

UNION GAP CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
Council Chambers, City Hall
Union Gap, Washington
September 8, 2008

- Call to Order Mayor Lemon called the Regular Meeting of the Union Gap City Council to order at 7:02 p.m.
- Council Members Present Council Members David Butler (7:05 p.m.), Dan Olson, Glenn Bateman, Dan Vanover, Roger Wentz, Dave Matson, and James Murr (7:04 p.m.) were present.
- Staff Present Robert Noe, City Attorney; Dennis Henne, Public Works Director; William Rathbone, Development Coordinator; Robert Almeida, Police Chief; Keith Yamane, Fire Chief; Lydia Warehime, Sr. Citizen Liaison; Kip Kendrick, Municipal Court Judge; Karen Clifton, City Treasurer; and Kathryn Thompson, City Clerk were present.
- Audience Present Fred Thomson, Vickie Ybarra, Jo Collier, Rhonda Ruhland, Joe & Linda Jackson, Debbie Matson, Phil Salzman, Greg Lybeck, Jeri Berube, Stephanie Gray, Amber Gooch, and others were present.
- Pledge of Allegiance The Public Works Director led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Special Award Presentation Mayor Lemon presented a certificate to Lydia Warehime, Sr. Citizen Liaison, for 5 years of service to the City.
- Ms Warehime thanked the Mayor and Council for their support and informed the group has grown since moving to the youth park.
- Consent Agenda Motion by Council Member Wentz, seconded by Council Member Vanover to approve the consent agenda, as follows:
- Approve the Regular Council Meeting Minutes, dated August 25, 2008, as sent out on pages 4831 through 4835 of the Minute Book.
- Approve Claim Voucher Nos. 72617 through 72650 in the amount of \$261,233.73 dated August 29, 2008 and transfer from the operating funds to the Claims Fund.
- Approve Payroll Voucher Nos. 31885 through 31965 in the amount of \$148,109.09, dated August 29, 2008 and transfer from the operating funds to the Payroll Fund.
- Approve Claim Voucher Nos. 72651 through 72717, in the amount of \$251,311.61 dated September 8, 2008 and transfer from the operating funds to the Claims Fund.
- Adopt and publish Ordinance No. 2578, An Ordinance amending the 2008 Budget authorizing the expenditure of \$18,000 from the Current Expense Fund for 2007 Audit costs.
- Adopt and publish Ordinance No. 2579, An Ordinance amending the 2008 Budget authorizing the expenditure of \$33,698.76 from the Current Expense Fund to repay the Infrastructure Reserve Fund.
- Adopt and publish Ordinance No. 2580, An Ordinance amending the 2008 Budget authorizing the expenditure of up to \$21,000 for the purchase of a Public Works tractor for use in the parks.
- Motion carried unanimously; Council Members Butler and Murr absent.

Ord. No. 2581 – Amending Municipal Code – Establishing Grace Period for Payment of Delinquent Charges for Water Service

Mayor Lemon informed this policy has been followed for many years without an ordinance in place.

Motion by Council Member Vanover, seconded by Council Member Wentz to adopt and publish Ordinance No. 2581, An Ordinance amending Union Gap Municipal Code section 12.04.110 Penalty Charge for Late Payment, to include provisions establishing a grace period for payment on delinquent charges for water service. Motion carried unanimously.

Ord. No. 2582 – Setting Melonee Moser’s salary for the position of Full-Time Court Clerk

Council Member Matson questioned what this employee’s present salary is.

Municipal Court Judge Kip Kendrick informed he does not have the amount, but she is on step 5 of the Deputy Clerk position and if she is promoted to the Court Clerk position she goes to the next step up which is a few dollars more.

Motion by Council Member Vanover, seconded by Council Member Butler to adopt and publish Ordinance No. 2582, An Ordinance setting Melonee Moser’s salary for the position of Full-Time Court Clerk. Motion failed: Council Members Butler, Vanover, and Murr voting in favor; Council Members Olson, Bateman, Wentz, and Matson voting no.

Council Member Matson commented this employee has not completed probation and he is not supportive of advancing an employee during probation. He stated he understands she has been a good employee, but if she is promoted she should be placed on probation for another year. He commented the system cannot be changed for one person when everyone else has had to work his or her way up. He informed he would be okay with her moving to the new position at the same wage with another year of probation.

Judge Kendrick informed when this employee was hired she had a number of years experience and could hit the ground running and could step into the lead clerk position when needed. He commented he does not feel it would be fair to require her to complete another year of probation. He stated he could place her in the position temporarily and promote her when she is off probation.

The City Attorney stated an employee can be promoted during probation but they are subject to a new probationary period unless the Mayor waives the probationary period. He informed the Council authorizes wages and they are not authorizing that step of the pay scale.

Mayor Lemon informed this would be an appointment to a new position and the employee will be on probation per the contract unless the Judge chooses to wait until January to fill the position. He stated the Council is addressing this issue because it is a financial matter.

Judge Kendrick informed he does not want to speak for Ms Moser, so he will need to talk to her about these issues.

The City Treasurer reported Ms Moser’s current salary is \$3,168 and step 4 of the new position would be \$3,260, which is \$108 more per month.

After discussion, it was the consensus of the Council to have the Judge talk with the employee and possibly discuss this again at the next meeting.

Ord. No. 2583 – Setting Christina Chapman’s salary for the position of Full-Time Deputy Court Clerk

Motion by Council Member Vanover, seconded by Council Member Butler to adopt and publish Ordinance No. 2583, An Ordinance setting Christina Chapman’s salary for the position of Full-Time Deputy Court Clerk. Motion failed: Council Members Butler, Vanover, and Murr voting in favor; Council Members Olson, Bateman, Wentz, and Matson voting no.

Judge Kendrick stated this position was advertised in the newspaper and the ad says salary depends on experience. He informed she has many years of experience and can hit the ground running.

Council Member Matson commented the Council has to consider the morale of the whole City.

Mayor Lemon informed other employees have had to work their way up through the steps.

Judge Kendrick stated other employees did not come to Union Gap with 20 years experience in the position.

Mayor Lemon questioned if the Judge knows other employees did not come in with years of experience or is he assuming.

Judge Kendrick stated he is assuming.

Council Member Matson commented the City has hired people at step 1 with six or seven years of experience.

Judge Kendrick informed she is the only qualified applicant.

Mayor Lemon stated there was one young man from Union Gap with a BA degree from Central Washington University.

Judge Kendrick stated it takes about 2 years to train a person for this position even if they have a BA degree because they have to know the computer programs and the court system.

The Council asked the City Clerk if there were other qualified applicants.

The City Clerk informed a number of applications have been received, but she did not review the applications or the qualifications.

Judge Kendrick informed he reviewed the applications and good people applied, but no one experienced and the court needs someone experienced. He informed the court clerk is way behind and just recently sent 1500 cases worth 1.6 million dollars to collection because she was behind in her work.

Mayor Lemon questioned if this person has been offered the position at step 1.

Judge Kendrick stated she currently earns more than step 3, but she is willing to take step 3 because with better benefits, it will be a straight across move for her.

Council Member Matson commented she has a lot of experience, but none of the experience is with the City.

Judge Kendrick informed he has worked with her as an attorney for 20 years and she comes highly recommended by the District Court judges.

Council Member Butler commented he believes the City is shooting themselves in the foot if they do not jump on hiring someone with this much experience.

Jo Collier informed she supports the recommendation because no other applicant has the qualifications and computer experience that is required for the courts. She also commented it is not like the City has not done this before and stated no one had a problem with starting the janitor on step 3.

Mayor Lemon questioned if Ms Collier is speaking on behalf of the union.

Ms Collier stated she is here to support the Judge. She stated she has not spoken with other union employees, but this is fair because of the qualifications and the City should be hiring someone qualified.

Judge Kendrick requested the Council reconsider this decision.

Council Member Vanover commented the City will end up paying more for training than it would pay for this experience and the court will be down 90 – 180 days while training.

Expenditure Request – Recommendation from the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee for donation to offset the cost of painting the basketball court in the SunDome

Motion by Council Member Olson, seconded by Council Member Wentz to authorize the expenditure of \$7,500 from the Convention Center Reserve Fund as a donation to help offset the cost of painting the basketball court used during WIAA High School basketball tournaments in the SunDome. Motion carried: Council Members Butler, Olson, Wentz, Matson, and Murr voting in favor; Council Members Bateman and Vanover voting no.

Greg Lybeck, State Fair Park Assistant General Manager, thanked the Council for their support. He informed small items like this mean a lot to the WIAA, and stated Yakima will be hosting 7 basketball tournaments this year instead of 2, and those are in addition to the baseball, softball, and volleyball tournaments that are held here. He stated they are also requesting donations from the cities of Yakima and Selah.

Items from the Audience

Vickie Ybarra, informed she is running for 14th District State Representative and is here to listen and learn. She stated she appreciates how open the Council's meetings are.

Development of Next Agenda

Council Member Olson commented the next agenda looks short and questioned if the study session items could be moved to the regular meeting.

The City Clerk stated if the agenda stays short, she will contact the presenters and see if they are willing to move to 7:00 p.m.

Departmental Reports

Mayor Lemon informed the following reports are in the packet and questioned if the Council has any questions of the departments: Building/Mechanical & Plumbing Report – August 2008; and Code Enforcement Activity Report – August 2008.

Resignation. The Fire Chief announced that he resigned on Friday and will be leaving at the end of September. He thanked the Mayor and Council for his time here and stated he enjoyed being here and commented there are a lot of really good employees here.

At 7:33 p.m., Mayor Lemon adjourned the Regular Council meeting.

Adjournment

These minutes dated September 8, 2008 were approved at the Regular Council Meeting of September 22, 2008.

Jim Lemon, Mayor

ATTEST:

Kathryn Thompson, CMC, City Clerk