

Public Works / Finance Committee



Regular Meeting ~Minutes~

www.ci.moscow.id.us

Laurie M. Hopkins
City Clerk

208.883.7015

Monday, January 25, 2021

3:00 PM

Council Chambers
206 E. Third St.

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Maureen Laflin, Anne Zabala (Virtual), Art Bettge

OTHERS: Mayor Bill Lambert, Council Member Gina Taruscio (Virtual), Council Member Brandy Sullivan (Virtual)

STAFF: Megan Cherry, Amanda Argona, Gary Riedner, Kyle Steele (Virtual), Tyler Palmer (Virtual), James Fry (Virtual), Roger Lanier (Virtual), Bill Belknap (Virtual), Mia Bautista (Virtual), Taylor Riedner (Virtual)

REGULAR AGENDA

1. Approval of January 11, 2021 Public Works/Finance Committee Minutes (ACTION ITEM) - Taylor Riedner

Minutes presented for approval.

PROPOSED ACTIONS: Approve minutes as presented; approve minutes with amendments; or take such other action deemed appropriate.

The minutes were approved as presented.

2. Ordinance Amending Title 5 of Moscow City Code with the Addition of Chapter 19 - Kyle Steele / Tyler Palmer

The City of Moscow was issued a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) Permit on August 5, 2019, which became effective on October 1, 2019. The MS4 Permit requires the City to develop and implement a comprehensive stormwater program. The City currently has few revenue sources and funding mechanisms to operate the existing stormwater program. Expenses for existing stormwater related activities are currently covered by general fund revenues. Due to increasing costs, increased maintenance and tracking requirements, and regulatory compliance responsibilities of the new MS4 Permit, securing the necessary additional funding and implementing the recommendations developed through the gap analysis process identified in the City of Moscow Stormwater User Fee Study is essential. The proposed amendment and adoption of Moscow City Code Title 5, by the addition of Chapter 19, would establish a system of stormwater user fees to fund and carry out a comprehensive stormwater management program. Stormwater user fees would be collected from customers within the entire incorporated area of the City proportionate to the cost of providing proprietary stormwater services. The money from stormwater user fees will be used to manage and operate the municipal stormwater control system in compliance with federal laws. The municipal stormwater control system exists to provide drainage services to properties within the City.

PROPOSED ACTIONS: Recommend Council approval of the proposed amendment to Title 5, by addition of Chapter 19, or provide staff further direction.

Steele presented the item as written above and stated that a permit was issued to the City of Moscow from the United States Environmental Protection Agency. The City faced a similar permit in the early 1990's regarding sewer regulations for environmental protection and this new permit for stormwater management suggests the same idea. Non-compliance would subject the City to penalties under federal law which can range up to \$37,500 per day per violation. The City is prohibited from using revenue collected to pay for non-stormwater related expenses. As discussed at a previous meeting, there are certain milestones that must be met throughout the 5-year permit term. The program will consist of additional startup costs and trials and the initial focus will be to fulfill requirements of the permit. Other projects such as rain barrels, additional education and rebates may occur in the future. Impacted properties will be contacted for one on one education and staff will also be reaching out to local schools for additional information. A range of fees will be charged to properties that receive stormwater service and discharge into the City's stormwater control system. Property owners are allowed to seek fee adjustments or elimination through an application and appeals process. Roughly 150 properties have already received a direct discharge credit. If the Council were to adopt the ordinance, it is proposed that the City will start applying fees on October 1st. The Committee recommended approval and that it be placed on the Council regular agenda.

3. Renewal of Agreement for E911 Services and Complete Dispatch Services with Whitcom - Gary J. Riedner

Since 2004, the City of Moscow has been contracting with Whitcom, the consolidated dispatch agency serving Whitman County, City of Pullman, Asotin County and the Nez Perce Tribe, for emergency dispatch, communications and E-911 services. The current agreement was renewed in 2016 and expired on December 31, 2020. For the past year, the Whitcom member entities have been discussing fee structures which would be equitable to all members. The new agreement contains a fee structure for the City of Moscow which is 21.25% of Whitcom's budget. The percentage takes into account in-kind services provided to Whitcom by Whitman County, City of Pullman and Washington State University (WSU). The new agreement is for two years (January 2021-December 31, 2022). Fees for the first year (2021) are \$607,213.25, and fees for the second year (2022) are \$712,911, which is the calculation of 21.25% of the Whitcom budget for each respective year.

PROPOSED ACTIONS: Recommend approval of the Agreement for E911 Services and Complete Dispatch Services with Whitcom from January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2022, or provide staff further direction.

In the early 1990's Moscow began enhanced E-911 Emergency Services and had a full staff of dispatchers and management housed at the current police department. From 2000 to 2003, the City researched what it would take to replace the existing system and the district judge determined that the operation of an E-911 was not an ordinary or necessary expense under the Idaho Constitution. After researching various other options, it was determined that Whitcom had the capacity and ability to provide dispatch services and the City negotiated an agreement. Whitman County, Pullman, and WSU were already in contract with Whitcom at the time with an inner-governmental-inner-local agreement. Since 2004, the City secured Moscow's dispatchers employment at Whitcom, the agreement has been renewed in 4-year terms, cost has increased due to inflation, and Whitcom added services to Asotin County. Moscow and Asotin County are known as contract members since it is not part of the original

3 entities. In the 2015 renewal, the City was given a voting position on the board for the City Supervisor or their designee which is Police Chief.

The agreement is currently expired but Whitcom recognized that negotiations were in the process and would continue services. Concerns with Whitcom at the time was the inconsistency and unstable employment rate. Today they are on the path of stability and continue to improve their operations and efficiency. Initial discussion of funding models for the renewal agreement came to City Council in June 2020. One proposed fee structure was a call volume model where entities pay an amount per call. Moscow has a non-emergency and after-hours public works dispatch for calls regarding sewer backup, water main break, or an event that would require a public works response, thus the call volume model would be inadequate. Another model regarded population which also proved insufficient as everyone needs to have access to emergency services regardless of population size. The final and most efficient proposal was to divide the budget and operations cost of Whitcom by the number of entities and share expenses equally. Whitman County, Pullman and WSU's in-kind services are roughly 2.5% of the budget and are therefore given a credit. A draft budget was shared with the Committee to demonstrate monetary value of this agreement. Going forward, the Moscow is hoping for an additional seat on the Whitcom Governing Board, a multiple year agreement for stability and predictability, and a standard calculation of yearly fees. The Committee agreed that an additional seat on the board should be requested. The Committee recommended approval and that it be placed on the Council regular agenda.

REPORTS

Moscow Farmers Market Friendship Square Entertainment Contingency Plans for 2021 Season – Amanda Argona

The Farmers Market is roughly 3 to 4 months out and is looking at another potentially unstable year due to COVID. In January, an application was sent out to local performers and folks to come play at the Farmers Market and the Committee has put together a few contingency plans. Option 1 would be to simply not offer any live market entertainment, which had happened in 2020's Farmers Market. Option 2 is the potential of offering market entertainment with some restrictions and additional safety measures. Option 3 is to offer market entertainment with no restrictions. All options are subject to change based on the community's situation and public health recommendations. Entertainment in the market is great for the moral and community but must be done safely and correctly. An outline of the contingency plan is located in the meeting packet for additional information. The Farmers Market Commission will be coming back to Council before the start of market for any additional updates and information.

2021 Arts Event Update – Megan Cherry

The obstacles and limitations that were faced in 2020 forced the recognition of opportunities and helped develop more flexibility in art programs that will be beneficial going forward. Scheduled Third Street Galleries for 2021 include *Dear Moscow* (December 2020-April 2021), *Silver & Gold* (April-July), *Ctrl+P* (July-October), and *Sculptured Spaces* (October-January 2022). These have online registration and are publicly-viewable through Submittable until City Hall re-opens to the public. At that time, physical installations will be accessible but number of visitors will be limited and masks required. The *Poetry Relay* in April will have the similar opportunities with video readings and/or print delivery. This year will offer another Mactivities Toolbox which started in response to COVID and has been valuable for arts education and offers low contact through online registration and pickup. Artwalk will depend on the conditions of COVID in June. The current idea is to have art in host

locations with no street fair. Reduced registration fees may compensate the reduced activities. Entertainment in the Park in July will also depend on COVID conditions and attendance will vary from a limited audience and assigned seating to no restrictions. Fewer congregational and interactive events/performances and more musical/stationary activities may be considered. Palouse Plein Air does not have any modifications at this time in hopes of regular schedules starting again. However, the same implementations from 2020 will be used if needed.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 4:16 p.m.

