

**Minutes of the Blythe City Council Meeting
September 12, 2023**

The September 12, 2023, meeting of the Blythe City Council was called to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers by Mayor DeConinck. Also in attendance were Vice Mayor Rodriguez and Council Members Reynolds, Halby, and Burton. Staff in attendance included: Interim City Manager and City Clerk Crecelius, City Attorney Roberto, Finance Director and City Treasurer Elms, Chief Building Official Brown, Police Chief Dale, Public Works Director McLaughlin and Fire Chief Hasler.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor DeConinck.

The Invocation was offered by Councilman Burton.

REPORT FROM CLOSED SESSION:

City Attorney Roberto stated there was no reportable action.

PROCLAMATION:

National Suicide Prevention Month, September 2023. Mayor DeConinck presented the Proclamation to members of Peace from Chaos.

PRESENTATION:

Officer of the Year-Coty Wadley. Mayor DeConinck presented the Officer of the Year Award to Officer Coty Wadley.

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.*

3. 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, September 8, 2023.

4. Approval of the Warrant Register.

Recommendation: Approve **9/12/23**, warrants numbered 10313 through 10318 and 77086 through 77101 in the amount of \$167,466.38; **9/12/23**, warrants numbered 10319 through 10338 and 77102 through 77162 in the amount of \$372,842.31; **9/12/23**, warrants numbered 10339 through 10347 and 77172 through 77231 in the amount of \$178,677.46 and **9/12/23**, Utility Billing Refund warrants numbered 77163 through 77171 in the amount of \$494.38.

5. Approval of the Payroll Register.

Recommendation: Approve **9/12/23**, warrants numbered 53819 through 53839 and Direct Deposit warrants numbered 56566 through 56626 in the amount of \$275,457.17; **9/12/23**, warrants numbered 53840 through 53841 in the amount \$3,922.45; **9/12/23**, warrants numbered 53842 through 53849 in the amount of \$5,725.23; **9/12/23**, warrants numbered 53850 through 53851 in the amount of \$1,935.55; **9/12/23**, warrants numbered 53852 through 53871 and Direct Deposit warrants numbered 56627 through 56688 in the amount of \$278,961.97; **9/12/23**, warrants numbered 53872 through 53873 in the amount of \$314.23 and **9/12/23**, warrants numbered 53874 through 53890 and Direct Deposit warrants numbered 56689 through 56779 in the amount of \$72,618.08.

6. **Minutes of the August 8, 2023 City Council Meeting.**
Recommendation: Approve the Minutes of the August 8, 2023, Meeting.
7. **Minutes of the August 28, 2023 Special Council Meeting and Special Closed Session.**
Recommendation: Approve the Minutes of the August 28, 2023 Special Meeting.
8. **City of Blythe Permits Issued for the Month of August 2023.**
Recommendation: Receive and file this monthly report.
9. **City of Blythe Fire Department Monthly Activity Report for August 2023.**
Recommendation: Receive and file the monthly report.
10. **City of Blythe Police Department Monthly Activity Report for August 2023.**
Recommendation: Receive and file the monthly report.
11. **Quality of Life Program Activity Report for August 2023.**
Recommendation: Receive and file the monthly report.
12. **Letters of Support for Community Grant Programs.**
Recommendation: Receive and file.
13. **Amendment Number One to Peacemaker Lease Agreement between the City and Syneco Systems, Inc.**
Recommendation: Authorize the Interim City Manager to execute Agreement No. 2023-047 A between the City and Syneco System, Inc. for Peacemaker® Odor Scrubbers.
14. **Purchase of Sewer Pumps for Sewer Lift #14.**
Recommendation: Authorize the Interim City Manager to issue a purchase order to Rockwell Solutions, LLC in an amount not to exceed \$61,279.25 for two 10 HP pumps and an electrical panel for Sewer Lift #14.
15. **Amendment to Fire Chief Employment Agreement- Ronnie Hasler.**
Recommendation: Authorize the Interim City Manager to enter into an amendment to the Volunteer Fire Chief Agreement with Ronnie Hasler for the position of Fire Chief.
16. **Amendment to Cooperation Agreement for Urban County Qualification for FY 2024-027.**
Recommendation: Authorize the Interim City Manager to execute the amendment and any subsequent amendments to the Cooperation Agreement for the Urban County Qualification (CDBG) for Fiscal Years 2024-2027.

No public comment. Councilman Reynolds moved approval of the Consent Calendar. The motion was seconded by Councilman Burton with a unanimous aye vote.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Ordinance No. 923-23 Amending Chapter 17.26 (Signs) of Title 17 (Zoning) of the Blythe Municipal Code. Interim City Manager Crecelius stated at the last meeting, staff asked Council to continue the Public Hearing for this item as the City Attorney's office was reviewing and making modifications to the Ordinance to address First Amendment issues. After speaking with that attorney, a simple change to the Ordinance to make it more business friendly has turned into a total re-write. As the current ordinance is over twenty years old, there have been significant changes in the law. He is finishing up those changes, so I am once again asking you to continue this Public Hearing to the October meeting.

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

CONTINUED BUSINESS:

Save Chuck. Interim City Manager Crecelius gave an update on Save Chuck.

No public comment. The item was received and filed.

NEW BUSINESS:

Issuance of Commercial Cannabis Business Cultivation and Distribution Permits to Edelweiss Enterprises, LLC. Interim City Manager Crecelius stated Edelweiss Enterprises, LLC submitted applications for Commercial Cannabis permits for a Cultivation and Distribution operation to be located in the former Kmart Building at 1455 W. Hobsonway. The applicants have successfully completed Phases 1-3 of the Commercial Cannabis Licensing process including an interview with City staff. Edelweiss Principles Patrick Kelly, James Shaffer, Thomas Iller and Jean-Luc Westphal underwent a thorough background investigation, and nothing was found to preclude them from being issued commercial cannabis permits. Staff recommends Council issue Commercial Cannabis Cultivation and Distribution permits to Edelweiss Enterprises, LLC for a commercial Cannabis Facility to be located at 1455 W. Hobsonway. If approved, the Cannabis permits will be issued once a Certificate of Occupancy is issued by the Building Department and Business License fees are paid.

The Council asked applicant Patrick Kelly questions about site development and timing.

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

Animal Shelter Committee Appointment. Interim City Manager Crecelius stated in January Mayor Deconinck appointed members of the Council to serve on the City's various boards, standing and Ad Hoc Committees. Staff inadvertently left the Animal Shelter Committee off the list of committees to be assigned. It is recommended the Mayor appoint two members of Council to serve on this committee.

Mayor DeConinck appointed Councilmembers Reynolds and Burton to the Animal Shelter Committee.

Engevik Park Playground Shade Structure Project. Interim City Manager Crecelius stated last fiscal year Council allocated \$120,000 in Park Bond Funding to improve the playground at Engevik Park. The Playground improvement project which consisted of the installation of playground equipment for the park was completed in April. In the current fiscal year, CDBG funding was allocated to purchase and install a shade structure for the park to complete the playground improvement project. On July 19th the City released an Invitation for Proposal for the Engevik Park Playground Shade Structure Project. The bid was directly sent to several playground installers, posted on the City's website, in the Palo Verde Times, sent to seven plan rooms and several minority news outlets in accordance with both the City's Purchasing Policy and CDBG noticing requirements. The City conducted the bid opening on August 15th with one bid received from Ortco, Inc. Ortco's construction license is current and in good standing with the State of California. Ortco Inc. has previously performed work for the City of Blythe, as the successful bidder for the Miller Park Improvement Project in 2019 and most recently completed the Engevik Park Playground Improvement project. There is a 6-8-week lead time on the shade structure. Staff anticipates this project will be completed by the end of the calendar year. Therefore it is recommended Council Authorize the Interim City Manager to

execute Agreement No. 2023-049 A with Ortco, Inc. contingent upon all bonds and proper contract documents being fully executed to the satisfaction of the City Attorney and Interim City Manager, issue a purchase order to Ortco, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$42,625.00, including \$3,875 in contingencies, authorize the Interim City Manager to approve change orders during construction not exceeding the contingency allowance and establish a project budget not to exceed \$42,625.00.

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

ORAL REPORTS:

Chief Dale reported on the Quality-of-Life Operation conducted last Thursday and the Summer Boating Patrol program which were both very successful.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Students Esai Sanchez, Dominic Rogers, Alyiah Lianez, George Sanchez, and Rudy Guilin from the Escuela De La Raza Unida's Outreach Program provided information on community handouts. The handouts contain information about the heat and water conservation.

Luther Holley of 955 Lido Ln. asked for tennis and pickle ball courts. I don't believe in bad cops, we all make mistakes, but I believe in bad supervision. Too often things are swept under the carpet. The complaint I filed was determined to be un-sustained. Is the body cam not evidence?

Chris Peters of 371 Tesoro Ln. made complaints about the Flag Football season. We have 4 weeks for practice and end a month before All-stars. We don't need that much time for All-Stars. Shortening the program is defeating the purpose of teaching these kids. We have always played on Saturdays and now the games are during the week.

Carmela Garnica of 409 Earle Street wanted to inform the Chief that there was a case involving raising kids in Blythe. They were using stats about the crime in Blythe, and I was very curious about it so I called the Police Department. The Officer stated the way they tackle things in Blythe is that the Police Department, Sheriff, Boarder Patrol, CHP all come together when there is a crisis. As a community member here with a large family I was very pleased to hear that response. It made me feel safe.

ADJOURN: The City Council meeting was adjourned at 6:47pm.

Joseph DeConinck, Mayor

ATTEST:

Mallory Crecelius, City Clerk