

**Minutes  
Cheney Planning Commission  
Regular Meeting – By Phone/Video Conference**

**April 11, 2022**

Commissioners Attending: Richard Mount, Dan Turbeville, Vara Lyn Conrath, Jake Vibbert, David Early, Natasha Jostad. Jacquelyn Belock was present via Zoom.

Commissioners Absent: None.

Staff Attending: Brett Lucas, Mark Schuller, Terry Mourning, Todd Ableman and Susan Beeman.

Councilmembers Attending: Vince Barthels.

Call to Order: Chairman Mount called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m..

Approval of Minutes: Commissioner Turbeville made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 14, 2022 regular meeting as corrected. Seconded by Commissioner Early, and the motion carried unanimously.

Citizen Participation: None.

Public Hearing: #2022-05  
Capital Facilities Plan 2022-2027

Mr. Lucas provided background on the City's Capital Facilities Plan, and reviewed the adopted Level of Service (LOS) standards. He then reviewed proposed projects, identifying revenue sources and noting which items are replacement requests, for the next 6 years.

Mr. Lucas commented that for the Water Department, projects are expected to be primarily through grants. For Waste Water Collection, funding will be primarily through rate revenues and grants. Solid Waste projects are expected to be funded through Capital Reserves. For the Street Equipment Fund, purchases will be funded through reserves and grants. He noted that we will be replacing the street sweeper this year, and several other vehicles.

Park projects are being funded through Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) funds, park impact fees on new development, and grants. Projects proposed include a splash pad and pool refurbishment, and creation of a dog park.

Light buildings and facilities are funded through electric rate revenues. Projects in the General Government funds are paid through REET funds, and IT charges and fees to each department.

Chairman Mount asked for an update on internet services being installed by Avista Edge and Ptera. Mr. Schuller reported that Avista Edge is looking to go live from their pilot program in May, and Ptera has a widening area of service in the central part of town.

Mr. Lucas reviewed Public Safety projects which are funded through the General Fund.

Commissioner Vibbert asked about plans for the Sterling-Moorman House. Mr. Ableman said that we don't really have a firm plan for the building, but it is intended to be a contributor to the downtown, and potentially, a revenue generator.

Commissioner Conrath asked about options for possible expansion of the Police Department. Mr. Ableman said that we have looked at various options over the last 10 years, but it is probably time to look at updating the assessments.

Chairman Mount called for additional comments or questions. No further discussion was held.

Commissioner Early made a motion to recommend to City Council that the 2022-2027 Capital Facilities Plan be approved as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Turbeville, and the motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearing: #2022-06

Amending Title 21 to Add design Standards for Shipping Container Homes

Mr. Lucas introduced Terry Mourning, who currently works as a building inspector for the City, and explained that Mr. Mourning will be sharing responsibilities in the Planning Department in the coming months.

Mr. Mourning explained that when people start looking at various forms of affordable housing, alternative methods of construction are considered, including using shipping containers.

Mr. Mourning reviewed proposed design standards, and showed pictures of container homes which would meet those standards.

Discussion followed. Chairman Mount said that his concern would be how this would impact neighboring property values. He wants to make sure that we have regulations that withstand challenges, and also protect neighboring property values. Mr. Mourning said that good design is fluid, and very subjective. Our intent with this proposed change is to identify what this Commission feels is good architecture for Cheney.

Commissioner Vibbert asked what surrounding jurisdictions are doing about allowing storage containers. Mr. Lucas said that it varies; some cities don't address the question at all. He added that the proposal tonight is an attempt to identify some design standards without being too prescriptive.

Chairman Mount asked if a 50' container could be placed on a lot in a residential zone under our current code. Mr. Ableman said that is a question that we could refer to our legal counsel.

Commissioner Turbeville commented that the 800 sq.ft. minimum would require at least 5 containers. He said that this is not... These are used as residences, but mostly in Third World countries.

Mr. Ableman stated that if the Planning Commission wants to prohibit these from being used as residences, then staff could research some options and report back.

Commissioner Conrath asked if these containers are insulated. Mr. Mourning stated that they would be, as the building code would come into play in requiring that the structure meet minimum energy code standards.

Discussion continued. Chairman Mount announced that he would abstain from participating in further discussion because the legal opinion will be generated by his law firm. He asked Vice-Chairman Vibbert to preside over the remainder of the conversation on this topic.

Commissioner Vibbert commented that he likes the modern aesthetic, but he questioned the compatibility point, which was a major point of discussion last month.

Commissioner Early made a motion to table this discussion pending a more thorough review by the city attorney.

Seconded by Commissioner Turbeville. Commissioner Turbeville commented that he is an architectural historian, and he believes we would see these same issues if someone wanted to build a log cabin, or a teepee.

Commissioner Jostad commented that she was in favor of approving the design standards, but...

The motion carried with Commissioners Turbeville, Conrath, Vibbert, Early, Jostad and Belock voting yes, and Commissioner Mount abstaining. Vice chairman Vibbert announced that this issue would be tabled, with a direction to staff to bring back some clarification from the City's legal department.

Public Meeting: #2022-07

City of Cheney Purple Pipe to Parks & Playfields (Water Re-Use Project)

Mr. Ableman explained that the objective for this project is to provide a new source and supply of up to 1.0 million gallons per day (MGD) of irrigation water during the summer months, and to reduce this demand on the City's existing potable water supply system. By doing this, we hope to eliminate watering restrictions associated with the existing seasonal water source deficit.

Mr. Ableman identified parks which are already associated with water reclamation. He explained that Sutton, Moos and Salnave Parks are already 'purple-piped' and are irrigated by Well #4, which has a turbidity problem which renders it unsuitable for use in the potable water system. He added that we could potentially put a filter system on Well #4 and put that production back into the potable water system.

Mr. Ableman reviewed project alternatives. He noted that the least expensive option is to do nothing, which would result in continued irrigation restrictions during the summer months.

Another alternative would be to drill a new groundwater supply well. This is less costly than other alternatives, but there is no guarantee of reliable long-term supply. He reviewed the history of some of the City wells, which have typically declined in production after a period of time.

Mr. Ableman reviewed some benefits of the proposed project:

Mr. Ableman explained that the reclaimed water supply with water quality requirements regulated under chapter 173-219 WAC, Reclaimed Water. He said that filtration and disinfection will remove pathogens from the water so it is safe to use for irrigation. He then reviewed the construction timeline, and construction cost estimates. A state grant has provided \$10.8 million for filters and ultraviolet disinfection, and we are waiting to hear about a federal grant for \$5.5 million. We also have a low interest loan available from the Department of Ecology for \$5.5 million, but we hope to not have to borrow the maximum amount available. He reviewed the estimated costs to rate payers, and said that we are still looking at how the water rates will fit in.

Mr. Ableman reviewed the list of permits required for this project.

Mr. Schuller said that the fact we have a shovel-ready project right now is going to make us really appealing as a grant recipient. We are in a great position, thanks to the work that Mr. Ableman and Esvelt Engineering have put in over the last few years.

Chairman Mount commented that he is not anxious to talk about extending water lines from Spokane; he would prefer to see Cheney manage our water needs on our own. He commended staff for moving this project forward.

Commissioner Early said that he lived in Aurora, Colorado in 1999 when they implemented a water re-use project, and he felt the city communicated very well that this was a sustainable practice which would make the community an inviting place to live.

Commission Reports: Commissioner Early asked about a wetland in the Field of Dreams that was fenced off and was supposed to be managed by the homeowners' association. The Field of Dreams HOA has gone defunct; is there any recourse for the City to maintain that area? Mr. Ableman explained that the Golden Hills 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Addition all have drainage into that pond, so it is an area of shared responsibility.

Chairman Mount invited everyone to participate in the Cheney Clean Sweep community cleanup day on Saturday, April 23.

Staff Reports: Mr. Lucas announced that he will be leaving the City of Cheney after 12 years as Senior Planner, moving to a position in transportation planning with the Spokane Transit Authority. Chairman Mount thanked Mr. Lucas for his efforts on behalf of the community, and wished him well in his next position.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Approved By:

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Susan Beeman, Secretary

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Richard Mount, Chairman