

**August 14, 2019**  
**Work Session**  
**City of Gaston**

**Present:** Mayor David **Meeker**, Andrew **Sewall**, Mario **DePiero**, and Bill **Martin**

**Absent:** Sarah **Branch**, Suzy **Carver**, and Don **Richter**.

**Staff:** City Recorder Wenonah **Blanchette** and City Clerk Sharon **Bregante-Candau**.

Mayor David **Meeker** called this meeting to order at 6:03 PM.

Roll Call: City Recorder **Blanchette** conducted the roll call:

Councilor Andrew **Sewall**, present

Councilor Mario **DePiero**, present

Councilor Bill **Martin**: present

Mayor David **Meeker**, present

Councilor Sarah **Branch**, *absent-excused*

Councilor Suzy **Carver**, *absent-excused*

Councilor Don **Richter**, *absent-excused*

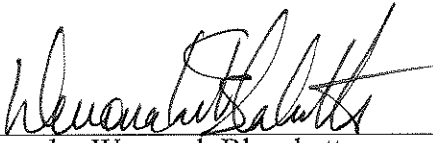
**City Charter Update Committee Review:**


Discussion heard of updating the City Charter adopted in 1975 and was led by Councilor **Sewall** who pointed out his specific concerns such as gender specific verbiage to which Councilor **DePiero** agreed. Recorder **Blanchette** noted in her opinion section 40, Debt Limit, is difficult to work around due to the City's restriction with acquiring a loan. This section limits to the City toward borrowing funds to no more \$5,000 or 5% of the annual City budget; whichever is greater except when approved by electors within the City. Preparing election documents to be placed on the ballot is time consuming and depending on the time of filing, costly. Clarification was provided that this amount was not what employees were limited to without Council approval; this amount would be approved by Council, but still limited by this section in the Charter. Recorder **Blanchette** explained in the past, preparation was made to obtaining a Small Drinking Water Loan to update the City water system with radio read water meters costing nearly \$100,000. Once the City Attorney reviewed the budget limits to borrowing money could not exceed \$83,000 for their standard 40-year loan program. Within the same section, it goes on to state "the City's bonded indebtedness shall not exceed 2% of the true cash value of all real property located within the City of Gaston."

**Employment Discussion:** Mayor **Meeker** added this item to potentially discuss hiring a Public Works Director with one applicant having experience in public works. Councilor **DePiero** stated this applicant may not be present tonight at the meeting but Council will be discussing hiring for the position. City Recorder responded this current work session is not a meeting for decision making. Councilor **Sewall** was concerned that the applicant quit his current job without having anything planned and asked to have his references as well as have a background check done. Recorder **Blanchette** confirmed all employees using City vehicles are required to have driving records checked once a year as well. Discussion heard on his experience allowing him to apply for water distribution certification with exception to hiring him based on checking references and his background. Further discussion heard on probationary employment based on the City's handbook. Councilor **Sewall** had questions regarding the city's monthly water testing with City Clerk **Bregante-Candau** replying Kris **Conway** from LA Water Co Op and she provided water testing samples for this month. Contacting Larry **Fenster**, the City's direct contact with Washington County has been difficult in finding clarification and information regarding the City's situation. It was discussed to hold a special meeting to determine employment and for hiring a company to provide DRC services for the City possibly next week; either Puttman Company or Hiland Water. Councilor **DePiero** stated the City Clerk has a contact and will be back on Monday to make contact to potentially provide DRC services.

Councilor **DePiero** lead the discussion heard amongst the Council regarding the complaint made against 124 Front Street and 304 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. 124 Front Street has the metal awning that is rusted hanging over the sidewalk potentially creating a safety concern and 304 2<sup>nd</sup> Street regarding dead trees on the property posing safety concerns for neighboring properties.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Mayor **Meeker** asked for any further questions, none heard. Work Session adjourned at 7:53PM.

Attest:   
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City Recorder Wenonah Blanchette

  
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Mayor David Meeker