
CITY OF MILTON-FREEWATER GOVERNING BODY

Destiny Jensen At Large, Position 1
Steve Irving - Council President At Large, Position 2
Wes Koklich At Large, Position 3

Mike Odman
John Lyon
Emily Holden
Jose Garcia

Mayor
Ward 1
Ward 2
Ward 3

CITY OF MILTON-FREEWATER**April 14, 2025****CITY COUNCIL MINUTES**

The Council of the City of Milton-Freewater met in regular session on Monday, April 14, 2025 in the Albee Room of the City Library, 8 SW 8th Avenue at 7:00 p.m.

The following members were present: Mayor Mike Odman, Councilors Destiny Jensen, Wes Koklich, John Lyon, Emily Holden, Steve Irving and Jose Garcia.

Youth Representatives Norma Rodriguez and Zachary Lamb were present.

Staff members present were: City Manager Chad Morris, City Recorder Leanne Steadman, Finance Director Laurie Bubar, Fire Chief Shane Garner, Public Works Superintendent Brian Steadman, Engineering Technician Steven Patten and Conservation Specialist Ryan Westman.

Guests and citizens present were: Paul Seaquist, Tammy Seaquist, Julie Maher, Chris Kowitz, Kate York, Tom Piefer and Vern Rodighiero.

Representing the news media were: Sherrie Widmer of the Valley Herald and Sheila Hagar with the East Oregonian.

A moment of silence was held honoring Bill Albee who recently passed away. The room that the city council holds their business meetings in was named after Mr. Albee.

CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS:

The consent calendar items consisted of:

- Regular Session Minutes from March 10, 2025
- Executive Session Minutes from March 10, 2025
- Work Session Minutes from March 24, 2025
- Liquor License application for Sip and Sizzle LLC, doing business as M-F Supper Club located at 1004 S. Main

Councilor Irving motioned to approve all items on the Consent Calendar. Councilor Garcia seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Youth Representatives Rodriguez and Lamb were in favor.

PRESENTATION ITEMS:**MAYOR'S PROCLAMATION -**

Mayor Odman read a proclamation which proclaimed April as Parkinson's Awareness Month.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

APPOINTMENT TO ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Manager Morris stated Nathan Lyon submitted an application re-applying to serve on the Planning Commission. Shortly after his application was received, Kate Winters submitted an application re-applying to serve on the Recreation Committee. Both applications were reviewed by Mayor Odman who recommended appointment of both applicants to the respective advisory committees.

Councilor Lyon disclosed that he was related to Nathan Lyon.

Councilor Lyon motioned to appoint Nathan Lyon to the Planning Commission for a 4-year term and Kate Winters to the Recreation Committee for a 2-year term. Councilor Jensen seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Youth Representatives Rodriguez and Lamb were in favor.

APPROVAL TO INCLUDE CEMETERY PROPERTY UNDER CITY WATER RIGHTS FOR IRRIGATION PURPOSES

City staff has been approached by the Milton-Freewater Cemetery District #3 (District) requesting to be included under city water rights for irrigation purposes. The District drilled a basalt well in 1996, Oregon Water Resource Department (OWRD) canceled the groundwater permit in 2017 due to the lack of proof of appropriation of water under the terms and conditions of the permit.

OWRD contacted City staff to discuss options for the District to irrigate the cemetery legally. The proposed idea is for the District to utilize water from the City's existing groundwater rights. At this time, staff was asking for approval by the council to proceed with producing an Inter-Governmental Agreement between the City and District which would address the details of the water usage along with responsibilities and obligations among both parties.

Councilor Lyon motioned to direct the City Manager to create an Inter-Government Agreement with the Milton-Freewater Cemetery District #3 for water usage at the cemetery under the City's existing water rights and the Council shall review and consider the Inter-Governmental Agreement for approval in a future meeting. Councilor Garcia seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Youth Representatives Rodriguez and Lamb were in favor.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Manager Morris reported there has been one application received for the aquatic center manager position, he will be meeting with them Thursday afternoon and if all goes well, he planned to offer them the position. Advertisement for lifeguards is out and there have been three applications received. Again, he reported there is a staff member who is interested in obtaining the Certified Pool Operator certificate. He reported he received an email from the YMCA stating if the city were in need of training, they were willing to help out. At the next meeting he will have a start date for the pool.

Sheila Hagar asked if the pool was in danger of not opening this year.

Manager Morris stated not at this point.

Councilor Holden asked how many lifeguards were needed to fully staff the pool.

Manager Morris stated 7-9 lifeguards on duty at a time. He would like as many as possible.

Mayor Odman asked if there has been any engagement with the high school principal regarding the pool.

Manager Morris stated he has met with School Superintendent Aaron Duff and has advertised in Walla Walla, College Place and colleges in the area. Walla Walla is currently hiring, with wages \$16.66 – \$21.00 per hour and he is advertising \$14.00 - \$18.00 for Milton-Freewater. City of Athena is also hiring for their pool.

Next, Manager Morris reported on the tennis courts. There is no funding committed for this project. There has been a couple different community members express support and interest. He said he would not tear out the tennis courts until after the tennis season and the project may be a much more phased plan than he anticipated. He reported that Regence Blue Cross Blue Shield and Providence came to an agreement by the end of March so there was no disruption to the insurance and Providence will remain in network. He made trips to LaGrande attending the Ways and Means meeting and Hermiston meeting with Senator Merkley. A T-Mobile, Home Town Grant was applied for which would be for cameras installed on public property to help detour graffiti activity. Manager Morris passed out the City of Irrigon's nuisance city code for review. He asked for input on changes to the city's code, which he will have the city attorney review before taking it back to council to consider. At the last work session, it was brought up that the city needed an overall mission statement. Manager Morris stated he will find a text book he has and will scan and send the council information on the process and concept of developing a mission statement. The city will be hosting the League of Oregon Cities Small Cities Networking Meeting on April 16th in the Police Department training room from 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilor Koklich passed out information regarding the new road package which is being proposed by legislation.

Councilor Holden announced the next Make a Difference Day is scheduled for April 26th, gathering at Freewater Square at 8:00 a.m. She reminded people to bring their work gloves, shovels and rakes. The Cinco de Mayo will be celebrated on May 3rd with a soccer tournament at Shockman Field and Grove School complex beginning at 9:00 a.m.

The council adjourned to executive session at 7:40 p.m. pursuant to 192.660 (2) (d) to conduct deliberations with persons designated by the governing body to carry on labor negotiations.

The council returned to open session at 8:15 p.m.

Councilor Lyon motioned to ratify the IBEW Clerical Bargaining Agreement as orally presented effective April 1, 2025. Councilor Jensen seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

Mike Odman, Mayor