

**October 12, 2016
Regular Session
City of Gaston**

Present: Mayor Tony **Hall**, Chris **Jeffries**, David **Meeker**, and Don **Richter**. Jerry **Spaulding** and Rod **Hale** both arriving later in the session.

Staff: City Recorder Wenonah **Blanchette** and Public Works Director Brent **Whittaker**.

Absent: Council President Richard **Sager** (with excuse).

I. Mayor Tony **Hall** called this regular meeting to order at 7:18 PM.

II. ADDITIONS/CHANGES OR CORRECTIONS – Mayor **Hall** announced an addition to the agenda under New Business: “City Issued Credit Cards.” No action.

III. ROLL CALL: Recorder **Blanchette** conducted the roll call for the record with:

Councilor Jerry **Spaulding**: present

Councilor David **Meeker**: present

Councilor Richard **Sager**: *absent with excuse*

Mayor Tony **Hall**: present

Councilor Chris **Jeffries**: present

Councilor Don **Richter**: present

Councilor Rod **Hale**: present

IV. STAFF REPORTS:

Water: Public Works Director **Whittaker**, started his first day of work on October 6, 2016. **Whittaker** reviewed with Council work done the past five days with the City since being hired as reviewing current inventory, looking at city equipment, and examining safety issues. Spent time reading water meters, repair a minor water leak in town, met with Rick **Henry** and reviewed ongoing city projects. Councilor **Spaulding** requested Public Works Director **Whittaker** to compile a list of projects needing to be completed. Also reviewed with Council the ongoing sidewalk issue at 410 Hedin Terrace. The property owner came to Council requesting an extension to install sidewalks to gain occupancy. The extension deadline for having the sidewalk poured lapsed six weeks ago. No action taken at this time. Discussion continued with addressing several safety concerns, vehicle concerns, and miscellaneous water related items. Mayor **Hall** informed Council of the new pump installed at the pump station has been changed to a three phase, 220 electric system and the computer board is been updated. The second pump needs to be updated too. Councilor **Jeffries** requested to have a flyer in the water bills introducing the City’s new Public Works Director.

Office: Grant application for the Community Development Block Grant was submitted last Friday on its due date. October is the first month QuickBooks is being used for the City finances. City website development is 70 percent complete, still updating and downloading documents and pictures. Payment Service Network is a web based payment service portal that was contacted along with two additional requests for proposals that have not provided information to provide the access for electronic payments of water and municipal court fines. Also briefly discussed was the addition to the agenda of a credit card policy allowing staff to purchase one-time items needed at City Hall. Staff received a Land Use Compatibility Statement application form issued through OLCC for marijuana licenses for 104 Mill Street, Gaston. Being

the city did not adopt a moratorium prohibiting marijuana until the election, applicants can apply for said licenses and if the initiative passes would allow those marijuana operations to run with state licenses, but possibly prohibit future applicants. Repairs made to the City's passenger side door are finished and was done by Scotties Autobody. Pauly Rogers and Co PC will be here tomorrow and Friday to perform fieldwork for the 2012-2013 audit. A complaint was received at City Hall by a citizen requesting to repaint the curb on 3rd and Church street.

Police: Deputy **Wormington** reported for the month of September 2016; however, the handout report states August. This is a mistake. Stats for the month of September include 70 total incidents, 21 public demand, 49 self-initiated, 1 arrest, 20 traffic stops and 5 citations. On the 7th a welfare check was done. On the 9th a 14 year old was trespassed on school property while offering other female students marijuana. On the 9th two trucks hit and broke each other's extended mirrors with one of the vehicles not stopping. On the 12th, an 8 year old was walking at the post office toward the trailer park during school hours. This student left school and went to the Gaston Market and stole approximately 30 dollars of merchandise. A safety plan was put in place. On the 24th, there were two separate incidents on 3rd Street; one on Church Street and one on Park Street. No crimes identified. Councilor **Meeker** made notice of a post at Brown park was broken. No suspects at this time. On the 30th, a woman crashed her vehicle into a tree and was transported to the hospital. On the 29th a crime scene technician who assists police in forensics and property crimes along with Deputy **Wormington** gave a career presentation at the high school for crime scene investigation. Contracted hours expected are 128.5 and provided by Washington County 148.25. Councilor **Meeker** requested the radar trailer. Deputy **Wormington** has put in the request. Traffic sign at E. Main Street is missing and the speed sign was replaced with a new 25MPH sign, the City previously had a 20MPH sign. Signs will need to be replaced by Northwest Metal Fab & Pipe.

V. COUNCIL REPORTS:

Mayor **Hall** provided his Mayor's Report with Bob **Jolley** working for the City on vehicle maintenance. It was requested not to exceed a total hours per month of no more than \$300. The invoice included in the bills this month however has a total amount of \$900. No action taken.

Public Works Employment Review: Mayor **Hall** reviewed with Council the process for hiring Brent **Whittaker** for the Public Works position. Mayor **Hall** began the review process on Sept 28, finished all interviews the following week, and closed the voting period to hire for the position to October 3, 2016. Recorder **Blanchette** requested to have clarification for the 6-month probation period for Brent **Whittaker**. Benefits will follow the Gaston handbook accordingly.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

VII. Council President Resignation: Mayor **Hall** announced Councilor Richard **Sager** resigned from Council President last month. Mayor **Hall** declared the position vacant conducting a vote by secret ballot with Councilor Jerry **Spaulding** receiving five votes and Councilor Don **Richter** receiving one to be appointed as Council President. Mayor **Hall** appointed Councilor **Spaulding** with six voting members present. Motion to appoint "Councilor **Spaulding** as City Council President," made by Councilor **Jeffries** and seconded by Councilor

Richter. Motion passed with aye votes heard from **Jeffries, Meeker, Hale, Richter,** and **Spaulding.** Nay:0.

VIII. Hiland Water Proposal: Mayor **Hall** discussed a new three-month contract to provide water services for Gaston, not to include reading water meters. Public Works Director **Whittaker** will read meters. Councilor **Hale** motioned to “hire Hiland Water for a three-month term with the option to renew.” Second heard by Councilor **Richter.** Motion passed with aye votes heard from **Jeffries, Meeker, Hale, Richter,** and **Spaulding.** Nay:0. Mayor **Hall** informed Council that staff recommends having Hiland Water perform fieldwork necessary for the water department and hire Richard **Howard** to train **Whittaker** for his Level 1 Water Treatment Distribution certification. **Howard** charges 65\$ an hour with a minimum of three hours.

IX. Richard Howard Proposal: Motion made by Councilor **Spaulding** seconded by Councilor **Meeker** to “Hire Richard **Howard** for 90 days,” subject to \$65 an hour with a minimum of three hours. Motion passed. Aye: **Jeffries, Meeker, Hale, Richter,** and **Spaulding.** Nay:0.

X. Spidal Field: Mayor **Hall** discussed with Council a petition received at City Hall for appointing field three at Brown Park as Spidal Softball Field in memory of Don **Spidal** and his dedication to coaching softball. Motion to adopt field three as Spidal Softball Field was made by Councilor **Spaulding** and seconded by Councilor **Richter.** Motion carried. Voting Aye: **Jeffries, Meeker, Hale, Richter,** and **Spaulding.** Nay:0.

XI. Ordinance No. 2016-02 An Ordinance Approving an Amendment to the Gaston Development Code Section 152.307.03 Specific Fence Standards and Amendments to Section 152.209 Flood Plain Overlay Zone. Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2016-02 was made by Councilor **Meeker** and seconded by Councilor **Spaulding.** Motion carried unanimously. Aye: **Jeffries, Meeker, Hale, Richter,** and **Spaulding.** Nay:0. Second reading of Ordinance 2016-02 by title only was made by Councilor **Meeker** and seconded by Councilor **Jeffries.** Motion passed. Aye: 5, Nay: 0. Motion carried unanimously.

XII. City Issued Credit Cards:

Mayor **Hall** discussed with Council the need for the City to have credit cards as it becomes increasingly difficult to purchase items that are not part of the regular bill process. Discussion heard for having a community card specific to municipalities offered through US Bank. The Credit Card Policy presented will designate what and who are authorized to purchase items on behalf of the City. Each employee will have their own card and are responsible for every purchase made with the card being reviewed and approved monthly. Mayor **Hall** called for a motion to appoint one card for the Public Works Director and one card for the City Recorder. Motion made by Councilor **Spaulding** to “issue two credit cards; one for the Public Works Director Brent **Whittaker** and one card for the City Recorder Wenonah **Blanchette.**” Motion seconded by Councilor **Meeker.** Motion carried. Voting Aye: **Jeffries, Meeker, Hale, Richter,** and **Spaulding.** Nay:0.

OLD BUSINESS:

XIII. Wage Study Increase: Councilor **Spaulding** reviewed with Council the wage study committee recommendations for increasing pay to employees in steps due to the budget process. A gradual increase in wages vs an increase all at once will need to be had to lessen the burden on the budget. Gaston employees should have competitive wages similar to other similar populated cities to maintain employees. Gaston has some of the lowest employee wages for a municipality.

City Recorder **Blanchette** explained the budget process and fund balances are being worked through with Mike **Marr**, the City's hired accountant. Staff was directed to compile salary information regarding the impact for wage increases for the three employee positions and make available at the next council meeting.

COMPLAINTS: Discussion heard amongst the Council of a sidewalk for a new home construction project at 410 Hedin Terrace. Problems relate to the property owner stating that sidewalk specifications have not been provided to him, however the sidewalk in front of the house has been installed but sidewalks on the west side of the property has not been installed. Generally, occupancy is not approved until all City requirements are met. On August 24th the property owner requested and was approved by a general consensus of the Council a 30-day extension citing his difficulty in obtaining a contractor to perform the work in less than four weeks' notice. Public Works Director **Whittaker** sent the property owner a letter on October 7th requesting the City's need to having the sidewalk complete and at that time, it was stated that the requested sidewalks specifications were never provided to the property owner by the property owner. Further discussion heard on remedying the sidewalk issue with the Mayor directing staff to send certified letters requesting the property owner install at his expense the sidewalk.

MINUTES: Mayor **Hall** called for a motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting. Motion made by Councilor **Richter** to "adopt the minutes as presented," and seconded by Councilor **Spaulding**. Motion passed with aye votes heard Aye: **Jeffries, Meeker, Hale, Richter, and Spaulding**. Nay:0.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE: Mayor **Hall** asked Recorder **Blanchette** to review with Council the new accounts payable list with a summary of financial statements to come for the following meetings. Motion to adopt the "Bills Payables for October was made by Councilor **Jeffries** and seconded by Councilor **Meeker**. Motion passed. Aye: 5. Nay: 0.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT: Mayor **Hall** adjourned the regular session at 8:30PM.

Mayor Tony Hall

Attest:

City Recorder Wenonah Blanchette