

MINUTES

**CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL
29592 ELLENSBURG AVE
GOLD BEACH OR 97444
SPECIAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, 2/21/07
12:00 NOON**

CALLED TO ORDER BY MAYOR POPOFF AT 12:03 P.M.

THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

ROLL CALL:

	<u>PRESENT</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Mayor Karl Popoff	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
Council Position #1 Sue Johnson	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
Council Position #2 Don Flynn	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
Council Position #3 Mark Coltrane	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>
Council Position #4 Vacant	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Council Position #5 David Alexander	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>

****NOTE:** The public is invited to attend but no public comment will taken.

SPECIAL ORDERS OF BUSINESS:

DISCUSSION re ADMINISTATOR AD (A)

Popoff stated he felt the city needed at least 30 hours for an administrator. I believe that a full time administrator is what the Charter intended. Four or five times I've heard people are wondering how we can give someone 16 hours a week and expect them to be able to handle the job, particularly with many of the things we've got. The other thing is I can, according to the City Charter, choose an interim city administrator, all on my own. To hire one full time or a permanent one, I can appoint, you guys confirm. I have not decided, at this time (if I can find the right person and they are willing to take it on an interim position, I might indeed do that) but as it stands right now, our department heads can handle their own departments and we run pretty smoothly that way.

Johnson-It's always been difficult here to say how many hours a person needs to work. We've had administrators, I can think of one in particular, that didn't do anything-he set us back. Then we had Hyrum. He wasn't paid full time but he was here most of the time because he liked being here-he wasn't in there working full time and he put in way more hours than he

was paid for-that was his choice. As you said, we get along very well in the interim. Frankly I can't tell much difference between when we do and when we don't. It's very difficult to set a time. You say 16 hours and expect him to do everything, like with Mr. Bare. I believe that was kind of an agreement with him that he thought he could handle his other job as well as do this and it didn't work out, so we learned he couldn't, at least. I don't know exactly what it is that an administrator does that doesn't go on day to day to day. I really don't. So, it is hard for me to say that I feel that 30 hours is adequate or not adequate. I can't give a reason for not having one that much or for having one that much. We've done it both ways, sometimes it worked and sometimes it didn't. Last time we tried to keep it under 20 hours to save paying benefits. We're trying to build up money and we're still trying to cut logical things as much as we can and still run our city.

Flynn-My experience has simply been with Hyrum (Fedje) as the administrator and with Mr. Bare. My personal observations were along the lines of what Sue (Johnson) said that Hyrum did an excellent job, although he was here a lot more than say 20 hours (half-time) but a lot of that time was spent more in a public relations type of a thing than actually administering departments per say. I think Hyrum would have been the first to admit, because we had many talks about this sort of thing while I was interim chief and since, that he could have done the job in $\frac{1}{2}$ and still had extra time. From what I've been able to see, again, from my personal observations and my personal opinion, I think even going to 20 hours a week would be more than sufficient. It would give someone benefits if that's what they were looking for. With the staff that we have, with the abilities that Shirley (Walker) for instance has repeatedly demonstrated over the years, I see the city administrator position as (and I don't want to use the term figure-head because that's not it) someone to make the official decisions because Shirley has plenty on her own to do. She is a tremendous support and with her support and guidance until someone becomes fully aware of what is involved in running this small city, I think $\frac{1}{2}$ time would be more than sufficient. My observations have been a $\frac{1}{2}$ time position has been able to do the job and do it well. I certainly don't consider this a "cost cutting measure" as a reason for doing it, it's simply all that's required to do the job. We've had very experienced people that have been able to do the job with that amount of time or less. Most of them have had other interest that they use the rest of their personal time for.

Coltrane-Like Councilor Johnson said, the variables are amazing. I think it is the kind of a job where most of the time you could probably do it in 20-30 hours but there will be certain times of the year where it's going to take more. I'm sure there are ways under the labor law when a person needs more time and they get compensated for it. I firmly believe that no one should feel or be compelled to work for and devote their time to something and not be compensated for it. There again, the variables come in what is compensation. Everyone wants something different. I would agree with Don also, that perhaps more hours than what we had in the past would be more appropriate in what the expectations are. I think we probably ask someone to do something on a part time basis and expect full time results-that's probably just human nature to do that. Some are willing to do that and some aren't willing to do it but of course those people don't need to apply I guess. We do need to be able to compensate somebody for what they do, fairly. Between that person, and us we can come up with a definition of fairness. I'm amazed that people would show interest in it. Whether it's through Executive Session or whatever-we need to sit down and figure out where we want to go unless that's what we want to do today, and that's fine with me.

Alexander-I am pretty much in agreement with you Mr. Mayor, in terms of the hours for the position but possibly for different reasons. I think if we offer a position as city administrator, one of the things that is important is to have the benefits package as part of that. (Alexander gave an example of why and how important a benefit package is) I would prefer a 30-hour position, I guess I would settle for somewhere around 25 hours as long as it qualified for the benefits package. One of the things I'd like to see out of this is for us to be able to attract the highest caliber applicants. You're not going to get that unless you offer a compensation package along with a salary range that makes sense. I think the salary range the previous administrator was under meets that criteria. But sufficient hours are needed so that the individual can actually focus their attention as their primary to the responsibilities as a city administrator, and not see it as something that can be easily thrown away. For those reasons I would support, preferably a 30-hour spot but I would think a minimum of 25 hours as long it included qualifying for the benefits package. I think that's a big part of the compensation.

Johnson-Neither Hyrum (Fedje) nor Mr. Bare needed or took the insurance because they already had that coverage. So we get down to PERS then. I would agree with 25 hours off the bat, if it's not enough, get 30. I have probably spent more time in this office than most of you have. I just don't see how a person can keep busy in there for 30 hours or 25 for that matter.

Coltrane-There are a couple different ways to approach the job. To come in and do the minimum amount of work that is required to do the job satisfactorily. And then come in and do the job, get the minimum amount done, then seek enhancements for the city. A dedicated person, like Mr. Bare- he went beyond just the minimum (couldn't hear) when the opportunity presented itself. (Johnson agreed)

Johnson-My observation from being around here are there really aren't any "daily" duties that a city manager does. The daily run of the mill duties of the city are taken care of by staff. He's kind of there to go to meetings to represent the city, if a particularly mad customer comes in we could direct him to the administrator. I have nothing but good to say about Mr. Bare. I'm certainly not trying to reflect on what he did. But I haven't seen any city manager, in my tenure here, that really was busy. They kind of stroll around and visit and go to meetings. But as far as daily duties, I really don't know what they would be.

Popoff-Even though we have excellent employees, there is no getting around that. One of their job descriptions is overseeing all the employees within the city. Being the focal point for whatever is going on in the city, so that we know as well. The other thing is that to attract a good person, we're going to have those benefits. (Johnson said we didn't need them the last two times to attract good people-that was my point) The only reason I am saying that is we were very fortunate-Mr. Fedje didn't need to work, he wanted to. We can't always presume to be that fortunate. I think we need the 30 hours. How can you feel you are actually in charge if you only work 16 hours? And by City Charter, you are the one that is in charge over the day to day running of the city- there's no way we can get around that. He is held responsible to this council alone. That person needs to know they have a full rein on what was going on, and to do that, a person is going to have to be as close to 40 hours a week as we can possibly make it.

Alexander-As I see it, in addition to the standard duties of an administrator, there are some things Mr. Bare initiated that I think are terrific and I would hate to see them fall through the cracks. One of those is the wind power on the sewer system and other eco friendly approaches to getting that system adequately up on line. In addition to the standard duties, such an individual has to put the additional time focused into it to make sure it doesn't slip through the cracks. If it does, I think the city would be worse off for it.

MOTION: Johnson moved to advertise for an administrator for 25 hours a week and then depending on the outcome of that advertisement (responses) we meet again and reconsider our hours.

Johnson said this is not part of my motion but we might not get any good applicants, so then we're going to have to "kick" some more in.

Alexander seconded the motion. Johnson, Flynn, Coltrane and Alexander voted "AYE". VOTE 4 AYES 1 VACANT

Popoff stated he doesn't intend, unless there is an interim, as far as hiring a full timer-to hire until at least after the budget meeting meets.

Alexander-With the extremely high quality we have in that office, I don't see a screaming need to appoint or hire one until after the budget cycle. The city is extremely fortunate to have the department heads that we have.

Popoff-Each department head will be responsible; in short we are not having an interim, until I can find one, if I choose to find one. They are all very competent and that's why I don't feel the least bit hesitant to let each department handle things as they see fit.

DISCUSSION re LOSS OF O&C FUNDS-Public Safety Review (B)

Popoff-Will be attending the "Mayor's Day at the Capitol" on February 28th. I am arranging meetings with our representatives and senators. I am going to see if there is any way I can get some sort of state funding-there is funding out there. In my way of thinking, what we need is another officer. In light of what is going on out here, perhaps losing, and it looks very very certain right now, that we lose

the backup that we have, that we have been able to enjoy, and that is the sheriff's deputy patrol. I do not want to leave this city, and you may disagree and that is fine, that's what we're up here to do, defenseless. I want our people taken care of and safety minded as best as we possibly can and that is a priority for me, always has been and it will remain a priority.

Alexander to Chief Merkley: It is my understanding that we currently have 4 full time officers and 1 reserve officer? (Merkley-yes) That reserve officer - is he trained and certified fully? (Merkley-as fully as the state requires for a reserve officer) Popoff said he hasn't been to the academy. To bring that person into a 5th patrol officer's slot would require him to go to the academy, get his BBST certification and that sort of thing? (Merkley-right) What would that entail as far as city funds to get him through that course and get him up to full duty status?

Merkley-The state pays for virtually all of the 16 weeks in Salem. The city would be responsible for his wages during that time.

Alexander-My understanding is that we do have vehicles and equipment to support a 5th officer at this time, is that correct? (Merkley-Reasonably so)

Johnson-About our officer, doesn't he have a regular good job in Brookings? (Merkley-yes) It was interesting to read in the Brookings paper about what they say. They say the county's loss of money won't affect their city. Johnson recapped the article. Brookings has always been of the opinion that they are hired and their duty is to protect the City of Brookings, not the people of Harbor, not the people of the county, but the City of Brookings. They said that if it were a life-threatening situation of course they would go. It says they are financially independent from the county and none of the expenditures of the city are contingent on county funds, same as us. This got me to wondering about the other small towns that we are surrounded with, so I made some calls. First of all, I used the figure for Gold Beach Oregon. We have a population of about 2,000 people, we have 4 full time officers and 1 reserve that works now and then. 4 officers and the 1 reserve (I didn't get it down exactly) gives us 1 police officer for every 500- people. Probably about 1 officer for every 450 people.

Brookings-In 2005, their population was 7,000, I don't know what it is now but I assume it has gone up a little but I still used the 7,000. They have 13 officers, counting their chief-I always included their chiefs, not dispatchers or other people. That comes to 1 officer for every 539 people.

Bandon-they said their population is approximately 3,115-that is 1 police officer for every 445 people, which is approximately the same as Gold Beach and they have 24 hour coverage-I don't know how they do it.

Powers has 760 people-1 officer-the chief does everything. Port Orford-2 officers and 1 guy that does the ordinances-their population is approximately 1200, so that is one officer for every 600 people.

Coquille-population 4,200 - 1 officer for every 700 people and they have 24 hour coverage.

Myrtle Point-population 2,535, they have 24-hour coverage, 1 officer for every 507 people.

I don't expect 24 hour coverage for the city, with our 4 guys and the 1 reserve. So Gold Beach is sitting better than anyone else for how many officers per people that we have. The county, I know, only went on 24-hour coverage for the first time about a year ago, I think. I could check that to make sure. We've never had 24-hour coverage here. So I'm not going to be real concerned that we're not going to be able to do 24-hour coverage here. We never have.

My point is-I don't think we're in such a bad position compared to everybody else-we're in better position. And it's not that I say we should ignore what is going on in our county, we can't do that as personal people, but as a council, I don't see what we can do. Number one-I know good and well people in this city are not going to vote for a levy for more policemen. They voted it down before and besides that - in my opinion, the county didn't handle their money very well. They've known this was happening for a long time. They made no provisions. I'm not going to rape the people of the City of Gold Beach for tax money to hire more police officers because they did not, in my opinion, handle their money correctly. We can't do that.

If the people would vote for it fine, but do any of you really think anybody would? We're still "iffing" quite a bit here.

I'm not in any state of panic right now about it and I don't know what I'd do about it if I was. I think we are sitting pretty good. I think we've done a real good job providing police protection for the people of this town. Thanks to our police department and thanks to us and thanks to our budget committee for arranging the money to do it.

All I hear is gloom and doom-we've got to do this-we've to do that. I feel like we have done a lot and I don't know what else we can do. That's my speech.

Flynn-I've some personal experience in this situation. Knowing the city's situation right now, what with the people having to come up with the money for the sewer treatment plant, etc., my opinion is we are going to have to stay with what we've got for now. I would not advocate to anyone that talked to me that we vote for a police levy. Simply because I don't want to overwhelm the citizens and I don't want to overwhelm the officers.

I spent a number of years in law enforcement and I know we are better than the average (statistically) per population, which doesn't necessarily cover 24 hours and I understand that. I've spent a lot of years getting called out in the middle of the night on these crises situations and that's the way it is-that's what comes with the job. As Chief Merkley knows, you get paid x number of dollars as the chief. You put in 40 hours a week or 60 like I did for 8 months, it all comes out the same. I want to be fair with the officers but that's just the way it is. I don't think the city is going to be able to afford it and I would not advocate increasing the number of officers. The county is going to come up with some kind of coverage, they just about have to. (couldn't hear) that goes to show the caliber of the people we've got on the Pd, they know what they're doing. There are certain ways you handle a situation when you have backup and certain ways you handle it if you don't have backup. They teach that at the academy. That's where I have to stand on it at this time.

Popoff-That's one of the things that has me worried. The back up, if the sheriff's department does indeed lose the road capability and it's very possible it can, at least according to the gloom and doom that we see in the paper and what the commissioners have said. To send an officer out by himself has me concerned.

Flynn-If it's that much of a crises, you send 2 officers out.

Popoff-We can indeed. The point is, is that sometimes response time, as you know, can be longer than is best for what the situation is that's going on. If you have to wait for a back up and it's an inordinate amount of time for one reason or another, whatever the situation that is going on out there that doesn't require immediate police attention, could have already happened, transpired and everything, prior to the time that you were able to have that back up with you. I used to be a cop too. I used to be a cop in a big city and quite frankly, I know what it's like to be out there basically naked and how much nicer it is, how much better it is, to have somebody with you. Now, that's one of the things I think is very important, is to ensure the safety of our officers. (Flynn-and the public) and the public-I agree with you wholeheartedly, that goes without saying. But the second half of that is the safety of our officers. That's all I really wanted to get across on that.

Johnson mentioned getting info from other cities, it's true, we have our 4 officers and as far as the averages are concerned, I don't disagree with any of that at all but in those places, they do have 24 hour coverage-somehow or another, they are able to do it. (Johnson said 2 of them did). I was under the assumption that Port Orford had 3 full time officers. (Johnson said that's not what they told me yesterday, I called and asked them) Before we start getting hot under the collar about this because I'm not going to allow that, and that goes for me too (Johnson-yes, but it's our meeting) but I run it and we don't forget that. I wanted just a common, basic discussion of what we thought we needed and what we didn't need. To have every opinion viewed and given some sort of courtesy. Now, if people can't do that, then we'll just drop it right now and I'll do what I have to do.

Coltrane-To Merkle-Do you keep statistical records (I know you do) for the activities of the police department over a period of time, say year to year? (Yes) How would I go about obtaining some of that information that might help me make some decisions? I used to have a daily log that had everything on it that was available to the public. I also had monthly statistical information that I compiled myself, which I found very useful for making decisions about where to allocate funds and person power and things like that. Is there something like that that still exists in the department? I'm looking for a tool to help me make some decisions.

Merkley-It's recorded by dispatch as a (couldn't hear) or radio communication traffic. There are a couple of resources that are available through dispatch that can be generated. Activity log and radio traffic log. Yes, they are retrievable but I'm not sure how long the county keeps them. We do get (couldn't hear) emailed to me on a semi regular basis.

Coltrane-Would it be possible for me to meet with you for a short period of time and obtain a little bit of that information? (Merkley-we don't have access to that (couldn't hear))

Alexander-I would like to echo Councilor Flynn's commendation of the officers and the leadership we have in our police department. I know of 2 separate instances where I've spoken with local business owners who had occasion to call the police (shoplifting and a potential child abuse situation). They said their interactions with the officers were extremely positive, high degree of professionalism, etc.

Several times when the added sewer charges were before us, we had a number of negative comments from the citizenry about how expensive it was for them to live here so I wonder (tape changed sides).....

My wife and I had occasion a couple years ago to call the dispatch at 1:00 a.m. in the morning to report an assault across the street from us. It took Chief Merkley about 15 minutes to be able to respond to this situation and without hesitation and without back up you went in. The perpetrator was extremely violent and Chief Merkley was very fortunate he (the guy) didn't have a firearm.

Even though we've got a very high quality police department, and with the understanding that I don't think we're going to get a levy passed, maybe there is some sort of compromise we can put together that maybe we can't bring a full time back up officer, perhaps a ½ time back up officer, a reserve to respond to simply back up situations, I don't know. I think something of that nature needs to be addressed. It's a thorny question, I think it needs to be addressed further.

Popoff-We're fortunate in one respect and that is that the citizens of this town, generally speaking, will help the police.

Further discussion followed.

Popoff mentioned that the county is discussing charging us around \$50K-\$60K for our dispatching. That will be discussed later at a meeting. The chief is getting some figures together, etc. So we'll have to wait and see.

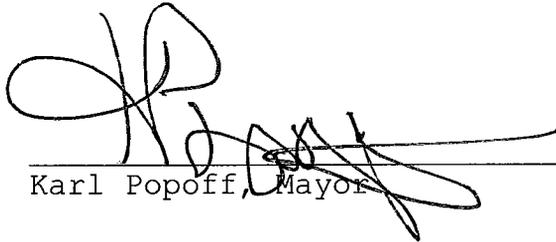
When I go to the capital I will be discussing the possibility of diverting some of the funding that is currently in place, for instance, pedestrian studies, etc., to funding to our local law enforcement. All I can do is give it a try.

Popoff gave a recap of the previous SRO and Cops Fast Federally funded positions that were employed by the city a few years ago.

It's a touchy subject and I want to thank all of you for your participation. I did want to at least initiate a discussion to see where we're going and to let people know that "yes, we do take it seriously".

ADJOURNED AT 1:02 p.m.:

Approved by Gold Beach City Council on March 12, 2007.



Karl Popoff, Mayor

ATTEST:



Shirley Walker, Recorder