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**OMAK CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
November 15, 2021**

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**CALL TO ORDER:**

Mayor Gagné called the regular meeting of the Omak City Council held via Zoom to order at 7:00 PM, established a quorum and all joined in the flag salute.

**COUNCIL AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL:**

Michael Foth	Tyler Wells, Building Official
Nattalie Cariker	Kevin Bowling, Fire Chief
Barry Freel	Dan Christensen, Police Chief
Steve Clark	Ken Mears, Public Works Director
Meyer Louie	Connie Thomas, City Clerk
Michelle Gaines	Todd McDaniel, City Administrator
Dave Womack	Judge David Ebenger

**CITIZEN COMMENTS**

Mayor Gagné asked if there was anyone in attendance not on the agenda that would like to address Council. Municipal Court Judge, David Ebenger told Council that he came in late to the November 8, 2021, Budget Workshop but, he was in attendance and asked that the minutes reflect that.

**CORRESPONDENCE AND MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Gagné asked Council to affirm her appointment of Betty Cleveland to the Omak Library Board. Member Foth moved, seconded by Member Cariker, to affirm the appointment. As there was no discussion or comments Council voted and unanimously approved the motion.

Mayor Gagné explained to Council that she would like to add an item to the agenda, the Final Budget Hearing for the 2022 Budget. Member Womack moved, seconded by Member Clark to approve the addition of a Public Hearing.

**PUBLIC HEARING CORRESPONDENCE AND MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Gagné opened the Final Public Hearing for the 2022 Budget at 7:02 pm. She asked if Council or the Public had any questions or comments. City Administrator McDaniel told Council that although the agenda did not include a public hearing, the hearing was advertised in accordance with the statutory requirements. The Omak City Council has held two Budget Workshops open to the public one on October 27<sup>th</sup> and the other on November 8<sup>th</sup>. He told Council the budget document fairly estimates the expenditures and revenues necessary to perform essential services. He reminded Council that there has been no change in city staffing or operations. The only significant changes in the 2022 budget are the capital purchases and the projects. He told Council that it's a good budget and noted the first read of the Final 2022 Budget is on the agenda. As there were no further questions or comments, Mayor Gagné closed the public hearing at 7:03 p.m.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

Member Clark moved, seconded by Member Womack, to approve the consent agenda consisting of minutes from the November 1, 2021, meeting and the November 8, 2021, Budget Workshop; 2021 claims checks numbered 105882-105943 in the amount of \$428,697.85; October manual checks numbered 105723-105725, 105729 in the amount of \$2,931.96. Council acknowledged the change noted by Judge Ebenger. As there was no further discussion and no comments from the audience, Council voted and unanimously approved the motion.

Mayor Gagné told Council that they will move into New Business but, she is going to excuse herself for a moment. She told Council that Member Foth will take over the meeting as he is the Mayor Pro Tem.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Alyssa Collins, Omak Branch Librarian**

Mayor Pro Tem Foth welcomed Alyssa Collins. Ms. Collins told Council that the library has its new book drop out front and it looks great. The city did an awesome job with the installation and concrete. She is asking Council to remove the fifteen-minute parking on First Street and designate book drop parking on Ash Street. She suggests either a no parking zone or five-minute parking tops for customer to drop books. Public Works

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Director Mears explained that Omak Municipal Code 12.24.115 designates the ten-minute parking, and that section of the code will need updated. After Council approves the ordinance, a sign can be installed. Member Clark moved, seconded by Member Cariker to move ahead with the ten-minute parking on Ash Street for the Library Book Drop. As there was no further discussion or comments, Council voted and unanimously approved the motion.

**Sarah Grooms, Omak Stampede Office Manager**

Mayor Pro Tem Foth welcomed Sarah Grooms. Ms. Grooms addressed Council stating that she has some concerns as a community member about the increase in thefts. She told Council that on October 14, 2021, the Omak Stampede office was broken into again and the shop was also broken into. She said the Card Shop was broken into on Saturday and pickups are being hotwired. They have the gentleman on camera and, they know who he is and to her knowledge, he is still roaming the city. She is looking for ideas for our community. She has spoken to Chief Christensen and, she does realize it will take more than a couple of officers to control this problem. Her concern is that her job is to promote an event and encourage people to come and stay. She has concerns that those people will have their things stolen. Chief Christensen explained that over the last two weeks he has issued five search warrants. This comes down to a systemic problem beyond what the police can do. The call load trend for the Omak Police Department has doubled. The easy answer is to add more officers but, the city doesn't have the budget for that. He explained that he has had every officer working the last seven days and there are warrants out for the suspect. The police are putting everything they have into getting them off the streets. Ms. Grooms asked if Mayor Gagné could talk with Sheriff Hawley about the jail. Mayor Gagné explained that Sheriff Hawley has a good working relationship with Chief Christensen and, it's an ongoing relationship and the police are working to the extent of their resources. The Omak Police Department, Task Force and Sherriff's Department have seen success in the last week as they solved a major crime spree. Mayor Gagné said we should be diligent and not vigilante like. She explained that there have been conversations with Okanogan Behavioral Health Care (OBHC) and the problem is bigger and, includes not only drugs but, mental health. There are no resources available in the area and, OBHC is currently short staffed. Ms. Grooms asked for suggestions to ensure the Omak Stampede staff is safe. Chief Christensen is unable to commit patrols. He suggested a camera system and being aware of surroundings. Member Cariker asked if Chief Christensen is working with the Colville Tribal Police. He said, absolutely. He explained the Colville Tribe is down officers along with the Sherriff's Office and the jail. There are so many systemic issues involved and, the call load is unbelievable. He paraphrased that the 9<sup>th</sup> circuit court prioritized property crimes were a low government interest. He suggested getting crime watches back together. Mayor Gagné told Ms. Grooms that there are no easy answers. Ms. Grooms said it's not only the Omak Stampede, Inc. but, the city as a whole. She asked about hiring temporary officers until things got under control. Mayor Gagné said that she doesn't disagree with her concerns but, legislation has made it more difficult for law enforcement. The city doesn't have the budget to hire the number of officer's it will need. Chief Christensen said the public is calling and the police are getting good tips. This is free volunteer service and he said that security cameras are important right now. He recommends cameras that connect to the cloud and that don't have audible light. Member Gaines said that it's so frustrating. It makes her wonder if the city could go to the Governor's Office and share our statistics and explain how the recent legislation has affected our city. We could ask them to send the National Guard or send money. She said that we need to reach out to the State Representatives and the Governor and let them know they created this situation and, we need help fixing it. Ms. Grooms said that Seattle is in the same situation. Mayor Gagné said that as constituents, we should reach out to Senator Short and Representatives and share fears and fixes. Mayor Gagné thanked Ms. Grooms and advised her to keep calling with concerns.

**Resolution 56-2021 – Approve Extension of Planning Contract through 2022 -Highlands**

**Associates**

Member Cariker moved, seconded by Member Womack, to approve Resolution 56-2021. City Administrator told Council the terms in the agreement are the same, this is just to renew the Planning Services contract through December 2022. As there was no discussion or comments, Council voted and unanimously approved the motion.

**Resolution 57-2021 – Designate Official Newspaper for 2022**

Member Cariker moved, seconded by Member Womack, to approve Resolution 57-2021. City Administrator McDaniel told Council the staff went out to ad and, we received two bids. The Omak-Okanogan

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Chronicle provided the lowest responsible bid and, he recommends approval of the resolution. As there were no questions or comments, Council voted and unanimously approved the motion.

**Resolution 58-2021 – Approve Agreement with Public Surplus Seller & PayMac, Inc.**

Member Cariker moved, seconded by Member Gaines, to approve Resolution 58-2021. Public Works Director Mears explained to Council the agreement will allow the city to sell surplus items online using Public Surplus Seller. The payments for items sold will be handled by PayMac, Inc. City Attorney Mick Howe has also reviewed the agreement. Member Womack asked how the items are advertised? Mr. Mears said the advertisement is online for entities to view photos and descriptions and then bid on the item. Chief Christensen wondered if he could use the site for lost property and what the threshold is for small items. Mr. Mears thought it was \$500 but wasn't sure. As there were no further questions or comments, Council voted and unanimously approved the motion.

**Resolution 59-2021 – Approve Public Works Agreement with Lees & Duke Excavating-House Cleanup**

Member Clark moved, seconded by Member Womack, to approve Resolution 59-2021. Public Works Director Mears explained to Council that Administrator McDaniel asked he and Building Official Wells to work together on a Public Works contract to clean up the burned home on South Main Street. Two quotes were received for this project and Lees & Duke Excavating provided the most favorable quote. He told Council the packet provided with the resolution details the scope of work. He recommends approval of this resolution. There were no questions or comments, Council voted and unanimously approved the motion.

**Ordinance 1908 – 1<sup>st</sup> Read – Adopting the Final 2022 Budget**

City Administrator McDaniel told Council that after the second Budget Workshop held, November 8, 2021, this is the final budget. He made some slight modifications to the True Up Balance (TUB) accounts within the Street Fund and Current Expense Fund. He explained to Council that projects in the Street Fund could be removed based on funding from the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB). The Washington State Auditor reviewed the City's cost allocations and found an error in the formula that will affect how wages are spent out of the budget for the Utility Clerk. If there is anything that was missed, an amendment can be made between now and the second reading of Ordinance 1908. If Council has a need for another budget workshop a date can be set. Otherwise, the only significant change will be removing any unfunded TIB projects. Member Gaines doesn't feel like Council will need another workshop. There were no further questions or comments.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

**Committee/Staff Reports:**

Fire Chief Bowling told Council the delivery of the new fire truck has been pushed out to March 2022 as they are waiting on parts. He advised Council of the river forecast as its projected to be above flood stage over the next couple of days. This is a result of rain in Canada and the warm weather melting mountain snow. He said this morning the river was at six foot five inches and this evening it measured ten feet so, its significantly rising. He doesn't anticipate the river going over seventeen feet and should not impact the city, but he is keeping a close eye on it.

Chief Christensen shared with Council the year-to-date call load of 4,073 compared to the 2020 year to date call load of 3,876. Comparing the call load from November 1<sup>st</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> which is at 202, he said the department is on par to bypass the total calls for the entire month of November 2020 which were 300. He told Council the delivery of his patrol truck has also been pushed out because they are waiting for vehicle chips. Chief Christensen told Council a joint press release was issued by the Okanogan County Sheriff's Department and the Omak Police Department on the robbery investigation and arrests.

Public Works Director Mears told Council that he has been in contact with Okanogan County Emergency Management and let them know the city is ready with pumps and sandbags. His crew is on standby if needed.

City Administrator McDaniel reminded Council that during the Budget Workshop on November 8<sup>th</sup> they discussed the garbage fund. He wanted to clarify a statement made during that conversation. The Contract with Sunrise Disposal, Inc. does not have a fuel clause. The request for a 2.5% increase to the Sunrise Disposal contract will be for the entire year. He told Council that he spoke with owner, Dion Gotti and talked about the recycling program he is working on.

Member Cariker thanked Omak Librarian Alyssa Collins for their participation in the Halloween Harvest Fest.

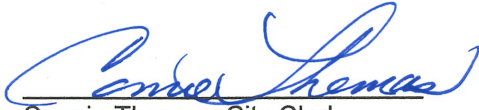
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Judge Ebenger asked Mayor Gagné for direction on how he needs to proceed with his contract terms for next year. Administrator McDaniel said he is working on that.

As there was no further business before Council, Mayor Gagné adjourned the meeting at 7:45 PM.

  
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Connie Thomas, City Clerk

  
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Cindy Gagné, Mayor