

TOPPENISH CITY COUNCIL
Regular Meeting Minutes
September 12, 2022

Mayor Saavedra called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Attendees: Mayor Elpidia Saavedra, Mayor Pro Tem Clara Jiménez, and Councilmembers Loren Belton, Juan Ceja, Naila Duval, George Garcia, and Kyle Pettit

Staff: City Manager Debbie Zabell (CM Zabell), City Attorney Gary Cuillier, Assistant City Manager Ford (ACM Ford), Chief of Police John Clary, City Clerk Heidi Riojas (CC Riojas), and Cable Television Manager Judy Devall

CC Riojas conducted roll call for each City Councilmember to respond their attendance at the meeting. Mayor Saavedra, Mayor Pro Tem Jiménez, and Councilmembers Belton, Ceja, Duval, Garcia, and Pettit responded their attendance during roll call.

APPROVE AGENDA

Councilmember Pettit moved, seconded by Councilmember Garcia to approve the September 12, 2022 Agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Alex Mejia, 402 Bolin Drive, Toppenish, expressed his public safety concerns with vandalism, the noise of racing cars in the community, and the availability to speak with Council.

Maria Perez, 526 North Chestnut Street, Toppenish, reported to Council her financial struggles with the current utility billing process.

Resident, 11 South H Street, Toppenish, expressed his concerns with the high utility bills being sent to customers.

CM Zabell provided an update on the reasons customers are receiving fluctuating amounts for their utility bills due to the failing water meters. With limited staff to work on this labor intensive process of hand reading each meter, the city has been divided into thirds. During this temporary period, one-third of customers receive a bill for the actual use and then the next month the bill is estimated; one-third of customers receive a bill for estimated use and then the next month the bill is for actual use; and one-third of customers have meters that report accurately. The months when customers receive a bill for the actual use, those customers also receive the amount for any additional usage over the minimum charge when the bill is estimated. This process results in a larger bill on the month that the meter is billed for actual use. It is anticipated for the Citywide Water Meter Replacement Project to be completed within the next few months.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Pro Tem Jiménez moved, seconded by Councilmember Pettit to approve Consent Agenda items a through e:

- a. Approve Regular Meeting Minutes dated August 22, 2022
- b. Approve Study Session Minutes dated September 6, 2022
- c. Resolution 2022-37: Approve Amendment No. 1 to Agreement with the Yakima Humane Society
- d. Approve Payroll Checks Number 35896 through 35920 and electronic transfers in the total amount of \$180,394.67 dated September 6, 2022
- e. Approve Claims Checks Number 95926 through 96009 and EFTAP304 through EFTAP307 in the total amount of \$486,510.30 dated September 12, 2022, and void Check Number NR95867 and NREFTAP297

Motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Capital Projects Update

Nancy Wetch, Engineer with Gray & Osborne, Inc. provided Council with an update on the status of the Sewer Improvements Project for the replacement of 67,000 linear feet (LF) collection system sewers and upgrade/replace three sewage pump stations. To date the project has replaced 47,000 LF of mainline sewer pipe, replaced Carlson and South Beech sewage pump stations, and the Branding Iron pump station is in progress. The remaining 20,000 LF of mainline sewer pipe will be replaced in Phase II that is projected to be completed by November 2023. Engineer Wetch noted the improved performance at the treatment plant is causing another issue with increased metals concentration being discharged into the Toppenish drain that will need to have a study completed to determine the best approach to manage the metals issue. The final project phase is still being finalized to determine the best use of the remaining \$1.8 million grant funding.

ACM Ford reported on the progress of the Citywide Water Meter Replacement Project. He noted that he created the City's Facebook post to help inform customers why their utility bills fluctuate from month to month. The Public Works building furniture is scheduled to be arrive this week.

Council Presentation Training

CATV Devall shared with Council on techniques to achieve a professional appearance while on camera with clothing colors, minimal jewelry for women, and how to use the microphone for the audience to hear the message.

COUNCIL MEETING REPORTS/COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilmember Belton had nothing to report.

Councilmember Pettit had nothing to report.

Councilmember Duval thanked Commissioner LaDon Linde for his assistance with her to paint out graffiti in the community.

Mayor Pro Tem Jiménez reported her attendance at Train to Nowhere on September 10, 2022.

Councilmember Ceja had nothing to report.

Councilmember Garcia had nothing to report.

Mayor Saavedra had nothing to report.

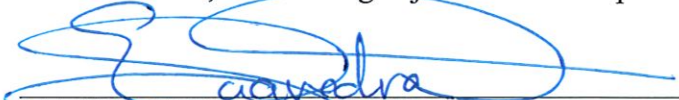
CITY MANAGER REPORT

CM Zabell updated Council on the following:

- Auditor Entrance Conference scheduled for 2:00 p.m. on September 15, 2022
- AWC training for municipal planning on September 14, 2022
- Northwest Community Action Center 40th Anniversary Celebration on September 20, 2022
- Yakima Valley Conference of Governments General Membership virtual meeting on September 21, 2022
- Safe Haven Community Center hosting Trunk or Treat on October 31, 2022
- Operations:
 - CP Clary working with CA Cuillier on Forfeiture Hearing Examiner process
 - FC Smith working with Lexipol to update department policies
- CATV Devall retirement open house set for October 27, 2022
- Former PW employee Brandon Tobia set to return to Toppenish on September 16, 2022
- City awarded a \$35,000 FEMA grant for a heavy-duty gear extractor, dryer, and gear rack storage system

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m.


MAYOR ELPIDIA SAAVEDRA


HEIDI RIOJAS, CMC, CITY CLERK