

**MINUTES OF THE WILLOWS CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD March 22, 2011**

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Hansen.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Council Member Yoder 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 Yoder and **seconded** by Council Member Cobb to accept the City Council March 22, 2011, Agenda as presented. The motion unanimously passed.

5. **Presentations & Proclamations:**

- a. Claudia Street of the Glenn County Resource Conservation District (RCD) announced the dates and times for the 2011 Glenn County Certified Farmers' Market season. This year the Willows market will be held each Wednesday from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. in Memorial Park and Orland will hold their market each Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The season will run from June through September, with Willows' Opening Ceremony to be held on June 1. Ms. Street thanked the Council, staff and the community for making last year's market such a success. Ms. Street then stated that because this was only a two-year grant that will expire in September, the Resource Conservation District will be submitting a Request for Proposals seeking parties who may be interested in taking over the 2012 market season.

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

Rose Marie Thrailkill inquired about a \$5000 donation that the City Council approved to give to Sycamore West Apartments in April of 2009 for a landscaping project as an incentive for continued improvements to the property and to enhance the general look of the City. She asked if there were any stipulations that went along with the donation, such as a requirement to keep up the landscaping. She stated that there is very little maintenance and upkeep of the property and it is totally covered with weeds and is an eye sore. She asked what the City plans to do about this. The City Manager addressed Ms. Thrailkill's question with regard to any stipulations attached to the donation, stating that there were no conditions as part of the donation. The owners at that time submitted a landscaping plan to the City which the City approved and the City Council subsequently approved the donation for the project. Since that time, the property has had a change in ownership. Council Member Holvik asked if City Staff could contact the new owners and bring this to their attention. The City Manager stated that he would contact the property owners and let them know of this situation.

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 (22857-22905).
- b) Approval of Payroll & Direct Deposit Check Registers (Z02370-Z02409 & 31140-31157).
- c) Approval of the March 8, 2011, City Council Meeting Minutes.
- d) Authorize a one-year extension to the term of Library Board of Trustee member Dawn George.
- e) Adoption of a Resolution removing the special assessment associated with Nuisance Abatement on APN 005-251-016 (1180 Southgate).
- f) Passage of second reading by title only and final adoption of **“AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILLOWS REPEALING SECTION(S) 2.05.100 – 2.05.200 AND AMENDING TITLE II SECTION 2.05.090 OF CHAPTR 2.05 OF THE CITY OF WILLOWS MUNICIPAL CODE”**.

8. **Public Hearings:** None

9. **Ordinances:**

- a. Action taken under item 7 (f).

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

11. **New Business:**

- a. Consider approval of extension of the Contract for Audit Services with Roy R. Seiler, CPA:

The City and the Willows Community Redevelopment agency are required to have an annual audit of their respective financial statements, and assurance procedures are performed on the Annual Appropriation Limit calculations. In addition, the City is required to have compliance audits performed when Federal funding exceeds \$500,000 for the fiscal year, and specific funding sources may require compliance audits of that particular activity (known as a component unit audit). Since 2000, the City has contracted with Roy Seiler, CPA, to provide these services, and City Staff wishes to extend the contract with Mr. Seiler for an additional three years, as the contract expired with the June 30, 2010 audit. Mr. Seiler has a solid understanding of municipal finance activity and has been professional and thorough in his work. Mr. Seiler’s offer to extend includes pricing on a task by task basis. The City utilizes only those services that are required

each year. Staff is requesting the City Council consider the extension of Mr. Seiler's contract with the city for an additional three years.

Brief Council discussion ensued and the members of the Council agreed that Mr. Seiler has done a very professional job auditing for the City in the past and that it is their desire to renew the contract. It was **moved** by Council Member Yoder and **seconded** by Council Member Hobbs to approve the extension of the Contract for Audit Services with Roy R. Seiler, CPA. The motion unanimously passed.

- b. Consider authorizing the Greater Willows Improvement League (GWIL) to proceed with the construction of directional signage to the downtown business area and authorize the release of funds in order to begin construction.

The GWIL has been working on directional signage leading to the downtown business area ever since its formation approximately two years ago. Funds have been raised through concession sales and obligated to the City for this project in February of 2010. The sign funding balance is \$718.86 and members of GWIL are now requesting the release of these funds and authorization from the City Council to proceed with the construction of a minimum of one sign, and possibly a second, depending on cost. These directional signs to the downtown business district would be placed on a concrete base, covered with rock similar to the City's entryway signs on Tehama Street, with the sign installed on a 4x4 inch powder-coated post. The signs will be constructed by the Willows High School Shop using a plasma cutter and a local contractor has volunteered his service for the installation of the signs. With that, GWIL is requesting that the City Council authorize release of funds for this project. It was **moved** by Council Member Holvik and **seconded** by Council Member Yoder to authorize the Greater Willows Improvement League to proceed with the construction of directional signage for the downtown business area and to authorize the release of funds in order to begin construction on this project. The motion unanimously passed.

## **12. Unfinished Business:**

- a) City Council to continue discussions from the February 8, 2011, City Council Meeting regarding the potential formation of an Economic Development Commission for the City of Willows:

This is an item that was placed on the agenda as a result of the SWOT Analysis that occurred last Summer/Fall in which one of the recommendations that came from the analysis was for the City to Form an Economic Development Commission. This item was initially discussed at the February 8, 2011, Council Meeting and because the Council didn't have very much information about the creation of an EDC at that time, local business owner Rick Thomas had offered to gather some additional information about the City of Orland's EDC and the discussion was continued to tonight's meeting. Mr. Thomas collected that information and the information is included in the meeting agenda packet. The City Manager stated that he believes the development an EDC this is a good idea and worthy of discussion, however he urged the Council to enter in to these discussions cautiously, as budget meetings and negotiations are coming up in

the very near future and now may not be the appropriate time to add any additional expenses to the City's budget.

Council discussion ensued and all of the Council Members agreed that they like the idea of the development of an EDC and they believed that it is something that would serve the City well. They indicated that there would still be a need to collect more information and conduct additional research regarding start-up costs (if any), how the selection process would work, who would be responsible for creation of agendas, minute preparation, records retention, Conflict of Interest filings, etc. - all of which are statutorily required for advisory boards or commissions. All were in agreement that they also need to look at possible operational costs and utilities costs on a long-term basis should such a Commission be created.

Members of the public were asked to share any comments. Rose Marie Thrailkill offered to donate use of the Chamber of Commerce Conferences room to conduct meetings and she also offered to donate paper and other miscellaneous office supplies.

Forrest Sprague recommended that the City Council form this Committee, and the sooner the better. He questioned what costs would be associated with the formation and operation of such a committee. The City Manager responded to Mr. Sprague, explaining that this committee would fall under the requirements set forth in the Brown Act, therefore paid staff would need to maintain records, create agendas, prepare minutes, etc. and with each of those tasks the City would incur costs. He also stated that in order to attempt to balance the upcoming budget for 2011/12, he has asked all employees to take a decrease in wages and/or benefits and this could certainly affect the City's labor force. He stated that he does not feel comfortable allowing additional expenses when we are asking for employees to make concessions.

Mr. Sprague stated that the Business Community looks at the formation of an EDC as something that is necessary and beneficial and if the City Manager could provide some idea of what costs would be associated with it's formation and ongoing operation, he believes the Business Community could arrange to provide some sort of mechanism to cover those costs and activities. He stated that he didn't want to suggest any violation to the Brown Act and he would like to have access to as many people as possible, but he thinks the Business Community and the people who are in support of this would be able to look at ways to generate the money and help to offset the costs for the Commission to be formed and actively operating. He stated that the Business Community believes the formation of an EDC is that important and that it would be that beneficial to the City.

Rose Marie Thrailkill stated that she didn't understand why the Commission would have to follow the requirements of the Brown Act. The City Manager explained that because it is a Commission of City Government with members appointed by the City Council, they have to maintain their meetings in accordance with State Law, just as any Ad-Hoc Advisory group that advises the Council on anything would. Ms. Thrailkill stated that it seems like there should be some way around this. The City Manager advised the Council that it should never be recommended that they break the law. Ms. Thrailkill stated that when they have to deal with all of these rules and regulations, they can not do what they want to do because they are restricted. The Council reiterated that, although frustrating, they are required to follow State Law when it

comes to Council-appointed boards and Commissions, very much like the Planning Commission and the Library Board.

Council Member Holvik then stated that he agreed with Mr. Sprague that the City needs to get moving on this as soon as they can, but he believes that as soon as they can should not be until after the budget is adopted at which time the Council will have a better idea of how many employees they still have and how many days City Hall will be open for business.

The City Manager stated that he believes the formation of the Commission is an idea concept; however, he was hesitant about the idea of there potentially being any additional costs to the City at this time. He stated that because there seemed to be a great deal of support and enthusiasm about its formation, he suggested to the City Council that they might consider the formation of an exploratory group consisting of two Council Members to meet with the local businesses to better define how to create the EDC, how many members there will be, how the Commission will serve, how the Board will meet, etc. and that information gathered from the exploratory group would give staff the opportunity to garnish the information that they need to better pin down specifically what type of detailed costs would be associated with the formation and the ongoing operation of the Commission. Then the two Council Members could share this information with the rest of the Council throughout the budget development process for the 2011/12 budget. Then if the Council is comfortable with the information gathered by the exploratory group during their investigations, they could recommend the formation of the Commission to the full Council.

Rick Thomas addressed the Council and suggested that one of the ways to offset the costs would be to take the \$2500 which the Council recently agreed to transfer out of the Wal-Mart Economic Development fund to help to offset some planning fees, and use that money instead to put toward the formation and operations of an EDC. It was his opinion that this would be a better use of the \$2500, as it would benefit the entire community and would help to move the entire community forward, rather than just one small individual business. Mr. Thomas stated that in researching the information that he presented for the Council from the Orland EDC, he spoke with Pat Ireland, who takes minutes for the Fish and Game Commission, and she expressed a willingness to contract, for a fee, to take the minutes of the EDC meetings and that way there wouldn't be any additional burden to an existing staff member who may already be over-tasked. He also stated that he liked the concept of the formation of an exploratory group and that he would like to meet with that group to look at ways to make this work. He also agrees with Mr. Sprague and he too believes that there are several members of the Business Community that would be willing to pay a few dollars up front to help to offset the first year's cost, as long as it was not excessive. He closed by stating that he didn't see the hard cost to the City being more than \$1000 per year. Mayor Hansen thanked Mr. Thomas for his comments and also for his gathering and presenting the information from the Orland EDC to the City Council.

Council discussion ensued once again, with the outcome being that Council Members Hobbs and Yoder volunteered to serve on an EDC exploratory ad-hoc subcommittee and to meet with members of the business community to discuss in greater detail the items that were outlined tonight.

Mr. Sprague addressed the Council and stated that he was pleased that two members of the Council were willing to step up to serve on the exploratory group. He recommended that from the outset somebody would begin taking minutes, if Council thought it would be appropriate, so the discussions and outcomes of the meetings would be captured. He stated that if Ms. Ireland would be agreeable to do that and if it was acceptable to the Council, he would be pleased to pay for minutes to be taken for the first three meetings that occur. Mayor Hansen thanked Mr. Sprague for his comments.

**13. Council Member Reports:**

Council Member Hobbs commented on Consent item 7 (d) stating that this item had been discussed at the most recent Library Board Meeting and all members were in agreement that it made sense to authorize a one year extension to current Library Board Trustee Dawn George, thus making it unnecessary to recruit for only one trustee every three years, and it will now change to recruiting for three trustees next year, and two trustees the following year, and the third year there would be no need to recruit. She also stated that the Library now has a very nice table that is displaying all of the new books and they are working on possibly getting coffee to serve on Saturdays for people to come in and have a cup of coffee while they are looking at the new books. Lastly, she announced that the April Library Board meeting will take place at the Bayliss Library and the May meeting will take place in Elk Creek.

Mayor Hansen stated that the Transportation and Regional Transit Committees met last Thursday in reference to reviewing potential service reductions because of the declining revenues with Glenn Ride, the Volunteer Medical Transportation and the New Freedom programs. The Orland and Willows City Circulator routes have been shut down recently as a cost cutting move and it saved approximately \$183,000 in the current budget year. At the March 17 meeting the Commission voted in favor of reductions to the Volunteer Medical Transportation which will increase the current fare to one half the Federal mileage reimbursement rate. There were also some service area modifications made to the Volunteer Medical Transportation in the Chico area. They also voted to increase the New Freedom program fare in conjunction with the Volunteer Medical Transportation fare, and the New Freedom service has been reduced to three days per week. The fare for in-county Glenn Ride service has increased by \$.25 and will now be \$1.50 and the fare to travel out of the county has increased to \$2.00.

**14. Adjournment: Mayor Hansen adjourned the meeting at 7:53 p.m.**

Dated: March 22, 2011

NATALIE BUTLER

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City Clerk

The City of Willows is an Equal Opportunity Provider