

UNION GAP CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
Council Chambers, City Hall
Union Gap, Washington
July 23, 2007

Call to Order Mayor Reeves called the Regular Meeting of the Union Gap City Council to order at 7:09 p.m.

Council Members Present Council Members Jim Lemon, David Butler, Dan Olson, Toni Webb, Glenn Bateman, Dan Vanover, and Roger Wentz were present.

Staff Present Bob Noe, City Attorney; Dennis Henne, Public Works Director; Tom Kehm, Fire Chief; Robert Almeida, Police Chief; William Rathbone, Development Coordinator; Karen Clifton, City Treasurer; and Kathryn Thompson, City Clerk were present.

Audience Present Tim Whitehurst, Larry Bird, Jo Collier, Dave & Debbie Matson, Phil Salzman, Pastor David Dalton, Dawn Lemon, Stephanie Kern, James Murr, John Cooper, and others were present.

Invocation Pastor David Dalton presented the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance The Police Chief led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Consent Agenda Motion by Council Member Vanover, seconded by Council Member Webb to approve the consent agenda, as follows:

Approve the Study Session Council Meeting Minutes, dated July 9, 2007, as sent out on pages 4660 through 4662 of the Minute Book.

Approve the Regular Council Meeting Minutes, dated July 9, 2007, as sent out on pages 4663 through 4666 of the Minute Book.

Approve Claim Voucher Nos. 69422 through 69515 in the amount of \$421,195.97, dated July 23, 2007 and transfer from the operating funds to the Claims Fund.

Motion carried unanimously; Council Member Olson temporarily absent.

Recommendation from Lodging Tax Advisory Committee Regarding Creation of a Tourism Promotion Coordinator Position Mayor Reeves announced that Lodging Tax Advisory Committee Member Tom Denlea would not be available for tonight's meeting.

Council Member Lemon expressed concern that the recommendation is still to make this position a new employee. He informed he would only support this position if it is funded solely by hotel/motel tax money and does not affect the General Fund. He stated there should be no co-mingling of job duties or funding.

Mayor Reeves stated that was discussed at the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee meeting, but the recommendation is still to hire an employee.

Motion by Council Member Lemon, seconded by Council Member Wentz to table this item until Mr. Denlea can be present. Motion carried unanimously.

Ordinance No. 2536 – Conditionally Creating Additional Fire Fighter Position The Fire Chief informed the fire department is a combination department with 22 volunteers and six career staff. He stated the volunteers are highly motivated and the best trained in the valley, and the officers have three years with the department and are EMT's and apparatus certified. He stated the department serves 25-40,000 customers during the day when workers and shoppers are in town, and provides service 24 hours a day 7 days a week. He informed the department has been experiencing problems because the well trained volunteers have retired or found career jobs and it is difficult to recruit 25-45 year olds that

will volunteer the number of hours necessary.

Council Member Lemon questioned why this request is for conditional approval.

The Fire Chief stated any offer of employment is conditional.

Council Member Wentz questioned why creating the position is conditional.

The Fire Chief stated they could not find a qualified deputy chief after that position was vacated in November 2004, and they are negotiating creating three captain positions so there will be a captain on each shift for supervisory staff 24 hours a day. In order to change to the three captains, they also need to hire an additional person, so this position is conditional upon approval of the labor contract negotiations.

Council Member Wentz questioned if there is money in the budget for this position.

Mayor Reeves stated the fire department is about 4 percent under budget on salaries for the first six months of this year, which should allow enough money to pay this new position for the remainder of the year.

Motion by Council Member Wentz, seconded by Council Member Lemon to adopt and publish Ordinance No. 2536 without the “conditional” language, as follows, Ordinance No. 2536, An Ordinance of the Union Gap City Council creating an additional Fire Fighter position.

Council Member Olson commented he spoke with both attorneys and the conditional offer is an attempt to be careful because of the union negotiations in case something goes haywire.

Council Member Vanover commented if another fire fighter is needed to cover the shifts, the City should hire one.

Mayor Reeves commented the proposed captain program is what creates the need for another fire fighter.

Council Member Wentz questioned if the Mayor is supportive of changing to the proposed three captains versus a deputy chief.

Mayor Reeves stated he is supportive of the proposal because it provides a paid employee supervisor for every shift and for training in the evenings.

Council Member Olson commented this is being discussed with the bargaining agreement right now and the deputy chief position has been vacant for three years.

Council Member Wentz commented if the City does not hire one of our volunteers there should be a good reason because they are extremely qualified.

Council Member Butler questioned how much overtime the City has been paying to cover shifts.

The Fire Chief stated \$13,000 last month.

Council Member Butler commented this proposal is a no brainer.

Council Member Lemon questioned if the City Attorney knows of any legal problem with creating the position without it being “conditional”.

The City Attorney stated there is no legal problem.

Mayor Reeves called for a vote on the motion to adopt and publish Ordinance No. 2536, An Ordinance of the Union Gap City Council creating an additional Fire Fighter position. Motion carried unanimously.

Phil Salzman, Civil Service Chairman, informed the Commission has already approved a new eligibility list for hiring, so the Civil Service process will not handicap this action in anyway.

Items from the Audience

There was no one present wishing to speak.

Departmental Reports

Mayor Reeves informed the following reports are in the packet and questioned if the Council has any questions of the departments: Public Works Department Status Report – June 2007; Police Department Status Report – June 2007; Fire Department Status Report – June 2007; New Businesses Report – June/July 2007.

Agenda for August 13th Council Meeting

There were no additions to the Council agenda for August 13th.

Communications/ Questions/Comments

Police Dept. Expenditure. Council Member Bateman questioned what the jumpsuits purchased by the Police Department for \$431 each will be used for.

The Police Chief informed one jumpsuit was ordered for each officer last year, and they are just beginning to arrive because of backorders. He explained these jumpsuits are gortex and will be worn in the Fall and Winter instead of wearing shirts, pants, and bulky winter coats. He stated these are warmer, more economical, and faster for dressing for emergency call outs. He stated the price is reasonable considering the summer weight pants cost approximately \$100 each. He stated these suits are insulated and waterproof for the elements also.

Mayor Reeves commented these suits will provide more flexibility for officers involved in scuffles also.

Newsletter. Council Member Lemon stated it has been suggested that the name of the librarian be listed in the newsletter.

Mayor Reeves stated there are two librarians, but they can be listed.

Travel Expenses for Union Gap Royalty. Council Member Wentz commented he reviewed the information provided regarding travel expenses for the Union Gap Royalty, and suggested the committee present a proposed expense budget to the Council.

After discussion, it was the consensus of the Council to ask the committee to bring their budget request to the next Council meeting.

Adjourn to 30-Minute Executive Session

At 7:35 p.m., Mayor Reeves adjourned the Regular Council meeting to a 30-Minute Executive Session to discuss Personnel Issues.

These minutes dated July 23, 2007 were approved at the Regular Council Meeting of August 13, 2007.

Aubrey C. Reeves, Jr.
Mayor

ATTEST:

Kathryn Thompson, CMC
City Clerk