

**UNION CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES**  
**Monday, November 9, 2020 – 6:00 P.M.**  
**Leonard Almquist Council Chambers, 342 S. Main St, Union, OR 97883**

This meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m.

Roll Call: Councilor Leslie McMillan, Councilor Brian McDowell, Councilor Jay Blackburn, Mayor Leonard Flint, Councilor Susan Hawkins, Councilor John Farmer absent, Councilor Terra Richter, Student Liaison Riley Later, and City Administrator Doug Wiggins.

Coy Wilde has a medical condition and will not be wearing a mask.

The first item on tonight's agenda was the City Surplus Sale of Real Property Update.

CA Wiggins stated on the old public works shed, I spoke to Carter Wells earlier and he said the contract is with their attorney. The intent is all there. They haven't heard from their attorney yet. There isn't any new information on the street property.

The next item was a Proposed Renewal of the Grande Ronde Enterprise Zone. CA Wiggins said if we are going to stay in the Enterprise Zone we need to make a decision at our next meeting. I included information on it for you to review. We are agreeing that there will be tax savings to new businesses. It applies to all of Union. It is for Hotel, Motel, and Destination Resorts. It also leaves it open for the cities to deal on utilities. We need to pass the resolution tonight in the business meeting for things to move forward. I don't know if a bed and breakfast is included. You would have to prove it if it was a destination resort. The cost is agreeing to lose property tax for up to 5 years. Business Oregon has the specific definitions. It applies to new business only.

Council discussed the benefits and problems that may arise for businesses that apply for this enterprise zone. We are just a member of it, decisions are made at the county level and in Business Oregon.

Dick Middleton 10<sup>th</sup> Street stated if you're not in this program the county would not go along with not charging property tax would they. On the county side. So, you wouldn't be able to offer a business anything.

Also, on tonight's agenda was the Water Rate Study Update. Mayor Flint stated no one likes rate increases. The study was done for water and sewer. The new accounting system revealed that we are out of balance on expenditure versus income. We can't transfer money between water and sewer per state law. We understand the cost impacts to the community, and we need to do this by a minimal rate increase. I don't know how else to do it.

Councilor McDowell said this makes sense. This seems reasonable. I didn't see where a bell curve was used to gauge customer usage. I would like to be precise and maybe use a base rate broken into three tiers.

Councilor Blackburn stated we need to soften the blow for the users who use a lot more. The change is not much, understand we have to be transparent to the public. I think it is a good thing to do it over years.

CA Wiggins said do you change it in a year, or over many years. I am not in for the big shock factor, I thought it would be best to ease into it. That way we are learning what you use.

Councilor Hawkins stated I think it's best to phase it out for our residents. I think this has conservation in it. Council also discussed how this would impact fixed income individuals.

Coy Wilde said if people were to install incinerator toilets it would save water, you could supply the toilets liners, cleaners, you would be the first city to say we don't have a sewer problem.

Councilor Blackburn stated this is really 100% increase in water but getting less. This will affect 65% of users, let's look at 750 cubic feet and phase after that. That is a really big deal for a lot of people.

Mayor Flint and Councilor Blackburn discussed the increase and the pros and cons of each side, both the consumer and the cost to provide utility.

CA Wiggins stated you're almost looking at 100% increase to get where we need to be. Council discussed different rates structures. Staff discussed that you could charge more for the overage rate and less for the base rate.

CA Wiggins said I can get these numbers run and get you answers on different rate structures.

Councilor McDowell stated we should ask for a template that helps to determine the rate increases yearly.

Councilor Blackburn said before water and sewer were all in one account, now we see where we are off.

Coy Wilde stated sewer rate is based off of water usage.

Due to running out of time before the Regular Council Meeting the following items were not discussed: Weed Ordinance and COVID-19: Discussions/Updates.

This meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor, Leonard Flint

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
City Administrator/Recorder, Doug Wiggins