

MINUTES OF THE WILLOWS CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD April 26, 2011

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Hansen.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Council Member Cobb led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. **ROLL CALL:**

Present: Yoder, Cobb, Hobbs, Holvik & Hansen

Absent: None

4. **Agenda Review:**

- a. It was **moved** by Council Member Holvik and **seconded** by Council Member Yoder to accept the City Council April 26, 2011, Agenda as presented. The motion unanimously passed.

5. **Presentations & Proclamations:**

- a) Mayor Hansen read and presented a Proclamation to Barbara LaDoucer of the American Legion Auxiliary declaring May 15 – May 21, 2011, as “Poppy Days”.
- b) Mayor Hansen read and presented a Proclamation to Police Officer Kelly Trent declaring May 15 – 21 as “National Police Week” with special recognition of May 1 & 2 as “California Peace Officer Memorial Ceremonies” and May 15, 2011 as “National Peace Officers Memorial Day”.

6. **Oral and Written Communications/Public Comment:**

Philip Zabell, Pastor of the First Lutheran Church and Executive Director of Glenn Communities Working Together, addressed the Council and encouraged them to give serious consideration to applying for a CDBG grant to conduct a needs assessment study for Senior Housing.

7. **Consent Agenda:**

It was **moved** by Council Member Yoder and **seconded** by Council Member Cobb to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion unanimously passed and the following items were approved/adopted:

- a) Approval of General Check Register (22993-23039).
- b) Approval of Payroll & Direct Deposit Check Registers (Z02410-Z02448 & 31184-31201).
- c) Approval of the March 30, 2011, City Council Special Budget Meeting Minutes.

8. **Public Hearings:**

- a) Conduct Public Hearing to provide the public an opportunity to offer comments regarding Unmet Transit Needs:

Mardy Thomas, Glenn County Senior Planner, on behalf of the Glenn County Transportation Commission, presented this item to the Council, indicating that the Transportation Development Act (TDA) Statutes and Administrative Code of Regulations require specific actions on the part of local transportation planning agencies. As part of the regulations, Mr. Thomas explained that annually the County holds a public hearing to receive input from citizens and City Councils regarding unmet transit needs. Specifically an "Unmet Transit Need" is found to exist when there is a reasonable need for an identifiable group within the community that has no dependable and/or affordable access to employment, medical, commercial public, or social services. Because transit needs fluctuate with variables such as unemployment, population, demographics, land use and circulation patterns, it is necessary to re-evaluate the needs annually.

Mr. Thomas briefly outlined the previous year's statistics for ridership on Glenn Ride and Glenn Trans and presented the Council with graphs showing comparisons of ridership between 2006 and 2011.

Mayor Hansen opened the Public Hearing at 7:18 p.m. Rebecca "Sam" Evans, Administrator for Eskaton Kennedy Manor spoke during the public hearing stating that when the City Circulator busses discontinued their routes in Willows, her residents were stranded and had no means of transportation in which to travel throughout the City. She stated that two-thirds of the residents don't drive and therefore they have no means in which to get to Doctor appointments, the grocery store, Wal-Mart, etc. Ms. Evans suggested that perhaps the County Transportation Commission could consider just running the Circulator busses three or four times a day so the residents have at least some means of transportation.

Pastor Phillip Zabell spoke and stated that transportation is a need that the community should fulfill, especially for Senior Citizens and others who have no means or method of transportation and he agreed with Ms. Evans that he would like to see the City Circulator transportation program restored.

Pastor Jana Adamson spoke, stating that she attended the Transportation Commission Meeting when the decision was made to discontinue the Circulators and she witnessed decisions being made due to financial cutbacks. She realizes that agencies have to deal realistically with financial challenges, but she stated that the people who are now being affected by the lack of transportation, are the same people who have given to the community all their lives. She does not believe it is expedient on the Transportation Commission's part to expect them to pay now, and to only offer a service if they are able to pay for it. These people have given to the community and she believes it is time that the community gives something back to them. She stated that she understands that there is still a "Dial-a-Ride" transport vehicle available that a person can call 24 hours in advance, but she stated that the price for that has gone up and this service is utilized by people who are on limited incomes. She believes it reflects the nature of our community by how we decide to treat our Senior Citizens and she would like people to take into account that making their life a little bit easier is a worth while expense, even if we don't get back from the Seniors what we may see ourselves as putting out.

Mayor Hansen closed the Public Hearing at 7:23. Mardy Thomas re-addressed the Council to address some of the concerns noted during the Public Hearing. He began by stating that the Transportation Commission is dealing with a lot of financial struggles, as everybody else is. One alternative the Commission has been looking into since the cancellation of the Circulator service, is doing what Ms. Evans suggested and running a Quasi-Circulator route that would run through town about four times per day. Mr. Thomas acknowledged that Eskaton Manor had one of the highest riderships for the Circulator program and the Commission is well aware of that fact, but they are trying to work something out that will be acceptable cost-wise so they can provide this service. He did point out that the fares for the ADA "Dial-a-Ride" service have not increased, but the fares for the Glenn Ride and the Volunteer Medical services have increased, as it has been quite a while since those fares had changed.

Council Member Yoder, who sits on the Transportation Commission, stated that just last week the Transit & Transportation Commissions had a meeting and the numbers were grim. When the decision was made to discontinue the Circulator, the County was already \$185,000 short in the Transportation budget and on top of that, they were also an additional \$185,000 short. The decision was made based on matters of funding and not based on trying to disassociate a sect, or certain people or persons in the community. It's a matter of not having the money to provide those services. In the past when money was more available was the time when additional service needs were identified and services were added, however now they find themselves in a position as money is going away and no longer available, to reevaluate those services and still keep the identity of what they actually did to start the original Glenn Ride program. Although they would like to keep the additional services, the Commission does not make the decisions to discontinue them lightly. Although the Commission has looked at several options and tried to come up with solutions, none of the solutions were financially sound. When monies become available again, the Commission will be reenacting some of these programs but currently there is only a certain amount of money available. Mr. Thomas then added that they are looking at possibly changing the format of the Glenn Ride program to where there would be a central transfer point in Orland and have two busses that run separate legs of runs – one between Orland and Willows and the other between Orland and Chico. That format may also provide them with some other opportunities to have a few runs through town to hit some of the hot spots that they were able to uncover when they were running the circulator routes through town. Perhaps with that format they would be able to pick up people around town and at least allow them to get to certain places throughout the town on the half-hour or on the hour. They are looking at a few creative options to be able to get people around, but trying to make it work within the limited money that is available.

Council Member Holvik addressed the concerns of the people who stepped up and spoke this evening and he too questioned if this is the nature of our community and how we treat Seniors. He understands that the Transportation Commission is trying to work on this situation and that the money simply isn't there, but he said it seems we are able to take people out of our area but we can't take people around our area. He stated that we have a pretty nice community here and it is unfortunate that we can't get our citizens out to see it, and that they can only see Orland and Chico. He acknowledges it is a struggle and just asked that the Commission continue in their efforts to find a solution.

Mayor Hansen, who is also a member of the Transportation Commission, echoed Council Member Yoder's statement that this was a very difficult decision to make and the Commission didn't come to make it lightly but the Commission is dedicated to continuing their efforts to work on a solution.

9. **Ordinances:** None

10. **Items introduced by City Council or Administrative Staff for discussion purposes only (Including Economic Development Updates, if any):** None

11. **Unfinished Business/Referred Matters Pending:**

a) Economic Development Commission Discussion & Update:

Council Member Yoder and Council Member Hobbs were recently appointed to serve on a subcommittee in order to research the potential benefits of the creation of an Economic Development Commission for the City of Willows. Council Member Yoder stated that the Orland Economic Development Commissioners indicated that they would be in attendance at tonight's meeting, however, unfortunately, none were in attendance. He stated that he and Council Member Hobbs have been doing a lot of research on the potential formation of an EDC for the City of Willows and they have spoke with the County, have attended an Orland EDC Meeting and spoke to the Commissioners, and had a meeting with 3CORE. He stated that one thing that he and Council Member Hobbs agreed on after meeting with 3CORE is that they need to develop a starting point and an overall strategy and at this point the City has neither. He commended the downtown business people who shared their vision with the City at past City Council meetings. The City of Willows in the past year conducted a SWOT Analysis and Orland has not conducted a SWOT Analysis and when they attended the Orland EDC Meeting, the Commissioners indicated that they were struggling on what their identity was, what their roles are, and what they were supposed to do and how they are supposed to do it. Subsequently, the Orland City Council and Orland EDC held a Special Joint Meeting. At that meeting he believes the Commissioners gained a little more insight on what the Council wants from them and how to proceed and there was some pretty good interaction. Council Member Yoder continued, stating that another resource that he and Council Member Hobbs learned about in their meeting with 3CORE is that there is a Professional Advisory Service offered through CALED (the California Association for Local Economic Development) that will actually provide a SWOT Analysis for the City and give an unbiased and objective opinion on which direction the City needs to go, how to get there and where the starting point is. Gridley, Live Oak and Mendocino have all done this and the subcommittee received a copy of the SWOT Analysis from Mendocino that they are currently reviewing. Council Member Yoder stated that he is still not completely convinced that a five member panel of an EDC is something that the City needs. He said that he and Council Member Hobbs are still too early in the researching stage to know whether this is something that the City needs or not. They are not near a point where they could recommend to the Council right now that an EDC is necessary and they still have much more research to do, but that they are continuously working on learning more and talking and meeting with various agencies and groups. They still need to establish what the local development strategies are, and determine that those strategies are consistent with those strategies of the City of Orland and with the County. He suggested it would be worth looking into partnering with either the City of Orland or the

County or both to develop common economic goals, strategies and vision and these are things that they plan to discuss with the City of Orland and with the County Board of Supervisors. He stated that it is important to minimize obstacles for new businesses that want to enter into the City and emphasized that it is important to develop a plan which would encourage new businesses and growth in the community. He wonders how the City can minimize restrictions, yet still remain consistent on how they want it to grow. He stated that the City already has the services, such as the schools, the Hospital, the Fire Department and the Police Department, but he wonders how the City can bring more people in to the community. He stated that another obstacle that the City has faced repeatedly is with Cal-Trans and he believes Cal-Trans really has the ability to either make or break a City. You can look at some of our neighbor cities and they have aesthetically pleasing on and off ramps that are welcoming to people, and Willows has tumbleweeds. The City needs to learn how to tap into these resources and work with Cal-Trans to find out how the City can make these types of beautifications that are going to make people want to visit or to live here. He stated that these are just some of the issues that he and Council Member Hobbs have been discussing and struggling with for the past month and are continuing to look into. He stated that the City needs to acknowledge who we are, where we are and where we want to go, and this is going to definitely cost money. The City needs to plan five, ten and even fifteen years out to the future to determine where they want to be, but the critical point to getting there is developing a starting point.

Council Member Hobbs stated that she concurs with Council Member Yoder. She stated that money is a big issue, as is developing a starting point, which is what all of the people she spoke to indicated is a priority. This is definitely a time of discovery and she understands that people may want this process to be more expeditious, but the problem is that this is something that doesn't happen over night. The subcommittee is still in the learning phase and still has much more research to do, and it is critical to develop a strategy. She indicated that she and Council Member Yoder are learning a lot and that they plan to continue to learn, and continue to attend meetings and gather more information. She stated that during their meeting with 3CORE, they learned of a number of other organizations that the City could utilize. She indicated that some of those organizations cost money beyond what we already pay 3CORE for their membership, but she stated that the cost may be minimal compared to what the City may gain from the expenditure. But again she reiterated that they are still in the very early stages working towards becoming a cohesive unit with the County and with the City of Orland. She stated that they had great discussions with Orland while attending their EDC Meeting and the Joint City Council & EDC Workshop. She believes that if we continue to work together with Orland and with the County we will all see things develop in a way that is good for everyone.

Mayor Hansen reiterated for the record that Council Members Yoder and Hobbs were appointed to a subcommittee to explore the possible creation of an Economic Development Commission and he thanked them for all of their efforts and all of the time they have spent on it.

Council Member Holvik stated that he really appreciates the subcommittee's effort to do this right. He agrees that a vision and a starting point are necessary and that we should begin with the end in mind. He appreciates the thoroughness in which the subcommittee is researching this.

Council Member Cobb echoed the Mayor and Council Member Holvik's sentiments and thanked the subcommittee for their efforts and stated that he understands this may be a lengthy process and it may be a long time before anything is set in stone, but he agrees that a lot of research is necessary in order to ensure the best possible end result.

Mardy Thomas addressed the Council and stated that if there was a time in the future that the Council wanted to look into a project to dress up the interchanges or the entrances into the City, that he would be willing to work with the City's Public Works Director Greg Tyhurst to try to apply for a grant through Cal-Trans. Council Members Yoder and Hobbs indicated that they would be interested in setting up a meeting with Mr. Thomas in the very near future to discuss this in greater detail.

a. Animal Control Feasibility Study – Discuss and direct Staff

At the direction of the City Council at a past City Council Meeting, an Animal Control Feasibility Study was conducted in order to determine whether it would be in the best interest of the City financially to take over Animal Control rather than to contract with the County as the City has historically done. A study was conducted and a report prepared by Police Sergeant Carl Walter was given to the Council to review. Council discussion ensued and the Council Members expressed that Sergeant Walter did an outstanding job preparing such a detailed statistical report. In having reviewed all of the details of the report and determining that the City lacks the staff and the time it would involve to perform this function "in-house", it was the unanimous consensus of the Council to continue to contract with the County for Animal Control services, at least for the time being.

12. New Business:

- a) Consider adoption of a Resolution declaring weeds, rubbish, refuse and dirt public nuisances and approve the weed and rubbish abatement schedule for the 2011 fire season as presented.

Each year the Willows Fire Department abates weeds, rubbish, refuse and dirt from different lots and alleyways throughout the City. In order to commence this process it is required for the City Council to adopt the Resolution before them this evening declaring weeds, rubbish, refuse and dirt as public nuisances and setting the date of May 24, 2011, as the date to conduct a protest hearing. It was **moved** by Council Member Holvik and **seconded** by Council Member Yoder to approve a Resolution declaring public nuisances, to approve the proposed Weed and Rubbish Abatement Schedule for the 2011 fire season and to allow staff to begin to solicit bids for an abatement contractor. The motion unanimously passed.

- b) Consider cancellation of the May 10, 2011, meeting and set a date and time for a special meeting to conduct a project-specific CDBG Public Hearing.

Recently staff learned of a special funding allocation available through CDBG, combining Economic Development and Planning & Technical Assistance Grants during the application/funding period. Immediately staff began working with 3CORE to develop project

scopes consistent with the CDBG funding requirements. A general Public Hearing was conducted by the City Council on April 12 to notify the public of the City's intent to file applications for funding. CDBG requires each agency to then subsequently hold Project-Specific Public Hearings prior to submittal of applications. Additionally, the subsequent Public Hearing(s) may not occur until thirty days has lapsed following the general Public Hearing. Therefore, the May 10 regularly scheduled meeting does not meet the thirty day delay requirement. The application funding period opens on May 25, 2011, and these funding opportunities are extremely competitive, thus agencies are advised to be prepared to submit completed applications on May 25 or risk falling too far behind in the initial screening process. The next regularly scheduled meeting after the May 10 meeting would be held on May 24 and this would not accommodate the necessary resolution approval and submittal process the following day. Therefore staff is requesting that a special meeting be scheduled during the week of May 16, with a preference of Tuesday, May 17 or Wednesday May 18, as both of these days provide optimal flexibility to have Planning Staff in attendance.

Discussion ensued among the Council and it was **moved** by Council Member Yoder and **seconded** by Council Member Holvik to cancel the Regular City Council Meeting scheduled for May 10 and to conduct a special meeting on May 17 at 7:00 p.m. The motion unanimously passed.

13. Council Member Reports:

Council Member Holvik extended a thank you to Fire Captain Skip Sykes for all of his Weed Abatement efforts during the initial survey that he conducted for the 2011 Abatement Season.

Executive Session: Pursuant to California Government Code Sections 54950 et seq., the City Council held a Closed Session. More specific information regarding this closed session is indicated below:

- a) CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATOR(S) pursuant to Section 54957.6

Agency Negotiators: City Manager Steve Holsinger
Finance Director Tim Sailsbery

Employee Organization(s): Willows Employees Association
Willows Public Safety Association
Unrepresented Employees (All others not in WEA or WPSA)

15. Report out of Closed Session:

Mayor Hansen reported that Staff gave the Council an update on the budget negotiations with the various Employee Organizations to date. Council then directed staff to continue in their negotiations with all of the Employee Organizations and to set a special budget meeting to take place on May 17 at 5:30 p.m., just prior to the Special Meeting which is scheduled to occur at 7:00 p.m. that evening.

14. **Adjournment:** Mayor Hansen adjourned the meeting at 9:50.

Dated: April 26, 2011

NATALIE BUTLER

City Clerk

The City of Willows is an Equal Opportunity Provider