting firm currently working on the SMP update to review and give suggestions for updates with a possible cost of \$7,500.00 to the City. This process could take longer than the first option; or 3) have the City Planner review and update with the help from committee members. This option would take the longest.

His hope is to have the plan reviewed and updated for Council to accept by the end of 2024.

Chief Cox- Officer Blair will be leaving the Department at the beginning of December to take an offer from GCSO. The new hire will start mid-December with an academy date of early January. These staffing changes will leave the department running with three Officers and Chief Cox to cover the shifts. There was a string of damage and graffiti recently. Suspects were caught on camera and will try to be identified.

A fundraiser for Shop-with-a-Cop will take place during December 5th at Busy Bean.

AED's were purchased through surplus to give the department 8 and the Fire Department and additional 5.

Public Works- during the recent failure of lift station no. 2, employees worked together with the contractor to make repairs quickly and efficiently. The City also received support from the City of Ephrata and local contractors.

Next Ordinance #1342; Next Resolution #1004

COMMENTS

Councilmember Taylor was glad to see the lift station repaired quickly. She said that the City was able to get information out quickly to residents via social media, however, many residents do not receive their news this way. She asked that local organizations step in during times of emergencies and help contact residents with important notifications.

Councilmember Wellein reminded everyone about the upcoming "Gathered in Gratitude" event this coming Sunday evening at McKay's.

Councilmembers Slipper, DuPuy and Bryson all thanked long serving Councilmember Rushton for her decades of commitment to the City of Soap Lake as a Councilmember.

ADJOURNMENT

M/Rushton, S/Woodhouse; move to adjourn at 6:23 PM. Motion carried unanimously.

Leslie Taylor, Mayor Pro Tempore

Jody Siebert, Administrative Assistant