



Weston City Council
Minutes

Lewis County Court House
117 Center Avenue
February 3rd, 2025

Present: Mayor Kim Harrison-Edwards, Councilpersons, Sherry Rogers, Steven White, Debbie Gump, Herb Curtis, Interim City Manager and Finance Director Joe Solberg, City Clerk Judy Piercy, City Attorney Brian Bailey, Chief Mike Posey, Chief Jimmy Suttle, Building/Code/Zoning Enforcement Officer Marty Lewis, Street Commissioner Mike Starett, Sanitary Director Dee Evans, and City Engineer Nate Stansberry.

Call to Order/Moment of Silence: Mayor Harrison-Edwards asked for a moment of silence then called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance: Mayor Harrison-Edwards asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Visitors Section (5 Minute Time Limit)

Tammy Lovett from McGary came to inform the council of a cat issue on her street. Ms. Lovett said that someone is taking the cats from Arby's parking lot and Holden & Son's Amish Buildings parking lot and dumping them off on her street. Ms. Lovett told the council that some of the cats are injured, and does not think they are being fed. The people in the neighborhood are having to clean off their porches and pick up trash because of the cats Ms. Lovett stated. Building/Code/Zoning Enforcement Officer Lewis stated he was at the parking lot of Arby's several evenings and did not see anyone picking up cats or feeding the cats. Building/Code/Zoning Enforcement Officer Lewis stated that with the freezing weather you cannot trap cats because a wild animal could be trapped and freeze.

Presentation: No presentation was given.

Approval of Minutes: Councilwoman Rogers made a motion seconded by Councilman White to **approve** the minutes on the Regular Session meeting on January 9th, 2025.
Motion carried.

Receive and File Reports of City Boards, Commissions and Outside Agencies

Report: Mayor Harrison-Edwards read aloud that dates and time of the various meetings, along with the vacancies that needed to be filled. Councilwoman Rogers made a motion seconded by Councilman White to **approve** Robert Darling and Robert Kuhn applications for the Tree Commission. **Motion carried.**

Sanitary Board of Director Report: Director Evans provided the council with her report and informed the council of the following:

- Update on the Phase II project she spoke with the engineer today and after receiving comments from the Sanitary Board he is ready to submit to the DEP.
- The billing sent out in January was \$155,057.76 and the Collections were \$165,528.06.
- 74 terminations for water were submitted and due to the weather conditions, they did not get terminations done in the timeline. Several bills were paid and will resubmit the remaining for termination.
- The Sanitary Board will meet Monday, February 10th, 2025 at 4:30 p.m.

Mayor Harrison-Edwards asked if anything stood out in the comments we supplied to the engineer. The Sanitary Board Director Evans said she did not think so, other than there were some places we thought there should be a sidewalk and thought a trash bin was needed.

Department Reports

Finance Manager Solberg provided the council with all bank statements, Profit and Loss Statements from July 2024 through January 2025, Vacant Structure Fund, and the Check Detail List for January 2025. Finance Manager Solberg gave the council an update on the Sales tax coming in at \$148,000, which the goal is \$153,000 but still on track for the year. The council was provided a copy of the Salt Invoices that were paid with the total of less than \$5000, but the total so far is \$14,000. Finance Director Solberg spoke with the State Auditor about the salt budget which has gone over budget and he was told to document the unusual weather that caused the increase and continue to take care of the streets. Councilwoman Gump made a motion seconded by Councilman White to **approve** moving \$300 from the General Fund to Vacant Structure Fund. **Motion carried.** Councilman White made a motion seconded by Councilwoman Rogers to **approve** the January 2025 Check Detail Report. **Motion carried.** Councilwoman Gump questioned the tonnage rate between JF Allen and Shriver Trucking. Street Commissioner Starett explained that Shriver Trucking is more because he loads the salt and then unloads to store then loads again when we purchase. JF Allen does not have to do that.

Street Department January Report was in the packet and Street Commissioner Starett informed the council of the following:

- his employees worked numerous hours because of the weather, and some are sick from being out in the cold.
- Main and North River has been cold patched.
- Spoke with Finance Manager Solberg and showed him pictures of roads that are in bad shape and down to the mud.

Police Department January Report was in the packet. Chief Posey informed the council that a couple of dog barking citations were given. Chief Posey stated that it being cold helped this department out except for accidents. Councilwoman Rogers commented that the Police Department responded to a lot of accidents.

Fire Department January Report was in the packet and informed the council of the following:

- It was a busy month for the Fire Department, and they put almost a thousand miles of the fire truck.
- Responded to two structure fires, one at Jackson Mill and one at Cove Lick. Councilwoman Rogers also commented of the numerous accidents the Fire Department answered. Councilwoman Rogers asked how the training went last week and was it beneficial. Chief Suttle responded that it was a long forty hours, and he thought it was helpful.

Building/Code/Zoning Report was in the packet and Building/Code/Zoning Enforcement Officer Lewis informed the council of the following:

- Sent out an email last week to the council about the trapping of seventeen vultures, then the next day trapped three more.
- The Mowing Bid ad will come out in the paper this Wednesday, and the Demolition Bids are already out. Councilwoman Rogers asked about having a Special Session and Building/Code/Zoning Enforcement Officer replied February 19th. Interim City Manager Solberg stated it is on the agenda later and we are hoping for the 19th of February.

The City Attorney Bailey informed the council that he is working on an alley closure in Shadybrook and will bring it to the council at the next Special Session Meeting or the Regular Session Meeting in March.

The City Clerk Report was in the packet.

The Interim City Manager Joe Solberg informed the council of the following:

- Trying to keep everyone updated by email
- Snow removal/sidewalks we have learned a lot about this, this season. This is something the City of Weston has done in the past; it snows then melts in a few days. Had a couple of issues with this because we did not have manpower nor equipment when it hit. The manpower was dedicated to keeping the streets clean. The Street Department did go to Salem to purchase a snowblower, and the AmeriCorps employees went out to clean the sidewalks.
- This winter's impact on the budget is not going to be confined to salt, it will hit in the spring as well.

- The Sanitary Board merger has made a lot of progress this month. We are moving things around at the city building and they should be moved in by the end of February.
- By email I have let you know about the Court Street extension and no further information today.
- Some talks have been floating around, and the city has only one federal funded program, which is the AmeriCorps Program. There is some uncertainty this month about how funding was going to work. The City submits invoices to the State, the State then submits them to the Federal Government. The first communication was that the Federal Government was putting a pause on all federal funding, then they stated next no pause was put on federal funding. Communication now is saying there is no pause but anticipating delays. The delays are not going to be big enough to lose sleep over. We have no reason to think we will not continue to receive funding, and it is not enough funding to hurt us for a few months.
- The City Engineer has been helpful this month working on project delivery with the Riverfront Project and the Culture Center.

Councilwoman Rogers likes the receiving the weekly reports. Councilwoman Gump asked about the streetlights out at the Robert L. Bland Middle School which needs attention with the kids crossing the street at nighttime. Councilwoman Gump stated it was a safety issue. City Engineer Stansberry responded to the street light situation at the Middle School and stated that they have been working on the issue for months. Councilwoman Gump would like to have a new light put in and not the old ones that goes out quickly, it is a safety issue.

City Engineer Stansberry informed the council of the following:

- Received the shapefile for the street light poles and will make a map of our poles showing where they are located. Having the locations of the streetlights for the field guys, they will be able to mark the actual streetlights. We will determine the wattage needed for the streetlights after the map is completed, this is still work in progress.

Councilwoman Gump thought was to have the intersections brighter in the downtown area.

City Engineer Stansberry stated there will be a cost that goes with the different wattages. Councilwoman Rogers agreed with Councilwoman Gump that the intersection should be brighter. However, in Kittsonville the light at the intersection is bright which is in a residential area, so we need to watch the residential areas Councilwoman Rogers stated.

Building/Code/Zoning Enforcement Officer Lewis said that he met with Mon Power last week and was told that different wattages could be provided in different areas. Building/Code/Zoning Enforcement Officer Lewis suggested that after the mapping is complete a general rule could be made for residential areas

at 50 watts, mid major intersections at 90 watts and the intersections at 130 watts.

- Going back and forth with conversations for the Riverfront Project.
- Will be meeting with Region 7 this Friday to discuss the environmental review that was required.
- Putting a grant together to submit to the state for the Cultural Center, the due date is March 31st.
- Read the email from HubCap about the Federal Funding and the city will pay the total amount and HubCap will reimburse us.
- Met with Ray Smith, the director of the Economic Development Authority today and talked about trails trying to incorporate with the Riverfront Project for long-term trail plans.
- Looking at the RAISE Grant, it was a good opportunity, but felt we do not have anything developed enough to benefit us. Councilwoman Gump commented next year, and City Engineer Stansberry agreed if available.
- The Hydraulic Study for Sixth Street was received, going to be completed this month.

• Councilwoman Gump made a motion seconded by Councilman White to **approve** all department reports. **Motion carried.**

Old Business

- **Consideration of Ventrac Tractor 4500 Series Rough Cut Mower Finale**
Quote: Interim City Manager Solberg recommended to table the Consideration of Ventrac Tractor 4500 Series indefinitely due to the budget. Councilman Curtis made a motion seconded by Councilwoman Gump to **table indefinitely** the Consideration of Ventrac Tractor 4500 Series Rough Cut Mower. **Motion carried.**
- **Consideration For Ordinance 2025-01 Assistant City Manager Position:** Interim City Manager Solberg recommendation to the council was to table indefinitely the Consideration for Ordinance 2025-01 Assistant City Manager Position. Councilwoman Gump made a motion seconded by Councilman Curtis to **table indefinitely** Ordinance 2025-01 Assistant City Manager Position. **Motion carried.**
- **Consideration Handbook Policy Update Conflict of Interest:** The council was provided with a handout for the Handbook Policy highlighted in red was the changes. Interim City Manager Solberg explained to the council this was a clarification of the conflict-of-interest policy. The change was not a substantial change; it only clarifies that a conflict could exist. Councilwoman Gump asked if the city has checked with Susan Deniker about the change. City Attorney Bailey

said he has not spoken with her about this change. Interim City Manager Solberg stated the reason we have not talked to her was just a price issue. This was a simple clarification and with the wisdom of the City Manager and City Attorney at that time it was done in-house. Mayor Harrison-Edwards asked if there was a conversation with another attorney about this change. City Attorney Bailey stated that it was a general conversation, not necessarily about a specific change of conflict-of-interest of this nature or whether it was feasible or doable. Councilman Curtis was surprised by the word “ordinary” being used, it is such a board word. City Attorney Bailey said that we can engage Susan Deniker if necessary. City Engineer Stansberry spoke to the change and the intension was we did not want to create anything extraordinary or a special condition. Councilman Curtis stated that when it comes to discipline or termination of an employee, we must have a specific structure to where it is even across the board. One situation could be ordinary and the next could become out of the ordinary. City Engineer Stansberry commented that this will bring the employee back to the employee handbook. City Engineer Stansberry gave an example, if two employees were hired and a conflict of interest cannot be avoided the remedy would be to terminate both employees. This will put emphasis on the employee reporting a potential conflict of interest. Councilwoman Rogers made a motion seconded by Councilman Curtis to **table** the Handbook Policy Update of Conflict of Interest until this matter is reviewed from Steptoe and Johnson. **Motion carried.**

New Business

- **Consideration of the Confirming Date for Special Session to Award Demolition Bids and Mowing Bids:** The council agreed to have a Special Session meeting on February 19th, 2025 at 4:30 p.m. for the awarding of bids.
- **Consideration of Kimely Horn Contract Changes:** Interim City Manager Solberg explained to the council that nothing has changed except they would like the City of Weston to pay the full contract up front. The City of Weston is paying \$1,800 and Hubcap is paying \$20,500. It will take longer for Hubcap to get their money from the federal government and the vendors would like to be paid now. Councilman Curtis made a motion seconded by Councilwoman Gump to **approve** to pay the Kimely Horn Contract in full and Hubcap to reimburse the City of Weston. **Motion carried.**
- **Consideration of Discussion of Cliff Street Legal Issues with City Attorney (Executive Session):** Councilwoman Gump made a motion seconded by Councilwoman Rogers to **enter** executive session at 6:54 p.m. **Motion carried.** Councilwoman Gump made a motion seconded by Councilman White to **exit** executive session at 7:22 p.m. **Motion carried.** No action was taken.

Reports of City Council



Mayor Kim Harrison-Edwards appreciated everyone that came to the meeting with Walmart and would like to thank JP Alkire for attending, it was nice to have someone young to participate and he added a lot to the meeting. We have heard nothing from their officials yet, but it was a wonderful day to showcase a lot of things in Weston.

Ward I, Sherry Rogers, thanked everyone for their hard work at the city, whether it is snowing or whether it is not. Councilwoman Rogers thanked the Street Department, Police Department, and the Fire Department for all the long hours they put in and for Building/Code/Zoning Enforcement Officer Lewis for stepping in to help. Councilwoman Rogers informed that Sweet Espresso is having a poetry reading, and the Chocolate Fest is this Saturday, and St. Paul's is having an indoor yard sale from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., the yard sale was a huge success last year for St. Paul's. Councilwoman Rogers stated that the Arts Council is planning some interesting things for the spring and there is a drawing class as well coming up.

Ward II, Steven White thanked everyone for their hard work and Street Commissioner Starett and the Street Department for the long hours they put in keeping the streets clear. Councilman White thought it seems like Interim City Manager Solberg and City Engineer Stansberry are doing well in your new positions and keeping us up to date is helpful. Councilman White appreciates everything everyone does especially for the winter storms.

Ward III, Debbie Gump thanked everyone at the city for all that they do. Councilwoman Gump said that the Museum of American Glass will be holding the Chocolate Fest, Saturday, February 8th at 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Councilwoman Gump explained that this is the main fundraiser for the glass museum, and it helps pay the bills and keeps the lights on. Councilwoman Gump is looking forward to the demolition of our unwanted vacant structures that we have out and the need to get rid of the blite. Councilwoman Gump is looking forward seeing what the LRA can do with the property they acquired, and the city will continue moving forward. Mayor Harrison-Edwards commented that the Museum of American are in need of volunteers because some of their volunteers are having health issues. Mayor Harrison-Edwards stated the glass museum has created such a stellar event as it would be a travesty to see it end.

Ward IV, Herb Curtis thanked all the city staff for their hard work and for the long hours the Street Department put in clearing the streets. Councilman Curtis thanked Building/Code/Zoning Enforcement Officer Lewis for his work for the demolition and let him know that he did receive the disconnects for the gas lines for the properties. Councilman Curtis thanked Interim City Manager Solberg for doing a great job and wished the City Engineer Stansberry well, will expect lots of drawings from him.

Adjournment



Councilman Curtis made a motion seconded by Councilwoman Gump to **adjourn** at 7:29 p.m. **Motion carried.**

Attest

Mayor, Kim Harrison-Edwards

City Clerk, Judy Piercy