



City Council Meeting Minutes September 3, 2024

Sammy Hartwick, Mayor	Present
Kelly Knowland	Present
Mark Hardin	Present
Ty Kelso	Present
Larry Johnson	Present
Richard Weaver	Present
Jason Bollinger	Present

Roll call indicated a quorum was present.

Mark Hardin made a motion to accept the August minutes, Richard Weaver seconded and all voted in favor.

Chamber of Commerce Report

Dena DeValle shared the Chamber Report with the Council. The Chamber welcomed seven new members in the month of August, all of which participated in the Back to School Breakfast and Expo on Aug. 13. There were more than 450 members of Greenbrier School faculty and staff present at the event as well. There were two ribbon cuttings in August at The Barking Lot and at Fast Pace Health. The Greenbrier Boxing club is hosting a ribbon cutting on Sept. 5, and the next Lunch and Learn is on Sept. 19.

Discuss Personnel Handbook

Mayor Hartwick presented the new Personnel Handbook to councilmen in the August meeting. Discussion on the handbook was opened to the council. There was a conversation about drug screening, which will be required prior to employment. A question about leave being able to carryover from year to year was asked by Kelly Knowland. Currently, employees are able to carry over vacation or sick days if they have some remaining at the end of the year. Mr. Knowland requested that under employee injury, the employee should be required to report the incident to their supervisor.

Jason Bollinger stated there was a lack of procedures within the policy to give clarity to processes in place within the organizational structure. He requested the addition of a procedures manual to help where there may be a lack of clarity in the procedures in areas such as expenditures.

The Mayor said they would continue developing the handbook and bring it back with changes next month.

Constitution Week Proclamation

City Attorney Dustin Chapman read a proclamation designating September 17-23 as Constitution Week, which is done on an annual basis. A motion to accept the proclamation was made by Jason Bollinger, seconded by Mark Hardin, and passed unanimously.

Street Dedication for East Park

Mr. Tim Tyler with Tyler Surveying and Development presented the final approved plat for East Park Subdivision Phase 3 on Tyler Street on behalf of Hal Crafton. There is a maintenance bond in place for \$20/foot that has been delivered to the Mayors Office. He is requesting the letter of credit be approved for 12 months, and the right of way be dedicated along Tyler Street. A motion to approve the letter of credit and accept the right of way was made by Larry Johnson, seconded by Jason Bollinger, and passed unanimously.

Discuss Rate Study

Mr. Dan Jackson with Willdan Financial Services presented a rate study for the city, which has been mandated by state legislation. Mr. Jackson stated that Greenbrier is facing a phenomenon that much of the state is experiencing. With water being a limited resource, population growth has strained water systems across the state and led to higher rates.

The expenses for water and sewer systems are currently exceeding revenues. The supplier of water for the City of Greenbrier, Community Water Systems has increased their rates by 13% in 2024, and will increase by 13% again in 2025. On average, a customer in Greenbrier who uses 5,000 gallons of water and wastewater a month, will pay \$62.35 which is the middle of the road for cities around the state.

Forecasts from the Garver Water and Sewer master plan indicate that over the next 10 years there will be an average increase of 3% in customers per year. Billed consumption may increase by an average of 1.5% annually. Factors impacting the rate plan include Community Water increases, operating expense increases, and additional positions added in the Water/Wastewater department.

Over the next ten years, it could cost the city almost \$6,000,000 a year to provide water and wastewater services. The biggest jump will be in 2026 due to infrastructure improvements detailed in the Water and Sewer master plan.

Willdan Financial recommends a five year rate plan with adjustments to be effective January 1 of each year from 2025-2029. The plan sets uniform percentage adjustments for base and volume charges, and sets premiums for residents outside of the city at rates of 25% for water, and 50% for wastewater.

The proposed rate plan would have the following impact on an average customer (consuming 5,000 gallons of water and producing 5,000 gallons of wastewater): Inside the city customers will increase from \$62.35 in 2024 to \$70.73 (2025), \$79.38 (2026), \$86.57 (2027), \$91.76 (2028), and \$95.06 (2029). Outside the city customers would increase from \$69.85 in 2024 to \$94.96 (2025), \$106.81 (2026), \$116.86 (2027), \$123.87 (2028), and \$128.55 (2029).

This rate plan would enable the water/wastewater services to remain financially healthy, ensure they can operate on a stand-alone basis from other municipal funds, and result in \$15.5 million in capital investments. The city would continue to have rates that are comparable to or below neighboring municipalities.

Crews and Associates was present to answer some questions regarding the capital investment bond.

Council members will be given access to the presentation so that they can sit with the information for future decisions.

Discuss West Side Connector

Mayor Hartwick stated that the County Judge has allotted money to engineer a west side connector street from Tyler Street to the High School. The estimate for the project is \$8 million, and the city would be asked to pay for 25% of the funding for construction. The project would allow local traffic to bypass a large amount of Highway 65 traffic. Larry Johnson made a motion to proceed with the county on the project. The motion was seconded by Richard Weaver and all voted in favor.

Sewer Improvements East Side

Garver Engineering presented the current state of the wastewater plant improvements and the new 24in line. Completion on the new line is nearing, and flow will be dropped in the line next week.

In the August meeting, Garver was asked for a solution to route septic flow from the east side lift station to the plant. The initial plan would be to build a new east side lift station near the softball complex that could service an additional 500 homes, and could house an extra pump in the future, doubling capacity. There were then four alternate plans presented to connect the new pump station to the sewage plant. These alternatives include a direct force main from the east side lift station to the new 24in line, or upgrading current lines to allow the diversion of flow from the east side lift station with a combination of pressure and gravity lines.

The estimate for each alternative is as follows: Alternate 1: \$1,735,750, Alternate 2: \$2,068,800, Alternate 3: \$1,849,000, Alternate 4: \$1,902,250. A decision will be made by the council in the October meeting.

Crews and Associates gave an update on the timeline for financing projects that were discussed tonight. For funding to be available, the 2023 audit must be completed and the proposed rate adjustments presented tonight must be made, which would include a public hearing with 30 days of notice. If it is not able to be approved in the calendar year, then they must wait for the 2024 audit to be completed. The rate analysis provided by Willdan puts the city in a favorable position for debt service.

Kelly Knowland made a motion to adjourn. Mark Hardin seconded and all voted in favor.

Sammy Hartwick, Mayor

Hunter Thrasher, City Clerk/Treasurer