

Minutes of the Blythe City Council October 11, 2016

The October 11, 2016 Meeting of the Blythe City Council was called to order at 6:00pm in the Council Chambers by Mayor DeConinck. Also in attendance were Vice Mayor Wade and Council Members Galvan, Reynolds and Egan. Staff in attendance included: City Manager Cosentini, City Clerk and Deputy Administrative Services Director Crecelius, City Treasurer and Interim Finance Director Elms, Police Chief Wade, Public Works Director Baldizzone, Planner Burrow and City Attorney Bettenhausen.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor DeConinck. The invocation was offered by Councilman Galvan. Councilman Reynolds asked for a moment of silence in honor of the fallen Palm Springs Police Officers.

REPORT FROM CLOSED SESSION:

City Attorney Bettenhausen stated Council went into Closed Session to discuss one item, Conference with Legal Counsel, Existing Litigation. Direction was given, no final action was taken.

CONSENT CALENDAR: *Items on the Consent Calendar are considered routine and will be enacted with one motion of the Council. If any item requires individual consideration, it will be removed from the consent calendar and acted upon separately.*

1. **Posting of the Agenda.**
The summary of agenda items were posted on the bulletin boards on the outside of the public entrance to the Council Chamber and near the inside entrance of the Council Chamber on Friday, October 7, 2016.
2. **Approval of the Warrant Register.**
Recommendation: Approve **10/11/16**, warrants numbered 64925 through 64992, 64694 and warrants numbered 64993 through 65008 in the amount of \$289,300.92 and **10/17/16** and warrants numbered 65009 through 65080 in the amount of \$553,334.49.
3. **Approval of the Payroll Register.**
Recommendation: Approve **10/11/16**, warrants numbered 48636 through 48664 and Direct Deposits numbered 37631 through 37687 in the amount of \$237255.66; **10/11/16**, warrants numbered 48665 through 48688 and Direct Deposits numbered 37688 through 37744 in the amount of \$208,359.33 and **10/11/16**, warrants numbered 48689 through 48697 and Direct Deposits numbered 377455 through 37844 in the amount of \$64,513.32.
4. **Minutes of the September 13, 2016 City Council Meeting.**
Recommendation: Approve the Minutes of the September 13, 2016 Meeting.
5. **City of Blythe Permits Issued in September 2016.**
Recommendation: Receive and file this monthly report.
6. **City of Blythe Fire Department Monthly Activity Report for September 2016.**
Recommendation: Receive and file this monthly report.
7. **City of Blythe Police Department Monthly Activity Report for September 2016.**
Recommendation: Receive and file this monthly report.
8. **Investment Report for First Quarter of FY 2016/17.**
Recommendation: Receive and file this quarterly report.
9. **Destruction of Certain Financial Records and Documents for Fiscal Year 2010-2011.**
Recommendation: Adopt Resolution No. 2016-027 authorizing the destruction of records for Fiscal Year 2010-2011.

RESOLUTION NO. 2016-027. A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BLYTHE, CALIFORNIA AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE TO DESTROY CERTAIN FINANCIAL RECORDS AND DOCUMENTS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2010/2011.

No public comment. Vice Mayor Wade moved approval of the Consent Calendar. The motion was seconded by Councilman Egan with a unanimous aye vote.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Allocation of 2017/18 CDBF Funds. Planner Burrow excused herself from the meeting due to a potential conflict of interest. Public Works Director Baldizzone reported eligible projects for funding include public facility improvement, property acquisitions, public service and capital improvements. The City's allocation for the 2017-2018 fiscal year is estimated to be \$50,521 with 14% or \$7,072 available for public service projects. The County retains 1% to provide County wide services. The County will also retain \$25,000 as part of the Community Center remodel project. Riverside County has placed a minimum grant restriction of \$10,000 per public service project. Due to our allocation, our restriction was reduced to \$5,000 allowing us to fund once service project this year. There is a chance that the Board of Supervisors will grant funds to meet the \$10,000 minimum funding. Funds allocated must be spent within two years of award. Public Service projects were received from Blythe Emergency Food Pantry and Sheltering Wings. Staff recommends subsequent to the public hearing Council fund the service project submitted by the Blythe Emergency Food Pantry, or fund both service projects in the amount of \$3,536 each pending funding from Riverside County, authorize the Mayor to execute the supplemental agreement with Riverside County and allow the City Manager to reprogram funds as required.

Mayor DeConinck opened the Public Hearing.

Councilman Galvan asked what other types of funding was received by Sheltering Wings. Leslie Jessop Watkins of Sheltering Wings stated we are paid for the work we do with adults with developmental disabilities. We are paid for the job coaches and aids, have a contract to care for the Wiley's Well rest area, grants and hold fundraisers.

Samuel Renoso, a client of Sheltering Wings reported on what he does at Sheltering Wings.

Mel Culp with Sheltering Wings thanked the Council for the opportunity to apply for the grant. Currently we have 30 clients with 15 in the day program and 15 in supported employment.

Councilman Egan moved to: 1) Authorize the Mayor to execute the supplemental agreement with the Riverside County Economic Development Agency (EDA) for the allocation of the 2017-2018 CDBG funds for the following projects: Public Service/Facility Improvements – Blythe Emergency Food Pantry, (\$7,072±) or Blythe Emergency Food Pantry, (\$3,536±) and Sheltering Wings Corporation (\$3,536±) contingent on the allocation of funding from Riverside County; City of Blythe – Park Improvements (\$42,943±); and, 2) Authorize the City Manager to reprogram funds as required. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Wade with aye votes from: DeConinck, Wade, Galvan, Reynolds and Egan. Noes: None.

ORDINANCE:

Adoption of 2016 California Codes. Building Inspector Garnica stated the City of Blythe enforces the Building Codes in Title 15 and 17 of the Blythe Municipal Code. Updates were made in 2016. By adopting the 2016 Codes it will correct these amendments. It is recommend Council conduct the first reading of Ordinance No. 879-16.
Codes

No public comment. Vice Mayor Wade moved approval of staff's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Councilman Egan with a unanimous aye vote. City Clerk Crecelius read the title of the Ordinance into the record.

ORDINANCE NO. 879-16. AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BLYTHE AMENDING TITLE 15, BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION, AND TITLE 17, ZONING, OF THE BLYTHE MUNICIPAL CODE.

CONTINUED BUSINESS:

Todd Park Public Restroom Improvement Project. Public Works Director Baldizzone reported this has been a project since 2015. The Park and Recreation Committee first looked at Pre-fabricated restrooms but the cost was prohibitive. On July 12, 2016 Council authorized staff to proceed with a request for proposals for engineering and design of a new restroom in a central location in Todd Park. The total proposed cost of the project was \$230,000 with \$141,000 available in CDBG funding. Staff contacted CIF about applying for a grant for the difference needed for this project. After several conversations with CIF staff decided not to submit a grant application as only project estimates were available. Staff received one proposal for the engineering and design of the restroom with a cost of \$71,493 which exceeds the estimated budget of \$25,000. It is recommended Council reject all bids submitted for engineering and architectural design for the Todd Park Restroom Project and authorize staff to proceed with the bid process for the demolition of the existing restroom and the construction of a new restroom in the same location using the current City plans. The project must be completed by March 31, 2017 or the City risks losing the CDBG funding for this project.

Councilman Galvan asked if CDBG would approve these plans. It was reported the plans were previously approved by CDBG. Councilman Galvan stated our fields are outdated and I wanted a nicer restroom there. I don't like how the current restrooms are set up; they should be inside the fence facing the ball field.

Councilman Egan asked if the cost of rehabilitation was higher than demolition. It was reported the restrooms are totally outdated with plumbing issues. Councilman Egan asked if we obtained bids on rehabbing the restroom. It was reported no.

Councilman Reynolds stated those restrooms have been there since I played ball on those fields.

Mayor DeConinck stated the main problem is the sewer lines that keep plugging up. Public Work Director Baldizzone stated we also have to bring it up to ADA standards so a rehab would not necessarily be more cost effective.

Public Comment. Michelle VanDyke of 14271 W. Riverside Dr. stated she understands the design change to have it accessible to the ball fields but as a parent with kids who would use the playground it would not be accessible to anyone using the park because it's locked up in a ball field.

Councilman Galvan would like a Park and Recreation Committee Meeting to look at the park and see where it will be best to locate the restroom so it is accessible to everyone.

Councilman Reynolds moved approval of staff's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Vice Mayor Wade with a unanimous aye vote.

Planner Burrow rejoined the City Council meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Community Improvement Fund Grant Program- Goal #2. Interim Finance Director Elms reported on August 30th Council identified Goals and then adopted a scope of work for each goal. Goal #2 was Council's interest in the CIF Grant Program. Staff recommends Council identify and prioritize a list of qualifying projects today as a starting point for achieving the goal. The goal setting process used on August 9th will be used for this list of projects. This process will consist of each councilmember one by one identifying projects for council consideration until we have a list of projects to work with. The items with a majority vote from Council will make a list to be ranked. CIF's Grant policy states matching dollar assistance. Once staff has Council's list of projects we will begin to explore additional funding options.

Council directed questions to Charles Hull, CEO of CIF regarding CIF's grant policy and which projects would and would not apply for funding. Mr. Hull stated the guidelines state it must have a public benefit and lessen the burden of government. City Manager Cosentini suggested the Council make a wish list. Staff will take that list to CIF to see what could qualify for grant funding and report back to Council.

The following projects were submitted:

Project:	Selected by:
1. Blighted Property in view of I-10	Councilman Egan
2. Gateway Park Improvements	Councilman Reynolds
3. Restrooms at Alexander Field	Councilman Galvan
4. Grant Writer	Mayor DeConinck
5. Goals List in Attachment #4	Vice Mayor Wade
Additional Staff	
Development Impact Fees	
Prison Worker Program	
Resources to address Transient problem	
Clean up of blighted buildings	
Master Plans for Water/Sewer/Parks/Drainage	
Fee for Study Service	
6. Direct Prospecting	Councilman Egan
7. Rehabilitation of Lighting and Landscape Dist.	Councilman Galvan
8. Welcome signs at each end of City	Councilman Egan

Vice Mayor Wade and Mayor DeConinck would like to focus on the goals already in place.

Councilman Reynolds would like to present all of the goals to find out what is or isn't eligible and then add or delete based on the findings.

Mayor DeConinck would like to hear ideas from CIF as well. CIF has helped the City many times. CEO Hull reported \$250,000 to the Rec Center, \$95,000 for the Splash Pad and \$35,000 for the Buxton Study.

Vice Mayor Wade would like to take suggestions from the public.

City Manager Cosentini asked that Council vote on these items to make sure they have a majority vote of the Council.

Public comment. Leslie Watkins of 734 Riviera Dr. asked for clarification on the two lists that will be presented to CIF. She asked if homeless was on that list. It was reported it was.

Vice Mayor Wade stated some of these items are already on a list, the grant writer is funded. It seems like the two lists are now competing with each other. City Manager Cosentini stated we have \$10,000 for a grant writer, if they are going to do some type of match we could ask them for more and expand that amount.

Councilman Egan moved approval of the list submitted by Council. The motion was seconded by Councilman Reynolds with aye votes from: DeConinck, Galvan, Reynolds and Egan and a no vote from Wade.

Request to Waive Fees- Palo Verde College. Councilman Egan recused himself from the discussion due to a potential conflict of interest. Deputy Administrative Services Director Crecelius reported staff received a request from Palo Verde College to waive fees at the Community Center for their Christmas Party to be held on December 9th. The College has paid the City's labor fee and cleaning deposit, but is asking for the hourly rate of \$45 be waived for the event. Total fees to be waived are \$450. The City routinely waives fees for other governmental agencies such as the College for their use of meeting space at City Hall as there is little to no cost involved. But as there is a rental fee schedule adopted by council for use of the Community Center, waiving fees takes Council approval. It is recommended Council waive the Community Center's hourly rental fee for Palo Verde College.

Vice Mayor Wade asked if it was a party or fundraiser. It was reported it's for PVC staff's annual Christmas Party.

Councilman Reynolds stated it was held at the VIM last year, but as it's now closed they are looking for a new location. Deputy Administrative Services Director Crecelius stated alcohol will be served and they probably can't do that on the College campus.

Councilman Galvan stated I could understand if it was a fundraiser for kids, but this is a private party.

Vice Mayor Wade stated he felt the same way when I first read it, but they are a partner in the Community and I would like to work together.

Mayor DeConinck stated they hold events at the College they do not charge for. It was reported they waived about \$2,500 in fees for our Centennial Events.

No public comment. Vice Mayor Wade moved approval of staff's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Councilman Reynolds with aye votes from: DeConinck, Wade and Reynolds and a no vote from Galvan.

Councilman Egan rejoined the Council meeting.

Grant Writer- Goal #1. Deputy Administrative Services Director Crecelius reported during the Goal Setting process the #1 goal selected by Council was grant writing. The City has \$10,000 in the current budget to hire a firm or firms to write grants for the City of Blythe. To move this goal forward it is time to select a firm to provide input on the types of grants available based on the needs of the City. Staff will send a request for proposal for grant writing services and ask each interested firm to make a presentation to the City Council. From those presentations Council will select a company to write grants on behalf of the City. Once a firm is selected, Council will be asked to prioritize grant opportunities. The grant writing firm will then start submitting grant applications based on those priorities. It is recommended Council authorize staff to receive request for proposals from grant writing firms.

Councilman Galvan feels this should have been taken care of already. This just delays it again. He asked if this process was necessary. City Manager Cosentini stated doing this provides a sharper pencil. If you have only one you have no choice but if you have two or three it's a more competitive process and you will get a better proposal and it also gives the Council a choice. Grants are done by hour, by project, by grant. I want to see what the market would bring.

No public comment. Councilman Reynolds moved approval of staff's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Councilman Egan with aye votes from: DeConinck, Wade, Reynolds and Egan and a no vote from Galvan.

Financial Status Report- General Fund, Fund Balance. City Manager Cosentini reported one of my primary focuses is the financial position of the City. I am working with Finance to determine what we have to spend today. The General Fund, fund balance is your left over money not appropriated in the budget. This includes all cash assets including receivables. There are two long term receivables that have an impact, one with Hampton Inn and our City loan to the RDA for the Police Department. Your General Fund Balance right now is in the black by \$193,000, but this includes all cash assets including these long term receivables. If you look at this from another perspective, as in what do we have to spend today, you have to back out those assets from that fund balance which leaves you negative about \$483,000.

No public comment. This item was received and filed.

Public Works Uniforms. Public Works Director Baldizzone reported the City provides uniforms for Public Works Department employees. Prudential is the company currently providing these services. Staff has been working with Prudential to resolve employee complaints and billing issues. The contract with Prudential for uniform service

is \$11,291 per year. Due to the quality and service staff began looking for a new service provider. Staff obtained three quotes from Aramark with a cost of \$6,778, AlSCO with a cost of \$7,848 and Prudential with a cost of \$10,065. The Contract with Aramark will have a term of 36 months with option to renew. The City Attorney has reviewed the contract with Aramark and it is recommended Council authorize the City Manager to execute a service agreement with Aramark Uniform Services.

Vice Mayor Wade asked if the poor service from Prudential was discussed with Aramark. It was reported it was. City Attorney Bettenhausen stated this contract allows for a 30 day notice if there is a material deficiency and we can terminate if the problem is not corrected within 30 days.

No public comment. Vice Mayor Wade moved approval of staff's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Councilman Reynolds with a unanimous aye vote.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION:

Martha Veneble regarding the homeless problem. Martha Veneble stated my concern is the homeless. My neighbors and I have cleaned up two properties. This is our home and we want it clean and to keep it clean and the homeless are running around and keeping it dirty. We are wondering what we can do. We need help from the City. Alexis is a daily problem. We have called the City and the Police. I am asking for dumpsters to put the trash in as we have been paying for it out of our own pockets. We just cleaned a property on Rice St. and put the trash in a pile. We will do the work but we want a dumpster.

Mayor DeConinck asked if staff had worked out something regarding the Rice St. Property. Deputy Administrative Services Director Crecelius stated Building Official Brow was working with CR&R to get a dumpster for this site. The issue was the dump fees charged by the County. I had suggested that we dump this trash with the Clean up Day trash as those dump fees have been waived. CR&R couldn't hold the dumpster that long so I believe they may be delivering the dumpster later this week and then storing it until the trash can be disposed.

Mayor DeConinck stated we are concerned about this and we are going to have to come up with some type of solution.

Public Comment. Walter Aken of 600 S. Solano asked Council to expedite the efforts in regards to the homeless. There has been a tax on our PD resources in dealing with the homeless problem. I see personal property being damaged, public intoxication and a tremendous amount of mental illness within this community. We also have people sleeping in our streets. It's a black eye on our community and a public health concern. Quartzsite has a program called Isaiah 58 and it's a good model Blythe could look into.

Councilman Reynolds asked to place this item on a future agenda for discussion. I have some information and concerns we need to address as a Council. I would like to have a Special Meeting because this is something that needs attention now. We have a problem

and need to stop passing the buck. I commend the PD on how they treat the homeless they are doing what they can but we don't have support from the west.

ORAL REPORTS:

Public Works Director Baldizzone reported on an emergency at the Waste Water Treatment Plant with the main pipes. We are looking for contractors to fix this issue. On Thursday we had to stop construction on 14th avenue due to a water main break. The line was fixed over the weekend. There will be a change order to address this issue.

Deputy Administrative Services Director Crecelius reported on Blythe Clean up Day scheduled for October 15th from 7am to 11am at Todd Park.

Police Chief Wade reported the Memorial for the two fallen Palm Springs Police Officers will be held on the 18th at 11am at the Palm Springs Convention Center.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

MEMBER COMMENT:

Councilman Galvan reported on equipment purchased for the Recreation Center by the Rec-N-Crew.

Councilman Egan asked if the concerns of Mr. Williams who spoke at the last meeting had been addressed.

Councilman Reynolds attended the League of CA Cities Convention and came back with a lot of good information that has been passed on to the City Manager and Chief of Police.

Mayor DeConinck thanked staff and the Rec-N-Crew for the Fall Festival.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Lisa Castellone of Grid Alternatives invited Council to a ribbon cutting to be held on November 10th at noon.

ADJOURN:

The City Council meeting was adjourned at 8:05pm.

Joseph DeConinck, Mayor

ATTEST:

Mallory Crecelius, City Clerk