

UNION CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
Monday, March 9, 2020 - 7:00 p.m.
Leonard Almquist Council Chambers, 342 S. Main St, Union, OR 97883

This meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m.

Roll Call: Councilor Leslie McMillan, Councilor Brian McDowell, Councilor Jay Blackburn, Mayor Leonard Flint, Councilor John Farmer, Councilor Susan Hawkins, Student Liaison Emilee Freeman, and City Administrator Doug Wiggins.

Mayor Flint added these items under new business: d. 2020-07 resolution e. farmers market, F appointment to Planning Commission.

There was not any public comment on agenda items.

Under correspondence, Mayor Flint stated we haven't received any applications for the vacant city council position, we hope that the word will spread, and we will get some new applicants.

Next, under old business was Ordinance 559, Vacation of Street from unfinished business, October 2013. Councilor Blackburn recuses himself. Councilor Hawkins read ordinance. Councilor Farmer motioned to approve ordinance. Councilor Hawkins second, motion passed with four yes votes.

The next item on the agenda was new business which began with Resolution 2020-05 Water/Sewer Rates adjustments. Councilor Hawkins read resolution. Councilor McDowell motioned to approve. Councilor Hawkins second. Councilor Blackburn stated we haven't had an increase in the last 3 years. We feel this is the right thing and not in excess. Motion passed with five yes votes.

The next item under new business was Resolution 2020-06 Parks Local Government Grant. Councilor Hawkins read resolution. Councilor Hawkins motioned to approve. Councilor Farmer second. CA Wiggins stated the grant is about \$13,000, with about \$3,000 coming out of our pocket. Councilor Blackburn stated this goes along with the school and the Ford Family Foundation. Motion passed with five yes votes.

The next item was the City Attorney Contract. CA Wiggins stated there are no changes other than the length the contract is effective. Councilor Farmer motioned to approve. Councilor McDowell second. Motion passed with five yes votes.

The next item was 2020-07 Resolution to create a bank account for the Friends of the Historic Union Community Hall to hold fundraising monies for the purchase of a building for a Community Hall. Councilor Hawkins read the resolution. Councilor Blackburn motioned to approve resolution. Councilor McMillan second. CA Wiggins stated I was approached by their committee they are looking at purchasing the Methodist church and making it a community hall. They have started their process to become a non-profit. This is just to get them started. Time is of the essence on this. I think two years is fair time to get this created. Terra Richter 101 E Bryan Union stated we got 175 signatures from the community asking to purchase church. We have

collected \$6,500 in earnest money. Our next step is to make an offer to purchase, we need to get other steps done. There are lots of ideas to make sure it is fully funded. The occupancy of the building is about 300. Council asked if this will have conflict with other businesses in town. Terra Richter answered no, I don't think so, this venue will be very unique. Motion passed with five yes votes.

The next item under new business is the purchase of city property by the school district. Mayor Flint asked Council for their opinion on the sale of city property and if it should be gifted. Councilor McMillan stated I would sell it at tax value. Councilor McDowell stated I would sell it at tax value. Councilor Blackburn stated I would like the city to gift it. Councilor Farmer stated I would sell it for less than \$50,000 or less than tax value. I would also consider gifting half of it. Councilor Hawkins stated I would offer it at tax value. Council and staff discussed the ODOT property that city was looking at purchasing.

CA Wiggins stated that property was given to ODOT. There used to be a clause that it would be given back to the city but that was removed. They are trying to see if the state will honor the clause about gifting. We would be responsible for cleaning up the lead and underground tank. Mayor Flint it is the citizens property, we are elected to look out for our citizens. We want to do the best for the citizens of this town. I would sell it at tax value. Mayor Flint stated Council's feelings in this matter will be taken into consideration during negotiations.

The next item under new business was the Farmers Market. CA Wiggins stated I was approached about getting a farmer's market started this year. They were hoping for some seed money. Andrea Malmburg 1782 S Main St Union stated we have several people working on this. We went to a meeting in La Grande, to get an idea of what we needed to do. We want to have it in the park every Friday from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. We have fantastic gardeners here. It is a wonderful way for people to get together and celebrate our town. Much discussion is had about the directive, funding, and who they are associated with. Council has concerns about liability insurance. We are just getting this started. Council felt they need information before we give money out. They started under economic development. Council discussed the donation already given to Economic Development. Donna Beverage 57843 High Valley Road stated I think it could go through the Union Chamber of Commerce as an entity. We can work with them. Councilor Hawkins motioned to table this. Councilor Farmer second.

The last item under new business, Mayor Flint appointed a new member to the Planning Commission. Samn Diller is appointed to the planning commission. Samn Diller stated I moved here in 2018. I am ready to serve.

The next item on tonight's agenda was the consent agenda. The items were minutes February 10, 2020, Regular Council Meeting, Minutes February 10, 2020, Work Session, Minutes February 24, 2020, Work Session Goal Setting, and Vouchers for February. There is consent.

Under the City Council Working Committee Updates there was a written report for Economic Development. The City Charter is still being worked on in work sessions.

Under informational items CA Wiggins stated there are a few applications for March in Planning. The Buffalo Flats Project had no new updates.

On the next item on the agenda the City Administrator/Public Works Report CA Wiggins stated I just sent off stuff to get approved to work on the house from SHPO. The ambulance should be done by the end of March we came in at \$166,000. The gurney system is usually \$42,000 I got them down to \$34,000. The ambulance should be in use by mid-April.

Finally, under Public Comment, Mike Berry a candidate for County Commissioner stated I am winding up a 30-year career with ODOT. I was born and raised in Lakeview, Oregon. We ran sheep, now we run cattle. I am a geologist and I was the local agency liaison with ODOT. I was a fire fighter; I have a large resume with a lot of experience. I want our kids to grow up and stay here. Thank you for your time.

Donna Beverage a candidate for County Commissioner stated we have a new person in charge of golf course in Union, we are having a chamber meeting on Thursday at 5 p.m. at the golf course for a meet and greet and we plan on improving communications about the golf course. We are doing the 4th of July in Union again. We want to continue building our relationship. I would like to continue as a county commissioner because I have a lot of projects still to finish but I have helped three businesses expand and helped to get a road paved.

Bill Miller candidate for sheriff stated I worked for the sheriff's office for 13 years, I am an air force veteran. I went into the timber industry after the air force. Then, I decided to make a career change, and I went into government and got a job in the prison. I worked for the city of Elgin, I was on the drug task force and major crimes team, and swat team. I trained others. I firmly believe I can do this. I feel I have the leadership skills. I would like to make a task force for all small cities in Union County. I want to work on the drug issue and get the reserves back, I want to go a different direction.

Cody Bowen sheriff candidate stated I grew up in Union County, I worked for Les Schwab. I have management experience. I was recruited for the reserve program, that program is a necessity. I am a full-time patrol deputy. We handle all crimes and I was trained by good officers. I jumped on the opportunity to be the school resource officer in La Grande. I wanted them to know that I am always available. I know we can do things better. I want to start a cadet program. I want to focus on relationships, we will have safer communities.

Shane Rollins a candidate for sheriff stated I was born and raised in the County, I did national guard, marine corps. I have experience in criminal investigations, military police, and I have managerial experience. I would like to lead and help this community. I know how to communicate with many entities, I am retired and I care about our community. I loved growing up here. Things are kind of going South with the drugs. I am a new face, and I want to bring in new ideas. I want to get a handle on the drug problem.

Ralph Riomondo stated this is going to be a hard vote.

Lastly, under Upcoming Meetings and Suggestions Councilors suggested looking at our nuisance ordinance, weed ordinance, and adopt rules and regulations for Councilors.

This meeting adjourned 9:05 p.m.

Approved: _____
Mayor, Leonard Flint

Attest: _____
City Administrator/Recorder, Doug Wiggins