



# Council Minutes

May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022

**ROLL CALL:** Council President Dave Hansen called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with Councilor Thompson, Mayor Ware, Councilor Humphreys, Councilor Chambers, Councilor Neddeau, and Councilor Craven present. Councilor Hansen asked Mr. McDowell to take roll call. Public Works Superintendent Karl Frink, Administrative Assistant Tammi Morrow, Administrative Assistant Elizabeth Coleman, and City Administrator Scott McDowell were also present.

**PUBLIC:** Dan Murphy, Patrick Starnes, Don Lyon, Kathleen Swayze, Natalie Wade, Steve & Nan Van Sandt, Steve Brenner, Jack Alsman, Paul Winther, Jeff Brown, Sherri Lemhouse, Linda McCormick, and Tia Parrish (*The Times*) were present.

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

**ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS:** Mr. McDowell added Ordinance 788 | Nominations for City Office Revision under Legislation, 9) C.

**MINUTES:** Councilor Neddeau made a motion to approve the April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022 Council minutes and the May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022 Budget Committee minutes as presented. Councilor Humphreys seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

## **PUBLIC HEARING | PRESENTATIONS:**

- Proposed Use of State Revenue Sharing.** Councilor Hansen called the Public Hearing to order. Mr. McDowell stated that by State law the City is required to hold public hearings for the proposed use of State Revenue Sharing. This is the second public hearing the City has held. He encouraged any members of the public wishing to comment to come forward. Historically the City has used this funding for public safety, specifically for street lighting. The City spends over \$54,000 per year, but receives approximately \$17,000. No public input was offered. The hearing was closed.
- Budget Public Hearing | FY 2022-2023.** Councilor Hansen opened the public hearing for budget consideration. McDowell reported that the Budget Committee met twice, and approved the proposed budget on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022. McDowell further stated that highlights of budget consideration consisted of the following:
  - ▶ Approve the Full Permanent Tax Rate - \$6.9597 per \$1,000.
  - ▶ Approve the levy amount needed for the Wastewater Bond Debt - \$217,984.
  - ▶ Recommend a 7% Utility Rate Increase for the upcoming fiscal year.
  - ▶ Approve Historic Use of State Revenue Sharing funds for Public Safety (Street Lighting).
  - ▶ Approve and recommend the continued use of all designated funds and line items contained in the FY 2022.2023 budget document.
  - ▶ Approve the FY 2022.2023 Budget and recommend the same to Council.

Mr. McDowell stated that the public may also comment on the proposed budget at the June Council meeting, and that Council will officially adopt the budget at that meeting. No public input was offered. The hearing was closed.

- Stand By Me Day (July 23<sup>rd</sup>) | Linda McCormick.** Linda McCormick, Chair of the Event, presented the preliminary schedule and activities for the event. The group is planning on showing the movie in the park that night. Councilor Hansen asked how many folks are expected for the event? Mrs. McCormick stated that for the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary event, it was estimated that there about 3,000



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– 4,000 folks in attendance. The group expects approximately 1,000 – 2,000 this year. Councilor Neddeau thanked Mrs. McCormick for all her hard work and efforts for this event.

### **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

1. **Linn County Sheriff's Office (LCSO) Sheriff's Report.** Sergeant Steve Frambes was present to report for the month, including 40 citations, 16 arrests; best he's ever seen in contract cities. Frambes expressed appreciation for the deputies and their stellar efforts. Sergeant Frambes also reported on one notable traffic stop. During a minor traffic stop, Deputy Newman discovered that the driver and a passenger had outstanding warrants. LCSO also found 3 guns in the car (one was stolen and one had a suppressor), and narcotics were also recovered. Frambes reminded Council how seemingly minor traffic stops can yield huge results. With the new lighting violations law restrictions, it makes the LCSO job much harder than ever. Another notable incident was on telephonic harassment. An individual made 70 harassing phone calls in one hour! The individual was later arrested. Sergeant Frambes introduced Lieutenant Steve Looney from Animal Control.

Lieutenant Steve Looney, Animal Control, was present to discuss dog complaints. Looney talked about licensing, barking complaints, and public nuisance dogs. Often an audio/visual recording is required as proof. An excessive amount of time for barking would be considered 8-10 minutes of continuous barking. Councilor Chambers inquired about rabies vaccinations and licensing, and how they coincide. Looney explained the process, and also related that dog licenses can be done by mail or online.

2. **Public Works (PW).** Superintendent Karl Frink recapped public works essential activities and projects for the month.

Frink reported that due to heavy rains, and high lagoon levels, Frink was forced to apply to DEQ for an additional 30 days of discharging into the river. The City was granted that extension. Mr. Frink does not believe that the City will need the full 30 days to bring the lagoon levels down to normal. He did receive the oral authorization within 2 hours, and then the formal agreement letter. Frink expects normal levels will be obtained within about a week.

PW has been out grading the roads, which is basically just filling in the potholes for now. Frink is hoping that the City can obtain a used grader soon, but the older machines become obsolete so quickly when there are no parts available for them. Dust control will be applied as soon as conditions allow.

Mr. Frink has hired Pete's Painting to paint stripes and curbs around town. The company has been doing a fantastic job so far. It is nice to see everything with a fresh coat of paint. There is still some stenciling to be done, but the painter is waiting on supplies. The piano key crosswalks on Main Street are painted by Linn County.

Jason and Liana Stone are the Park Caretakers for the year. Their duties began on Monday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>. The couple has 4 young children, it is nice to see kids in the park again.

The cemetery is all mowed in preparation of Memorial Day. PW is currently bagging all the grass, and blowing off the headstones. Mowing is a never-ending job until July.

Mr. Frink reminded Council that in 2019 all water meters were upgraded to a Kamstrup radio-read meter. These new meters have provided a remarkable cost savings to the City. Instead of taking 2 employees 2-3 days to read all the meters, it now takes Frink about 1.5 hours to complete.

Frink reported that OLCC has established new laws in relation to selling bulk water. These laws were instigated mostly due to the marijuana industry and the high-water needs. A new form has been created, and bulk water sales must be tracked in different ways, and reported to the State.



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Mr. Frink stated that by law the City is now required to separate storm water from sanitary sewer. Towns like Corvallis have spent millions of dollars to achieve this separation. Frink stated that now we are headed in the direction where storm water will need to be treated, so the systems will need to be put back together so that it can all be treated. It will cost millions of dollars to achieve this.

I & I stands for inflow and infiltration; in other words, flow with intent, such as off a roof or a driveway that is intentionally running into the sanitary sewer. This is illegal, and there are ways to test for this happening. The City has run into this happening before, and have had to require the property owners to comply with the laws. Infiltration is unintended flow coming into the system, which comes from things like manhole lids leaking, etc. In 2008 when we replaced 45% of the sewer system, unintended infiltration went from over 3 million a day (wintertime, and prior to the sewer project), to about 1.5 million gallons, total! We dropped down easily 80% of the inflow and infiltration. Although the project was expensive, it is a fairly remarkable difference.

Mr. Frink reminded Council of responsibility of utility lines. The City is responsible only for the lines going into the meters. Homeowners are responsible for the lines that go from the meter, all the way to their house, even if it goes under the asphalt. The City is responsible to mark what we own, so we only mark to the meter box. The City cannot work on private property due to liability issues and restraints. The City marks the sewer laterals as well, with as much information as we have (approximately 60% of the sewer laterals in town).

Mr. McDowell reminded Council that the reason we are talking about this is due to the regularity of the complaints that are received at City Hall.

Mr. Frink stated that he gets a lot of calls about the sewer being backed up in someone's house, and the owner wants the City to come out and fix it. The ordinance says that the City is only responsible to the main line. There have only been a couple of times where it was determined to be the City's problem. The distinction is that the owner is responsible for the lateral lines, the City is responsible for the main line.

- 3. Administration.** Mr. McDowell reported that he recently attended the Halsey City Council meeting to talk about REAL, or Rural Economic Alliance group (formerly MVP or Mid-Valley Partners). Back in 2014 the GO Team was formed, which came from the Ford Foundation Leadership Cohorts. Classes were held in Sweet Home and Lebanon, and many folks from those areas as well as Brownsville and Halsey participated in the multiple-week trainings that culminated in a project. Active members parlayed the GO Team into the Rural Economic plan. They spent 2 years determining what would make the biggest footprint for our local area, focusing on economic well-being, people's wellbeing, etc. The one thing that they kept coming back to was economic development. Towards this end, the cities of Sweet Home, Lebanon, and Brownsville got together informally trying to make a meaningful difference on this common objective.

In 2016/2017, the cities of Halsey and Harrisburg joined the effort. The group then approached the COG and Benton county rural cities, and a lot of interest was expressed there as well, including Adair Village, Philomath, and Monroe joining the group. This has been a total grass roots effort, and has held together quite well for quite awhile. The group was successful doing self-funding and receiving a few grants, and were able to hire RAIN (Regional Accelerator Incubator Network). By self-funding the effort, it gives small towns like Brownsville access to economic developers on staff at the larger cities of Sweet Home and Lebanon.

In 2019 McDowell was traveling around to the other cities with the IGA to continue the effort, and drive toward previously agreed upon outcomes. All of the Councils agreed to move forward with the IGA and then the project came to a screeching halt due to the coronavirus pandemic in 2020. Finally in 2021, the group decided that it was time to pick up the effort again, and they started meeting again. The group then hired JayRay to develop a website, logo, and do marketing. The City of



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Tangent joined the group in 2021, which takes the group to a total of nine cities, and it is expected that the City of Scio will also be joining the group soon.

The IGA runs out soon, June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022, and Council is being asked to continue the agreement until 2024 to finish the objectives and outcomes we were looking for in the original agreement, and then we are going to build a strategic plan to bring back to Council in about a year and half for Council's consideration.

Some of the highlights includes putting rural economic alliance in the center of the hub. McDowell is excited to be working with the County, both Benton and Linn. The COG economic development arm is coming to the table now, in large part to the group's energy and drive. Other interested parties include the State of Oregon and RAIN. McDowell stated that the biggest thing about economic development is to retain what businesses we have, but it is also great to add more businesses as well. It is great to have a group that developers and investors can reach out to in regard to economic development. We also have the University of Oregon, Oregon State University, and Linn Benton Community College right in our backyard. It would be great to capture some of this young raw talent and put it to use for the good of our state and local communities instead of those people going out of our State to start their businesses. McDowell reported that the model for economic growth has changed. These resources help folks want to stay and work here.

McDowell reported that our Municipal Court Administrator, Carol Humphreys, will be retiring officially on June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2022. The Brownsville Municipal Court will be moving over to the Linn County Justice Court (LCJC) in Lebanon. Many other communities use the LCJC as well. Folks that receive citations in the City of Brownsville will have to appear in the Lebanon court. Judge Meyer will still serve as the judge for the City. May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022 was the last court day in Fisher Hall. Many folks have worked on the transitions, including Staff, Judge Meyer, and Angie Debban of the LCJC. McDowell stated that even with so many moving parts, it has been a mostly seamless transition. Mrs. Humphreys has done a fantastic job for the City, and she will be missed. We wish her all the best in her retirement.

McDowell reported that the CLRC renovation project is coming along. Jonathon Dunn from Woodblock Architects has done a fantastic job with everything they have completed on the project including a 3-D model of the facility. They went through the building's every nook and cranny. The City hired Udell Engineering to do site survey work. The building hasn't had a major upgrade since it was built in the 1930's. The Ad Hoc Committee has completed the initial project review. McDowell thanked the committee (Brandie Simon, City's Park Board, Hilary Norton, City of Halsey Administrator, and Katy Kallai, CLRC President, Councilor Lynda Chambers, Mrs. Coleman, Mr. Frink, and himself) for their work on this effort. The next step is to obtain a working estimate for the project by June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022. The City would like to start in earnest on the project in June 2023. More information will be shared as it becomes available.

The Linx transportation project has been spearheaded by Mayor Ware and Councilor Thompson. Community partners have met and had discussions about the project, including logistics, routes, rates, etc. There is a meeting scheduled on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at the American Legion. In a nutshell, the bus will run 2 days a week, with 4 trips each day.

McDowell reported that the budget will be approved by Council next month. There is still a lot of work to be done between the end of June and the 1<sup>st</sup> of July.

McDowell reported that the Public Works Standards, since their adoption in 2014, have been great for the integrity of Staff and City alike, and the taxpayers as they rely on us to get these things done correctly. Our engineer, Ryan Quigley has asked for another month to finish the updates to the Public Works Standards. They should be ready for Council review and approval at the next meeting.



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Mrs. Morrow reported that Emergency Preparedness Committee recently met. A newsletter will be going out in July that will focus on wildfires, defensible space, campfire safety, etc. The group discussed doing an ice cream social type of event in August or early September, just to try and get more information out to the community. Another group effort will be participating at the end of the year playday at CLES. EPC will have a table, and all the classes will come through the station. We will likely talk about “Go Bags”, and meeting places, and other pertinent educational topics. EPC President Norman Simms, Marilee Frazier, and Mrs. Morrow will lead this event.

Mr. McDowell recapped progress with Disaster Preparations. The group now has the rates in hand, and they will decide whether to move forward or not with that contract soon.

Mr. McDowell reported that Staff has been busy with nuisance abatement. We started a little early, due to some complaints and have, at the same time, been delayed due to the rain on weed abatements. Staff sent out several RFA letters (Request for Actions) and are hoping to get the mowing started around town, and many folks are working towards compliance.

McDowell reported that the online website reservation calendar has been modified to include the current rates for folks wishing to rent facilities, tables and chairs, etc.

Mr. McDowell reported that the City audit has been scheduled for the first week of August. Staff will be pushed to get the information to them that early.

Mr. McDowell reported that the City is still waiting on the Pacific Power franchise agreement.

Mr. McDowell reported that the final water consumption management report from Tim Tice at OAWU is pending.

Brownsville Canal Company conversation is pending as well.

McDowell reminded Council of the climate change committee news release that was in the agenda packet. This committee is seeking members, and will be talking about policies and implementation of transitioning away from fossil fuels and using cleaner forms of energy. These new regulations will impact us greatly, especially small communities. It will be important to keep an eye on this; these unfunded mandates and financial implications will affect us all.

McDowell reported that the State of Oregon has come out with new rules about family leave. They will start assessing all employees 1% to pay for this. The details are still forthcoming on that.

McDowell reported on the River’s Edge development. As part of the approved plan, there was to be a park provided. McDowell showed a slide featuring a drawing and potential plan for the park. Mrs. Coleman and Superintendent Frink continue to monitor the situation to make sure that all conditions are met. It is important to remember that this will be a private park, not a city park. The City is holding \$102,000 bond payment to ensure that the project is completed. Hopefully in a few weeks, these funds can be released back to the developer.

McDowell stated that budget time is upon us, and the City is walking a tight rope as we try to self-fund as many projects as possible. Priorities in the next few years include the GR 12 waterline and creating another slow sand filter, CLRC, park pavilion, sewage treatment lagoon, and a new playground in the park. McDowell stated that costs are likely to run higher than expected due to inflation, shortage of materials, along with a myriad of other issues. So, truly the budget funds are committed. Council has done an admirable job with holding the line, and establishing the best use of City funds. If the Kirk Avenue project was implemented, it would likely be about \$40,000 or more assessed on to the abutting property’s taxes.



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Several years ago, Council decided to retreat from the Calapooia River erosion project as the best option. To address the situation, there are several agencies that would need to work together, which is a nightmare in itself, and the cost of the project would be several million dollars, with no long-term guarantee that it would work.

McDowell stated that it is important to remember that with the recent refinancing, the City is under a \$2.4 bond limit through 2024.

McDowell also reported that there is no shortage of wants in the City. Staff and Council would like to accommodate all of the wishes, but are forced to do the best we can with the resources available.

Mayor Ware and Mrs. Morrow recently hosted two groups of 3<sup>rd</sup> graders for a field trip to City Hall. The groups were from Central Linn Elementary School and the Pioneer Christian Academy.

4. **Planning.** Mrs. Elizabeth Coleman was present to discuss planning challenges. Often, a property owner or developer will contact Mrs. Coleman with an idea of what they would like to do with their particular property. They then want her to let them know they can do with their property, which can cause some challenges. Coleman can determine if the proposed use meets the Brownsville Municipal Code, and is an outright permitted use. If the plan falls within an outright permitted use, there is not typically a need to go before the Planning Commission, but would still need to follow State and local standards.

If the proposed use does not qualify as an outright permitted use, the application would need to go before the Planning Commission as a conditional use. The Planning Commission has the authority to deny, or approve the application and define conditions that have to be met for that use. Conditions could include lighting or parking parameters, etc. It is important to remember that the primary use must be fulfilled before a secondary use is allowed.

Mrs. Coleman stated that one thing that she is not, is a mind reader. She has no crystal ball, and cannot determine if a proposal will be successful or not. She does not grant wishes, like a genie, and does not make deals. Her responsibility is to make sure that things are fulfilled to the code. She cannot do this without a plan. Conceptual ideas are very nice, but a solid plan must be in hand to move forward. At a minimum, a plan would likely go through the city engineer, Public Works, Planning Consultant, administration, and staff. One complaint she hears a lot is that other cities allow what the property owner or developer are proposing. Mrs. Coleman stated that all plans submitted much adhere to Brownsville, Oregon standards, not any other city. Ninety-nine percent of the time our Brownsville Municipal Code and standards follow similar codes and standards for most cities within the State.

All of these standards and practices protect the City from liability, which is ultimately a line of defense for the taxpayer.

When planning property uses, FEMA must also be considered. There is a lot of Brownsville that is in the flood plain. In order for an approved application, it may mean that the developer or property owner will need to obtain an elevation certificate. This again, is not the City's job; we are not surveyors.

Mrs. Coleman stated that this is what she does all day, every day! She expressed appreciation for the many folks that call, it shows that Brownsville is a great place to live, but it is important that we make sure to follow the rules for everyone. It is so important for folks to come to the City with a concise, formal, professional plan, not a napkin plan.

Mr. McDowell stated that Mrs. Coleman often seems to be wearing roller skates while ice skating, and performs her duties admirably. She is our 'point guard' for all things planning related. She deals



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with a lot of unhappy, growly people at times, and does it very well. McDowell stated that the City truly appreciates all her efforts on our behalf.

5. **Library.** Mrs. Sherri Lemhouse presented the quarterly report. In 2016 she sang her first ditty for Council. She sang the first 2 verses again for Council tonight. Mrs. Lemhouse stated that in the budget this year there is provision to switch software. Folks will be able to look at the catalog online. In January 2023, e-books and audio books will also be available, due to an initial \$10,000 donation. Summer reading program is happening again in July. The library will also be offering some evening programs. Mrs. Lemhouse says that she is seeing new folks from the new development come in and get library cards. Mayor Ware expressed his appreciation for a job well done.
6. **Court.** No comments.
7. **Council Comments.** Councilor Humphreys would like to discuss dissolving the TRT (Transient Room Tax) fund from the budget. He would like the funds that need to be paid out to be paid, and the rest of the funds to be absorbed into the budget. This fund causes a lot of Staff time and effort, with very little return. Dissolving this fund will have little or no effect on the budget. Councilor Thompson recused herself from the vote. Council decided by consensus to send Mr. McDowell move forward on the issue.

Councilor Chambers read the email from Detective Captain Dave Snippen, Linn County Sheriff's Office, regarding MIP of Tobacco. Basically, ORS 167.785 was the statute that dealt with "Possession of tobacco products or inhalant delivery systems by person under 18 years of age." As of September 25, 2021, this law has now been repealed. . This change has effectively ensured that new generations of tobacco users (our children) can use and get addicted to tobacco without any legal consequences. Councilor Chambers wanted to make sure that Council is aware of this, and this is a real shame.

8. **Citizen Comments.** Don Lyon, Calapooia Food Alliance (CFA), was present to request that Council create an ad hoc committee to discuss the future of the Farmer's Market at Kirk's Ferry Park. The CFA would like this meeting to be scheduled as soon as possible. Councilor Hansen asked about the sense of urgency, as the agreement is up in November? Mr. Lyon stated that they would just like to know what Council is thinking, and are anxious to work together to make sure the market continues. *Councilor Thompson made a motion to form an Ad Hoc Committee to discuss the issue. Councilor Humphreys seconded the motion. The motion passed, with Councilor Craven abstaining.* McDowell asked for volunteers for the committee. Councilor Thompson, Mayor Ware, volunteered for the committee with Councilor Hansen as an alternate.

### LEGISLATIVE:

1. **Resolution 2022.13 | Election to Receive State Revenue Sharing.** *Mayor Ware made a motion to approve R 2022.13. as presented. Councilor Chambers seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*
2. **Proclamation | National Military Appreciation Month,** Mayor Ware proudly proclaimed May 2022 as National Military Appreciation Month in the City of Brownsville, stating that he appreciated all veterans!
3. **Ordinance 788 | Revising Title 1, General Provisions of the Brownsville Municipal Code, Chapter 1.20 Nominations for City Office.** *Mayor Ware made a motion to read by title only. Councilor Thompson seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously. Mr. McDowell read by title only, and explained that this ordinance is just making our past practice match the code. In the past, folks could get petition signatures, or just pay a \$10 filing fee. The problem with the petitions is that some signatures could not be validates, and people often felt harassed to sign petitions. In an effort to clean up the procedure, and dial everything in, the City will now allow*



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the \$10 filing fee only to run for office. If this ordinance is passed as an emergency, it will take effect in June. *Councilor Craven made a motion to approve O 788 and pass as an emergency ordinance. Councilor Thompson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

### ACTION ITEMS:

1. **Authorize Linn County Sheriff's Office Contract.** *Councilor Humphreys made a motion to authorize Mr. McDowell and Mayor Ware to sign documents and contracts as necessary. Councilor Chambers seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.*
2. **Authorize Rural Economic Alliance Agreement (REAL) Extension.** *Mayor Ware made a motion to authorize the REAL agreement extension. Councilor Neddeau seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

### DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1. **Ad Hoc Committee | The Brownsville Times.** Councilor Hansen reported that Mr. McDowell had met with all 4 members of the committee, separately to prevent quorum issues, and asked Councilor Craven for a summary. Councilor Craven read a written statement as follows:

“My purpose for requesting this committee was for three reasons, 1) to provide clarity as to why our local newspaper seems to distort and disinform the citizens of Brownsville, regarding the true business and progress with the City of Brownsville and its Council, 2) to understand why our position, that is the City’s position, was not being properly investigated, and 3) for Council to consider speaking to Mr. Parrish if in fact, Council shared these same concerns.

As Council members, we know the projects that we are working on for the next year or two are complex and require accurate coverage. I found my concerns crystallized as I read the article authored and published by Mr. Parrish in the May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022 edition of *The Times*. An editorial based purely on rumor, speculation and gossip which was cultivated by a few members of our community all of whom were *absent* from the last two Council meetings which were free of attacks directed and aimed at certain councilors and Staff. Council was able to conduct the City’s business uninterrupted, for the good of the order. Due to Mr. Parrish’s reaction to hearsay, clearly he is not interested in contacting the City, nor its Council to seek facts and/or clarification. He is more interested in rushing to publish rumors. For me, this says everything and confirms my concern. So sadly, I would like to formally rescind my request to meet with Mr. Parrish because the point is moot.

As this committee has discussed and agreed upon, I would like to request that this Council authorize a monthly report of Council meetings to *The Times* so the citizens of this community can have access to the factual content of City business. I feel this would benefit the community positively by providing an unbiased, straight forward recap of City business. Also, I would like to spearhead an effort to author and submit articles highlighting the city’s recent projects and accomplishments which benefits ALL citizens of this community.

Thank you to all the Council members who have taken the time to join this committee in seeking clarifications regarding this matter.”

Councilor Hansen asked Councilor Craven to restate what his request to Council is. Councilor Craven stated that it is basically requesting authorization to submit a recap article to the *The Times* surrounding Council business and projects. Councilor Chambers also stated that she thought this was the request of the Ad Hoc Committee, to basically get the facts out to the community.

Councilor Thompson stated that she thought it was a good idea to have some parameters, such as how often, who is going to do it, etc. She thinks guidelines are needed, and is uncomfortable without





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them. Councilor Chambers responded stating that the Councilor would be working with Mr. McDowell to ensure that all things reported are factual.

Councilor Craven stated that this effort is to have an open line of communication with *The Times*. He suggests working with Mr. McDowell to provide actual facts to the paper.

Mr. McDowell stated that basically what the City would do would be to submit a summary of the meeting before the minutes are officially approved at the next Council meeting. The second issue that McDowell brought up was that articles are different than editorials. A few Councilors have been misquoted over the last few months in articles. Those Councilors should try to address that directly with the paper. Editorials are different, and guidelines might be a good idea there. In the past, there have been multiple instances where reporters call Council and the City Administrator late at night.

Councilor Thompson stated that she is concerned with consistency. Mr. McDowell stated that he is very concerned with consistency, that is why this conversation is taking place right now. The City's minutes are very clear and concise. The City has several upcoming projects that will need accurate reporting relayed to the City. It is gigantically important.

*Councilor Craven made a motion to basically submit a recap article to the paper surrounding Council business and projects and develop procedures for this recap. Councilor Chambers seconded the motion and it passed unanimously with Mayor Ware abstaining from the vote, stating he used to run the newspaper.*

Councilor Hansen stated that Council does not in any way want to infringe on the freedom of the press; that's not what this is about, never was. As Councilor Craven indicated, Council would like to have good open communication with the newspaper because obviously accurate reporting is vital to us, and Council has a vested interest in that. Councilor Hansen further stated that in regard to the Letters to the Editor and editorials, it is the responsibility of each individual and if is they feel compelled to respond to that, it is their prerogative.

2. **ROI Grant Disbursements.** Mr. McDowell reported that Council will find on page 50 of the agenda packet, a listing of the disbursements to date for the ROI grant as required by R 2022.07.
3. **April Financials.** No comments or questions.

### **CITIZEN QUESTIONS & COMMENTS.**

Kathleen Swayze, Main Street, stated that she felt like she needed to respond to Councilor Craven's letter. She stated that it was suggested 3 or 4 meetings ago that the City publish the agenda in the paper. It was determined that the agenda comes out on a Friday, and the paper is a Wednesday publication. Mrs. Swayze further stated that folks can always write letters to the editor, stating that editorials are rare in the paper anymore, but individuals can always respond. She is really happy that we have a community paper. The paper is the glue that holds a lot of this community together. Swayze stated that she respects the editorial that Mr. Parrish published several weeks ago, and they do the best they can. It is not always great, she agreed, but doesn't think that the article was generated out of rumor or slander. Council always has the option of responding to the paper, and no one did. Mrs. Swayze stated that she is glad that Council is doing this process now, but to slam the editor of the paper, really bothers her. Mr. Parrish does a good job, as best he can.

Councilor Hansen stated that we do value the paper, and that it is an integral part of the community. Mr. McDowell commented that Council has a duty to make sure that articles are correct.



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Jack Alsman, Spaulding Avenue, stated that the computer and monitor are great, but requested greater access and visibility for the audience. Mr. McDowell responded that folks are always welcome to move their chairs, with budget restraints it is hard to purchase all of the equipment we would like. Mr. Alsman also asked for a definition of “ad hoc” committee.

Mr. McDowell clarified per code what committees mean for the City of Brownsville. The first kind of committee is a subcommittee, which requires an agenda and recorded minutes. The ad hoc committee is usually appointed or called by the City Administrator. That committee will generally take a very particular topic for discussion and then brings it back to Council for further action and review.

Natalie Wade, Templeton Street, stated that she is the newest person on the CFA Board. The Board has years of wealth of information, love Brownsville, and want to educate everyone. They share the plants they have with folks, hoping people will be more self-sufficient and healthier. Ms. Wade encouraged everyone to appreciate them and all they do; they are volunteers as well.

Councilor Hansen stated that Council values the CFA, community garden and resources, and the Farmer’s Market is great; there is no lack of support for the CFA. Council is simply trying to find the most suitable solution.

Nan Van Sandt, Bishop Way, stated that she supports the local paper. It is incredibly important to keep a local paper alive, and we need to support them as best as possible. She suggested the CFA is an important part of Emergency Preparedness Committee (EPC) as food sovereignty is so important right now, and it teaches people how to take care of themselves.

Patrick Starnes, Putman Street, encouraged Councilors with concerns about CFA continuing the Farmers Market at Kirks Ferry Park to be part of the committee.

Mr. McDowell stated that the City has historically done a lot for CFA, as one of the City’s big three non-profit partners in the City. When Mrs. Coleman and he sat down with Kathleen Swayze and Steve Brenner to discuss the transition from private ground to public ground, much discussion followed. It was understood that this agreement was a year-to-year issue. The Board needs to understand that the City has done a lot for CFA and supported them in many ways over the years. Mrs. Swayze came to Mr. McDowell in October, and they toured 8 different spots. She took this information back to the CFA Board and discussed the options with them. Before the community garden was established, Mr. McDowell was the one who petitioned the School Board to allow CFA use of the property there for the community gardens. Mr. McDowell wants to make it clear that there is no ill will between any of the non-profits and the City. It is vitally important for everyone to understand that the City has many priorities to fund such as the 26-acre Pioneer Park, the CLRC, and the Library, just to name a few. Let’s accentuate the positive things that we are doing together; the heart for our community is unmatched. We need to accentuate the positive things that we are doing together; we all want what’s best for the community. If Council has to say no, it is never with malice or disrespect for a group or event. Hopefully with this as the new understanding, we can move forward and make the best choices for the City and CFA.

### **COUNCIL COMMENTS.**

Mayor Ware commented that he had encouraged Council President Dave Hansen to run the meeting tonight and would like to offer the same to any other Council member that would like to run a future meeting.



## Council Minutes

Councilor Chambers commented that if folks need to get their real ID for air-travel, there is only about one year left to do that. Councilor Hansen stated that folks can also use a passport.

Councilor Humphreys thanked friends and citizens of the community for taking their time and coming to Council to share their views. He believes that it makes him a better Councilor. Councilor Hansen echoed this sentiment.

Councilor Hansen stated that in the packet there is a letter from Mike Caughey, Harrisburg City Council President, sharing his experience with doing a “ride-along” with Sergeant Steve Frambes, LCSO. It was very interesting, and it speaks to our relationship with LCSO.

Councilor Hansen also reported that he, Councilor Thompson, and Mrs. Morrow all attended the Region 4 LOC meeting held in Harrisburg last month. He has some comments, but he will hold those until the next meeting due to the lateness of the hour.

**ADJOURNMENT:** *Councilor Chambers made a motion to adjourn at 9:05 p.m. Councilor Craven seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "SM", written over a horizontal line.

City Administrator S. Scott McDowell

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "DW", written over a horizontal line.

Mayor Don Ware