

**GOLDENDALE CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING  
JANUARY 19, 2021  
7:00 PM**

Mayor Michael A Canon called to order the regular meeting of the Goldendale City Council followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call.**

**Council Present:** Mayor Michael A Canon (Not voting), Council Member Andy Halm, Council Member Filiberto Ontiveros, Council Member Julie Buck, Council Member Kevin Feiock, Council Member Miland Walling, Council Member Shannon Middleton.

**Staff Present:** City Administrator Larry Bellamy (Not voting), Clerk-Treasurer Connie Byers (Not voting), Public Works Supervisor Doug Frantum (Not voting), Fire Chief Noah Halm (Not voting), Police Chief Jay Hunziker (Not voting).

**Absent:** Council Member Loren Meagher.

**Motion:** I move to excuse Loren Meagher from the meeting., **Action:** Motion, **Moved by** Council Member Shannon Middleton, **Seconded by** Council Member Miland Walling. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Canon ask for an amendment to the agenda to include a capital outlay for a new command truck.

**Motion:** I move to approve the amendment to the agenda and approve the consent agenda., **Action:** Motion, **Moved by** Council Member Filiberto Ontiveros, **Seconded by** Council Member Shannon Middleton. Motion passed unanimously.

**Department Reports**

Chief Hunziker reported on incidences that happened over the weekend.

Noah reported on 2020 incidences and response times.

Doug reported on the clean up after the big winds, streetlights, school zone signs and new water/sewer services.

Justin Leigh reported on land use related items, Planning Commission, Comprehensive Planning Consultant, outdoor tents for restaurants and ordinance updates. An Ordinance Committee meeting was set for February 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm.

**Council Business**

Capital Outlay for a Command Truck for the Fire Department. 42551.34

**Motion:** , **Action:** Motion, **Moved by** Council Member Andy Halm, **Seconded by** Council Member Shannon Middleton.

Motion passed unanimously.

## **Report of Officers and City Administrator**

Larry spoke about the tourism application process and lodging taxes. January 25<sup>th</sup> there will be an executive session to discuss union negotiations.

Filiberto: Mayor, I do have a few things so let me apologize to everybody, it looks like a short agenda. I have a couple of things, so I wanted to follow up on a couple on discussions from previous council meetings. I am wondering if we can get a report from staff on all the attorney fees that have been paid out in 2020 and 2019, what those were for and to what attorneys. It seems like for a city we have way to many attorneys and looking for more attorneys. My previous experience with city attorneys is that there was one city attorney that handled all on staff as a paid employee. I'm just curious to see how much we are paying out on contracts and also on hourly services just for a question. If we can get that I think that would make my job as a council member a little more responsible to the citizens fiscally. Along the budget lines, the more I've been on council and understanding more along the same lines as fiscal responsibility I would really, really appreciate if we can break away the budget from the council agenda. I feel that needs to be a flat out decision to approve the budget each time because it is essentially council members that are responsible for approving that regardless of what it is. Having approving that agenda every time it's kind of like a free pass on everything else that's attached below it and I think that's a little irresponsible on our part to continue with that. We approved the agenda tonight and I totally forgot that it's all included on all the items below it and I had some questions on the budget. But once again, I'm the one that made the motion and forgot that it was all together. I would really urge that that action take place. I don't know how the other council members feel. I'll leave a little space if anyone else want to comment before I move onto my other item.

Kevin stated that he has his back on this.

Filiberto: Thank you Kevin, I appreciate that. With that being said, the other item that I would appreciate is having the agenda, I'm sorry not an agenda the budget. We see the items getting paid and I see the payees by name but I don't know what department applied for that. I don't know what budget item number that is under. As we continue approving, were they listed to continue spending out of the budget item or is that expended? Does money need to move from one budget item to another to make up for that? That is numbers that we just continue approving blindly. I think that has been a disservice to the citizens that we serve. If we can get a budget listed by item number, by department and what that expense is for that would be great. Again, I'm open for discussion if we need to put it on the next agenda as a motion. Don't change it on my account alone. I just feel that getting to know my job as a council member, I think there is a little more responsibility that we need to take especially we are voting for these items so the buck stopes with us. That is that on fiscal items. I do have several items to ask for on the service to our citizens. I had heard from a parent, he was sharing concerns that he was at Ekone Park and him and his two children witnessed what appeared to be a drug deal going on right at Ekone Park. People came out of the RV Park and people came from the parking lot, met in the middle which some of us would recognize that behavior of somebody being under the influence of drugs which is a little bit different from being under the influence of alcohol. Obviously he reported it to law enforcement however while we support the police department and everything they do, they can only do so much when they get a report. The call comes in and they act on that. We know a lot of citizens in this community know that the RV Park near Ekone Park is a questionable place. It's a place of ill repute. It has a reputation for having excessive

unlawful activity to say the least. Not all residences there participate in this you know there is just a few people that continue doing unlawful activity. It just boggles me and I don't know what else we can do. I had heard at some point in a year or so, I don't know if this has changed but management did not even allow our law enforcement to patrol that area sighting that it was private property. Which is fully their right however I'm not sure if that changed or not. I feel that something needs to be done. I know there was some code enforcement issues that needed to be dealt with. There is car shops running out the back that is in full sight of Ekone Park. So I'm not sure what else we can do to increase law enforcement around the park and increase security to handle that kind of thing and really clean up our town from drug activity not just the users but these people making it a business to bring more criminal activity into our town. I'll just make a plea right out that I would hope to invite, myself as a private citizen, for the Washington State Department of Ecology to come and look at that area that is in close proximity to one of the rivers that feeds into the Columbia would be such a huge ecological impact if stuff continues the way it has been. You know fixing cars, taking cars apart, vehicle parts on the dirt, who knows. I'm not sure what else we can do. Definitely that is a law enforcement matter and I think the Police Chief can totally handle that. I'm just bringing it to attention that it continues to be a problem. Unfortunately it's one arrest at a time and they get out and go back to their thing. I'll leave that alone for now but definitely we need some attention, we need some code enforcement. We need to partner with the property owner, the management and just move forward and try to clean up our community. I definitely support the law enforcement side on this to whatever legal means they need to take action on, I'm all for it. The other side is I know from the fire perspective it was in question about the code enforcement code for how close parking spaces or RV Parks and homes are brought in. I noticed they have brought in more. Some of the larger ones have gone but again, I'm not entirely sure the space between those are kept up to code. We'll have to follow up with that and again whatever code enforcement needs, law enforcement needs or the fire department if it is a fire department function that they need to enforce on that. On the law enforcement side again the only thing I would ask is if we could increase the coverage hours without going into too much detail, I don't know if we can look at a report, a plan, maybe they can come up with a plan to increase coverage hours to cover more of the days with the can come up with a plan to increase coverage hours to cover more of the days with the best kind of coverage that they can and increase their productivity and just get out there and do their thing. If they could increase their coverage that would be great. I know with limited staffing that we have we can only do so much but I think again that would be up to the Chief to see if that could be done. Another item for providing service to our citizens, I've asked for this before, I know there is different times where projects are larger and require more people and again we don't have the people but if we can provide addition coverage for Public Works providing coverage to our citizens. They all work on one side of the week and everybody gets the same days off and if something big happens then everybody gets called back out on overtime and lose their days off. I think coming up with a plan on providing coverage having some people on different shifts would be great. If we need to call additional people for an emergency not everybody is losing their days off. If we have snow on the weekend or towards the weekend we have some coverage. You know just different plans like this so we can provide much better service to our citizens. If a water pipe breaks, there is somebody down at the shop during the day that can come out on a Friday or on a Saturday. Again it's not my roll. That would be up to each department manager to see if that's possible to come up with solutions just asking for us to be able provide a little bit more service to our citizens and be available for their demands. Following up on a big one, this one made it difficult for me, because as you guys know I'm also on the fire department. I hold an officer position and I kind of have to balance my position to insure that I'm not overstepping. As a fire member, I respond to fire calls under the direction of the Chief. This one was a balancing act and make sure I do the right things. As the Chief pointed out earlier in the meeting the calls were 85 for EMS and 126 for fire. That's almost

50% kind of give and take. In December I responded to a medical call and one piece of equipment was malfunctioning. We were there without the ambulance service that provides coverage for the city. There is only one ambulance for the Goldendale area which is Goldendale Medic and they were not available. The next ambulance was coming from Dallesport with over a twenty minute response time. The only service in the gap for coverage is being provided by the fire department. Since we had a malfunctioning piece of equipment is when I decided this was a little bit bigger. As a council member I cannot stand to allow this to continue. I made a call to the Mayor and I have not heard back from him as to what resulted. The city used to contract services out of Rural 7 Fire to provide that gap in coverage and for several years the Fire Department started building their EMS side. Volunteers have gone through EMS training which is great because there is a gap in coverage. I contacted the Mayor about this and this particular piece of equipment costs \$20,000. It is a cardiac monitoring device, blood pressure cuff and is what we see EMT's carry. It has multiple capabilities and as I mentioned the Fire Department took on the position in filling this gap that our citizens need and the budget has not increased for this. My understanding that to provide more service with the same budget. You are going to have to rob Peter to pay Paul. You are going to have to leave things undone, unreplaced. So I contacted the Mayor again trying not to overstep in my position that I saw a gap and I have a big issue with this and as a council member I cannot allow this to happen. So I looked at the budget and there is a budget item that was approved by council for EMS services for \$5,000. This budget item has been approved by council for several years now and used to be paid to Rural 7 for providing that EMS coverage that this fire department now provides. We approved it once again this year and it just sits there. This would pay ¼ of this equipment. If not that, it would pay for EMS equipment and services that are needed without dipping into the general fund of the fire department that buys other equipment that is equally or even more necessary for the fire department side. I'm not sure Larry what we need to do to move this budget that was approved by council for EMS services. It shouldn't be that difficult to move this over to the fire department allocated for EMS services continuation so that this gap in service can be filled by our volunteers to continue to provide that urgent response that everybody needs. We can discuss at a later time what we can do to support our EMS company to get more staffing but the truth of the matter is the fire department is responding to calls either alone waiting for a response waiting for over 20 minutes or responding to support the EMS agency with personnel to assist. A CPR call can take up to 10 people to do CPR. Noah, out of the 85 calls for EMS 2020, how many times has the fire department have to transport a patient to the hospital?

Noah: If the numbers are correct, we did transport 3 patients to the hospital and in 2021 we have transported one patient.

Filiberto: We are less than 20 days in and there has already been one transport. Again as a council member, where there is a need, there's a need. That budget item was passed by the council as part of the name was EMS service. Larry, what do we need to do to help get this resolved and help get the equipment that we need so that we can continue providing not just good quality of service but good quality of care? Do we need an ordinance to move that item or does it just need to be moved to the fire department because it is already approved for EMS? Or just consciences from council members?

Larry: One of the first things I look at is any capital outlay purchase over \$5,000 is supposed to be approved by council. So the starting of this is to look at what you are requesting, how much it costs and whether or not we can get a capital outlay approval for that particular item.

Filiberto: I don't want to request this. The department head should request that and that would be the Chief. I know that for the EMS side there is money needed and I don't want to force them

to take money out as a capital outlay so that other purchases are desperately needed at the fire department. What do we need to do to transfer that money and then we can figure out is the items that they are wanting is it this machine they are particularly, is it other equipment? Is it a capital outlay or just part of the budget? Definitely the EMS needs support. For disclosure, I am taking an EMT class because I see the need for the lack in service in our community. So trying to step up and fill the gap because there is a huge gap.

Larry: There are a couple of things you need to find out. Why is there a gap.

Filiberto: Without capital outlay and without me trying to purchase an item that again that's a department motion. What do we need to do to transfer that and get it under the correct department under EMS as it was approved.

Larry: As you were indicating there is a gap in the EMS service. So we need to find out if there are reasons why there is a gap. Then support the reason for purchasing the piece of equipment that you are talking about. Then we would have to look at how the funding would work. Like you say there is \$5,000 on a line item. I don't necessarily look at specific line items. At the end of the year I end the year with so much cash to carry over to next year. I don't specifically look at each line item, I mean I do but there are some places being underspent.

Filiberto: There is a gap in services and we can have meetings all day long about how we can fill that. Maybe the ambulance service need more people. They are not going to hire overnight. In the mean time we are going to continue to have emergence calls. People are still going to get sick. I personally don't feel like holding a budget item hostage. If we are supporting the fire department and what they are trying to do and provide the service and not get into politics as to why there is a gap in service but just filling the gap. What do we need to do to transfer that money that was approved by council as an EMS service to actually be utilized for what the council approved it for. And not somebody's saving account for whatever might come out at the end of the year. It was approved by the council member for an EMS service therefore it should go towards EMS service and not for a total how much we spend at the end of the year. It's not a slush fund.

Larry: I have to take a look at that and see how we can make that happen then.

Filiberto: Perfect. Since I contacted the Mayor on December 29<sup>th</sup> and today is the 19<sup>th</sup>, we are looking at over 20 days and I have not got a response from anybody as to this. I will officially request my words to be included in the minutes officially requesting this item to be on the on the agenda for action. Let me know if you need my notes to include that. I believe this is being recorded and I would definitely like follow up and not fall through the cracks as many thing fall through the cracks when council asks for something. I don't feel like somebody's life is worth dropping through the cracks. I apologize if I'm a little strong here but I have responded to people and have done CPR. Some people have made it back, some people have not and that is something that I'm not going to take lightly. The budget item was approved by council for EMS services and as that item was passed under false pretense because that item has not been paid to that agency that was listed. We need some answers then.

Larry: I will have a response for you at the next council meeting.

Filiberto: Perfect. So that is the end of my list of items. I thank everybody for their time.

Kevin thanked Fil for his comments. The number one priority for ever government is the health and welfare of the people.

Miland asked Jay if a camera at Ekone Park would help.

Jay said yes it would. You can't argue video.

Mayor Canon stated that he would like to go back to the Police Chief because there were a number of things talked about by Fil on suspected drug activity and things of that nature.

Jay: A lot of the stuff that you touched on, if you would like to give me a call I will be more than happy to discuss that with you and give you some information about things that we are doing, some problems we are having and staffing. Hopefully in the next month we will be back at full staff with a new hire and Officer Lucatero back to full duty. Any council member, if you have any questions regarding drug activity or any other thing please give me a call and I will discuss that with you on what we a doing and problems we are seeing. I encourage it. Thank you for the information and I'm looking forward to hearing from you.

Filiberto: Thank you Chief, I will reach out to you and it was definitely not my intention in trying to tell you how to do your job. You all do an awesome job. Just needed to bring some attention so we can continue supporting you in what ever ways we can by whatever means we have available.

Jay: I appreciate the whole council's support and I would like to discuss that with you other than here.

Shannon asked Noah if we are licensed as a transporting agency.

Noah stated that they are not licensed.

Shannon asked Larry to get with our attorney what our liability is on that.

Julie stated that she appreciates all the discussion tonight.

### **Adjournment**

**Motion:** I move to adjourn the meeting., **Action:** Motion, **Moved by** Council Member Andy Halm, **Seconded by** Council Member Julie Buck.  
Motion passed unanimously.

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Michael A Canon, Mayor

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Connie Byers, Clerk-Treasurer