

City of Prairie City  
Council Meeting  
September 12, 2018

1. **Attendance**

2. Mayor Jim Hamsher
3. Councilor Carole Garrison
4. Councilor Joe Phippen
5. Councilor Frank Primozić
6. Councilor Les Chruch
7. Councilor Dottie Miller
- 8.

9. **Visitors**

10. Carlos Bortell
11. Luanne Bortell
12. Chantal DesJardin
13. Dan Becker
14. Donna Becker
15. Sandy Murry
16. Mark Murry
17. Taci Philbrook
18. Melanie DeJong
19. Debbie Emmel
20. David Kebler
21. Deanne Negus
22. Frances preston
23. Sue Malaney
24. Marvin Rynearson, Fire Chief
25. Trish Lindeman
26. Judy Jacobs
27. Katy Nelson
28. Wanda Winegar
- 29.

30.

31.

32. Mayor Hamsher opened the regular council meeting at 6:00pm and roll call was taken. Councilor
33. Georgia Patterson was absent.

34.

35. **Approval of Minutes**

36. The minutes of August 8, 2018 council meeting were considered. **MSP: To approve the minutes of**
37. **August 8, 2018 council meeting. Councilor Church/Councilor Phippen. All members present**
38. **voted in favor.**

39.

40. The minutes of the August 22, 2018 town hall meeting were considered. **MSP: To approve the minutes**
41. **of August 22, 2018 town hall meeting with corrections. Councilor Garrison/Councilor Primozić.**
42. **All members present voted in favor.**

43.

#### **44. Visitors**

45. Mayor Hamsher called on Sandy Murry who had submitted an agenda request to discuss the trees on  
46. Front Street. She read aloud her presentation which stated that during the May 2018 council meeting the  
47. Council was asked if the trees along Front Street were going to be cut down. The Council assured her  
48. that the trees were not going to be cut down, that it was a rumor; four days later two trees were cut  
49. down. During the June 13, 2018 council meeting, Sandy asked if City Hall was aware that this was  
50. going to happen. She stated that Carole Garrison had given Donna Merrill permission to cut trees down  
51. in front of Hotel Prairie. The Council had decided at that time to put a hold on any decisions or actions  
52. concerning the planters and trees until further research could be done to find out who is responsible for  
53. them. During the weekend of August 25, 2018, another tree had been cut down in front of the empty  
54. hardware store. Sandy had called Phil Bopp from the Oxbow Restaurant to inquire if he knew who had  
55. cut the tree down next to his building. Phil told Sandy that he cut the tree down with a Councilmen's  
56. blessing. Phil said that the Councilmen told him that the City was talking to an arborist, and that the trees  
57. were going to be removed, and it would be helpful if he removed the tree. Sandy stated that she was here  
58. tonight because Carole Garrison and Frank Primozic gave permission to individuals to remove those  
59. trees without the knowledge and approval of the Mayor and City Council. Sandy asked the Council what  
60. recourse there will be.

61. Mayor Hamsher thanked Sandy for her patience in this matter and the time she has donated to the help  
62. with the research. Mayor Hamsher asked Councilor Primozic about the incident concerning the tree in  
63. front of the old hardware store. Councilor Primozic explained that he had discussed this matter for a year  
64. and a half with Phil Bopp, and that Phil had to move his business sign down towards the highway due to  
65. the tree blocking the view of his business sign. Councilor Primozic said that he was absent earlier this  
66. year and wasn't aware that Sandy Murry was in charge of the planters.

67. Mayor Hamsher said that Sandy was not in charge of the planters during this time, she had resigned  
68. taking care of the planters in 2015.

69. Mayor Hamsher explained that Councilor Primozic never talked to him about the tree in front of the  
70. Prairie Drug and Hardware Store. He said that he would like to establish a committee to help care for the  
71. planters, and then set some guidelines to follow so this does not happen again.

72. Wanda Winegar, who owns Bar WB, said that the trees have outgrown their planters and who would  
73. they ask permission to cut down those trees since the business owners are liable.

74. Mayor Hamsher said that if they could establish a committee and set a policy to follow, the business  
75. owners could then talk to the committee.

76. Mayor Hamsher asked if there was anybody in the audience who would like to volunteer for the  
77. committee. Wanda Winegar, Frank Primozic, Judy Jacobs, Chris Camarena, Carole Garrison, Sandy  
78. Murry, and Mark Murry raised their hands to express their interest to volunteering for the Front Street  
79. Planter Committee.

80. Councilor Garrison stated that she would like to thank Sandy for providing water for the trees and  
81. flowers on Front Street. She said that she would also like to remind Sandy that at the June meeting when  
82. she gave permission to Donna Merrill who owns Hotel Prairie that she discussed that with the Mayor.

83. Mayor Hamsher said that his recollection is Councilor Garrison was going to have an arborist evaluate  
84. the trees and then, at a council meeting, come up with a plan to apply for a grant to fund the project.  
85.

#### **86. Public Works**

87. Mayor Hamsher called on Chris Camarena, Public Works Director, who reported that two million  
88. gallons of water have been hauled from John Day to supplement the water demand for Prairie City. The  
89. production hasn't dropped any, but residents are still using a lot of water. He said that divers are coming to  
90. do an inspection on the reservoir and to seal a small crack at the bottom. Chris introduced Jake Ellson who  
91. was hired as the Utility Maintenance Work I in August 2018.

92. Mayor Hamsher gave an update on the Faiman Wells Project. The first well pump test was successful,  
93. testing at 465gpm for the duration of 70 hours, and it will pump a million gallons in 30 hours. Mayor  
94. Hamsher said that this was the perfect time to do a pump test because August is our driest time of year, so  
95. to yield 465gpm is an excellent outcome. Anderson & Perry Engineering is working alongside Mayor

96. Hamsher, and City Recorder to complete the State application. Once the application is finished and  
97. submitted, Anderson & Perry, Mayor Hamsher and City Recorder will compile the information needed for  
98. the USDA grant application. Mayor Hamsher asked the Council if they would allow him to sign the State  
99. application when it's finished.  
100. Mayor Hamsher read aloud to the audience an email that Dave Wildman from Anderson & Perry  
101. Engineering requesting that all contact be from the City Hall. He asked that he be made the primary  
102. Coordinator for all things funding related in order minimize confusion and misdirection. This will help us  
103. stay on point and get through the process in a more efficient manner.  
104. Frances Preston asked if the council understands the chain of command in regards to the completion on  
105. the loan.  
106. Mayor Hamsher said that he wanted to share this email with the council because he sent it by email to all  
107. of them, but not all councilors have access to the internet, or have a computer. He said that council  
108. members have been contacting them with questions, which slows the process down. Mayor Hamsher said  
109. that council members are always welcome to call or text him for updates on the application process. He  
110. said that the staff at Anderson & Perry do these applications all the time and know what they are doing.  
111. Judy Jacobs asked how the negotiations with John Coombs are going.  
112. Mayor Hamsher said that they are going along quite nicely.  
113. Chantal DesJardin asked if the rate increase would need to be more than what the loan requires.  
114. Mayor Hamsher said that at this time we are just going to raise the rates for what the loan requires and that  
115. hopefully, we will be able to allocate the future cell tower income to the loan.  
116. Frances Preston asked how things are going for the Wastewater Project. Mayor Hamsher said that the  
117. sewer contract was held up by the attorney's office who had been reviewing and making amendments to  
118. the original copy. The attorney has now finished and the changes have been submitted to the engineers for  
119. their approval; it will then go to the USDA for their approval.

120.

#### 121. **Payables**

122. To ratify the payment of bills. **MSP: To pay the bills. Councilor Garrison/Councilor Miller**

123. **All members present voted in favor.**

124.

125. Mayor Hamsher moved then addressed, an added item to the agenda regarding the sidewalks on Front  
126. Street. The sidewalk in front of the Masonic building needs repair. He said that the code book states that  
127. the owner of the property responsible for their portion of the sidewalk will be notified by the City by  
128. mail, and asked to repair it within 60 (sixty) days. Mayor Hamsher explained that in order to send the  
129. notice to the property owner the council must approve it.

130. **MSP: To send a letter of notification to the owner of the Masonic Lodge to correct the sidewalk.**

131. **Councilor Church/Councilor Phippen. All members present voted in favor.**

132.

133. Mayor Hamsher moved on to Ordinance 2018-02 for 911 jurisdiction plan. Councilor Garrison and  
134. Councilor Patterson had been attending meetings in John Day as representatives for Prairie City.  
135. Councilor Garrison explained that approximately a year or so ago, we were notified by John Day that they  
136. no longer wish to provide 911 services. There was discussion about Condon taking over the services for  
137. the Grant County area, but it was voted on and decided to keep it local. The dispatch center will move  
138. from the John Day City Hall to the John Day Fire Hall starting January 1, 2019. John Day will no longer  
139. be responsible for providing dispatch services. At the last meeting, the intergovernmental group approved  
140. the new intergovernmental agreement, which is to take the old agreement and put it in new, more modern  
141. terms. It includes a cost sharing formula, so that all the cities will be paying a fee. Prairie City will pay  
142. \$6,170.00 annually for their portion of the 911 service fees, and that will be reevaluated each year.  
143. Councilor Garrison stated that Prairie City budgeted \$25,000 for 911 services, so \$6,170.00 is a smaller  
144. amount to pay.

145. Mayor Hamsher stated that we didn't use the \$25,000 allocated because Nick Green, City Manager for  
146. John Day had received \$420,000 worth of funding to help with the cost of providing 911 services for two  
147. years.

148. Councilor Garrison said that in order for this to take effect by January the council will need to pass the  
149. 2018-02 Ordinance and new jurisdiction plan tonight.

150. Mayor Hamsher had some concerns about the M-50 deferral vs farm deferral for property tax that would  
151. make a big difference, and his other concern is that the state needs to increase the cost in the 911 fees.

152. Councilor Garrison stated that a bill is going to be introduced this year for the 911 tax.

153. Mayor Hamsher said that he would like that to be incorporated in this agreement. He said that he doesn't  
154. want to see people paying for the 911 tax twice if that bill goes through.

155. Councilor Garrison said that they discussed that at their last meeting, and if the tax is increased the budget  
156. will be adjusted during the next budget year. She said that it will be adjusted every year based on the taxes  
157. coming in.

158. Mayor Hamsher said that he didn't see it stated that in the agreement.

159. Councilor Garrison replied that it is not in the agreement because it will be adjusted every year.

160. Mayor Hamsher said that it made him a little uncomfortable that it will be adjusted every year; they could  
161. decide to increase the City's percentage considerable.

162. Councilor Garrison said that they can't do that; that the only thing they can change is the amount.

163. Councilor Phippen asked how can we approve this when we don't know what they will put in the  
164. agreement.

165. Councilor Garrison said that in your plan it tells you exactly what your user fees are, and they are based  
166. on the cost for next year, so next year they could ask us to increase the water or sewer rates.

167. Mayor Hamsher explained to the audience that we all agreed to keep 911 local, so that we could keep  
168. employment here, and to keep the money in our own County, and these questions are on this particular  
169. agreement.

170. Councilor Garrison said that there is one correction that was made Monday night at the meeting on page  
171. 12, it says "Prairie City Rural Fire Protection District" and it should be changed to "Prairie Rural Fire  
172. Protection District." They will strike through "City" because that should be removed.

173. Mayor Hamsher called on Frances Preston who said that if the bill is passed to increase fees we won't  
174. have to pay very much for a while because the revenue to the County will double and the expenses will  
175. only be \$50,000-\$60,000 more than they are currently, but what needs to be known is as property owners,  
176. the County is responsible for 50%, and as a property owner you will be paying more, so don't lose sight of  
177. that. The other thing to know is that Oregon State Police have their own dispatch and will not be using the  
178. dispatch at the Fire Hall.

179. Mayor Hamsher said that the County cost sharing is 43.8%, John Day is 7.8%, Prairie City is 3.0%,  
180. Canyon City is 2.6% Mount Vernon is 1.6%, Dayville is .5% Long Creek is .5%, Seneca is .5%, and  
181. Monument is .4%

182. Councilor Phippen asked that Mayor Hamsher read step 4. Mayor Hamsher read aloud step 4 which was  
183. the remaining balance of the proposed operating budget assigned to the City's and County's proportions  
184. based on each jurisdiction percentages of prior year's property taxes assessed value for all property in  
185. Grant County. Councilor Phippen said that Frances' comment was a very valid point, and he would like a  
186. copy of the ordinance sent to each home owner, so they know what is going on.

187. Mayor Hamsher said that we can make copies, so the public can pick them up at the office, and be more  
188. informed.

189. Frances Preston said that County Court has only read this once and it will need to be read one more time.  
190. She encouraged the public audience to go and listen to the Courts reading and express your feelings  
191. because there are some who believe that those other entities that are providing services to other Counties  
192. can do it just as efficiently.

193. Marvin Rynearson said that on that you are actually wrong there.

194. Councilor Garrison said that you're wrong, wrong, wrong.

195. Mayor Hamsher said that this is the first reading of the County Court and they're supposed to have  
196. another reading and take more public comment. The City has a slightly different procedure for passing an  
197. ordinance then the County does. We can pass it in one reading if the vote is unanimous, but I think that we  
198. should have public comment and public opinion, so now listening to Carole, this has to be passed by the  
199. first of the year, so there would be an opportunity for the public to have more time even though we could

200. hurry up and pass this tonight. If we put it on the agenda for the next meeting there would still be ample  
201. time to pass it by the end of the year and be passed in the same time frame as the County. This would give  
202. the public more time to look at the ordinance and attend the next meeting.

203. Councilor Garrison said that it has to passed this month or early in next month because it has to go  
204. through the State before it can come back to us and be approved, and we have cut it pretty close; we don't  
205. have a lot of time.

206. Mayor Hamsher said that we may not have a lot of time, but some times this hurry up and sign things and  
207. look at it later is not the best thing. If we have to have a special meeting because it only takes one reading,  
208. this would give opportunity because we are going to have to have a special meeting here soon anyway.

209. Once we get the amount from the State and the application in for Business Oregon we will have to have a  
210. special meeting to make a Resolution for the rate increase. I anticipate us having a special meeting here in  
211. the next few weeks. We may not have to wait until the second week of October to have another meeting,  
212. and we could have that on the agenda then. That way the public has a chance to come in and read it, and  
213. people that have questions I will try to find out answers they have. Everybody gets a chance, so it won't  
214. be like, "well when did they do this?"

215. Councilor Phippen made a motion to delay passing the ordinance.

216. Councilor Garrison asked to set the meeting date tonight.

217. Mayor Hamsher said, "No, the reason that I cannot set the date tonight because I need to see how fast  
218. Business Oregon will have the application done. I don't want to set it for next week and them not have the  
219. information from Business Oregon, and then have to do another meeting four or five days later. It should  
220. be in the next week or two, but this will give everybody an opportunity to look it over, and get questions  
221. and concerns answered."

222. Mayor Hamsher said that basically we have a motion to table this to our next meeting whether it be  
223. special or whatever.

224. **MSP: To delay until the next special meeting on ordinance 2018-02. Councilor Phippen/Councilor**  
225. **Church. All members voted in favor except Councilor Garrison who did not vote.**

226. Chantel DesJardin asked, "you are delaying because you want public comment; what then do you feel  
227. your authority or action to change the agreement, so if your intent is to get public comment and then  
228. you're going to recommend changes to this agreement?"

229. Mayor Hamsher explained not necessarily.

230. Chantal DesJardin asked, "then why don't you approve it. If the public comment cannot change the  
231. agreement then what's wrong with passing it tonight?"

232. Mayor Hamsher said, "if the public comment influences the decision to adopt it, then that could be."

233. Chantal DesJardin asked, "so you may not be choosing to adopt it at all?"

234. Mayor Hamsher said, "that could be."

235. Councilor Garrison said, "so if we choose not to adopt it then we would be out the 911 service."

236. Chantal DesJardin stated, "so if you don't adopt it then don't call 911."

237. Mayor Hamsher said that wouldn't be the case at all, and it sure wouldn't be that we aren't willing to pay  
238. this \$6,170.00 because we budgeted \$25,000. It's so the councilors have more time with it and the public,  
239. and if you have any concerns please write them down, so I can address them. Does anybody have any  
240. more comments on this because their getting a chance in County Court by having several readings.

241. Marvin Rynearson had discussion concerning whether to keep it local or to farm it out to Frontier in  
242. Condon.

243. Mayor Hamsher explained to Marvin that the decision has already been made to keep the 911 services  
244. local. The reason for delaying is so that council members and the public can read the agreement and feel  
245. comfortable with it.

246. Councilor Garrison stated that on the 21<sup>st</sup> of August an email was sent to you at this City's email, and it  
247. listed the 5 step processes we needed to follow, and in this email, and you should have received a copy of  
248. it because it came to pchall. It did state how important it was to be adopted in September.

249. Councilor Church asked who this was from.

250. Councilor Garrison replied this is from Nick Green or from the president of our council Kenny Delano.

251. Mayor Hamsher said that this is a process that they have come up with, and they may want it passed right

252. now, but by your own admission this doesn't need to be passed until the first of the year. Let me remind  
253. you this is the 12<sup>th</sup> of September, and we only got this agreement a week ago, and on the County level we  
254. received this on Monday, so I think it's important to get your public to look at it, regardless if they say we  
255. need this done, done, done; then get the agreement to us sooner, so that these questions can be asked. See,  
256. if it was such a rush the County could have said today "this is an emergency" and it wouldn't have to have  
257. several readings, and they could have done it as an emergency ordinance, and if it passes unanimously  
258. then it goes into effect. Their having several readings, and I think we should do the same.  
259. Councilor Church said that chances are we will still get it in on time.  
260. Councilor Phippen said that he agrees whole-heartedly with Jim; there's no sense in making hasty  
261. decisions that are forced upon you. I don't like that. Anybody with common sense doesn't like that.  
262. Chantal DesJardin said that you're forced to take a 1.5-million-dollar loan out.  
263. Mayor Hamsher said no, that it's not the same, we are not being force to do it. If the bulk of the residents  
264. said that they want to hope for more rain and snow this year, and be in the same boat as this year, but we  
265. cannot support hauling anymore water next year; we are lucky that we had some money left over on the  
266. loan. The vast majority at the town hall meeting voted in favor of the rate increase and fix the problem.  
267. We didn't meet here in secret or in a small group like tonight, and then decided to go after a rate increase.  
268. That's why we held a public meeting, to remain transparent, and not shove stuff down the publics throat.  
269. Councilor Garrison said that we have had public meetings, and every one of our meeting have been posted  
270. here on the front window and at the Post Office.  
271. Mayor Hamsher said that's the user board meetings for John Day, and I'll tell you what kind of  
272. participation they had; Scott Myers relayed that there was a lack of people to even have a quorum and  
273. they had to call him to come down to attend the meeting, so they could even vote on anything in one of  
274. their recent meetings. I thank you people that come down to our meetings regularly and your questions are  
275. helpful. I think it's good when the public comes down and asks questions, so the true story can be relayed.  
276.  
277. At 7:50pm the Council moved into executive session pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(i) – A governing body  
278. may hold an executive session "to review and evaluate" the job performance of a chief executive officer,  
279. other officer, employees, and staff, if the person whose performance is being reviewed and evaluated does  
280. not request an "open hearing."  
281. Mayor Hamsher read aloud that The City of Prairie City will now meet in executive session pursuant to  
282. ORS 192.660(2)(i) – A governing body may hold an executive session "to review and evaluate" the job  
283. performance of a chief executive officer, other officer, employees, and staff, if the person whose  
284. performance is being reviewed and evaluated does not request an "open hearing." Representatives of the  
285. news media and designated staff will be allowed to attend the executive session. All other members of the  
286. audience are asked to leave the room. Representatives of the news media are specifically directed not to  
287. report on any of the deliberations during the executive session, except to state the general subject of the  
288. session as previously announced. No decision may be made in the executive session. At the end of the  
289. executive session, we will return to open session and welcome the audience back into the room.  
290. Mayor Hamsher recused himself and Councilor Church ran the executive session.  
291.  
292. Councilor Church adjourned the executive session at 8:43pm  
293.  
294. Mayor Hamsher opened the regular council meeting at 8:44pm and invited the public back to the meeting.  
295. **MSP: To approve Ms. Browns permeant employment and increasing her salary 50¢ an hour.**  
296. **Councilor Church/Councilor Primozic. All members present voted in favor.**  
297.  
298. Mayor Hamsher asked for a motion to approve him to sign the Business Oregon loan/grant application.  
299. **MSP: To approve Mayor Hamsher to sign the application for Business Oregon Loan. Councilor**  
300. **Church/Councilor Garrison. All members of present voted in favor.**  
301.  
302. Mayor Hamsher adjourned the regular council meeting at 8:48pm.  
303.

304. Submitted By: \_\_\_\_\_

305. City Recorder, Bobbie Brown

306.

307. Approved by the City Council this day 10<sup>th</sup> of October, 2018

308. and signed by the Mayor:

309.

310.

311.

312.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jim Hamsher, Mayor