CITY OF MERRILL BUDGET HEARING and REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

Tuesday June 09, 2020 6:00 P.M.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

Mayor Carlson called the Tuesday, June 09, 2020 Regular Business Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Roll call was taken with the following members of Council and others being present: Councilor Smith, Councilor Hinton, Councilor Carleton, Mayor Carlson, and City Recorder Hernandez.

FLAG SALUTE:

The Flag Salute immediately followed with Mayor Carlson asking Councilor Carleton to lead.

MAYOR STATEMENT:

Mayor Carlson asked that everyone please turn cell phones on silence. All meetings are recorded. When addressing the City Council, please speak clearly and state your name.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mayor Carlson stated the public is invited to provide their comments and opinions to the City Council at this time on issues of concern. Non-emergency issues brought up in this form will not be considered tonight other than in this preliminary discussion, but if found warranted, may be considered at a future meeting of the city council. Public comment is limited to five minutes per person.

Carol Bement (431 W. Water Street): "I turned in this Code Enforcement Complaint Form in to Officer Srch yesterday about barking dogs next to us at 411 W. Water Street, Phil Braggs place. Phil Bragg and his girlfriend live at 411 W. Water Street, and their dogs bark almost constantly when they are not home. I listened and put it in writing, I taught for 30 years, the different days that this has happened. Someone has a copy of it because I gave it to Officer Bicknell."

Mayor Carlson stated Carol Bement submitted a Code Enforcement Complaint and inquired the process moving forward from Councilor Hinton.

Councilor Hinton stated multiple complaints have been made regarding barking dogs. Marshall Bicknell directs all complaints to 911 for documentation. The 911 method is ineffective. City Council has the responsibility to deal with the dog complaints since the Code Enforcement Complaint Form has been submitted whether the City Clerk has the knowledge to complete the notification or not. Marshal Bicknell may have to file the notice. The issue must stop. Mayor Carlson inquired whether Councilor Hinton would take the lead on the Code Enforcement Complaint Form. Councilor Hinton stated collaborating with Marshal Bicknell. Councilor Hinton inquired whether City Recorder Hernandez has the knowledge to complete the Code Enforcement Notifications.

City Recorder Hernandez stated Code Enforcement is City Clerk.

Councilor Hinton inquired whether City Recorder Hernandez would complete the Code Enforcement Notifications as directed.

City Recorder Hernandez stated Code Enforcement is in the City Clerk Job Description.

Councilor Smith inquired the City Clerk's schedule.

City Recorder Hernandez stated City Clerk Northcutt will be back on Friday June 12, 2020. City Clerk Northcutt and Marshal Bicknell have a scheduled training for the following week.

Discussion of Code Enforcement Notification responsibility and scheduled time for completion ensued.

Polly Tickner (405 Water Street): "I also filed a complaint because after so many nights of dogs barking all night long, repeatedly being woken up, it definitely has to be dealt with. I am disappointed it is not dealt with. Every time somebody complains, nothing happens. So, there it is (*inaudible*)."

Mayor Carlson directed Councilor Hinton to take the lead; however, Mayor Carlson would collaborate if necessary by June 12, 2020.

Donnie Bement (431 Water Street): "We were instructed to call 911 by our Police Department here in Merrill, but when the land owner, well not the land owner, he just lives there, his grandfather owns the property, but when he

stands out on his deck and screams at our house to go ahead and call 911 because he has a police scanner. We have no power."

Carol Bement (431 W. Water Street): He will get in a rig and rip out of there throwing gravel all over the place." Donnie Bement (431 W. Water Street): If there is a party, that is another subject, a big party, we can call 911 and they all disappear before the cops get there. And like I said, he will stand on the deck and scream at our house. We can't do anything because he has a scanner. We don't have any power and basically we do not have power it seems like in Merrill anymore."

Councilor Hinton will process the complaint. Mayor Carlson will collaborate if necessary. The notification will be mailed Friday, June 12, 2020.

Councilor Hinton stated the City Clerk needs to be trained in Code Enforcement Notification via Marshal Bicknell. Councilor Hinton stated the opinion the process will not work with Code Enforcement and Law Enforcement combined.

The history of Code Enforcement and Law Enforcement within the City of Merrill and volunteerism ensued. Polly Tickner (405 Water Street): "I think that other people in our neighborhood do not speak up because they are afraid of retaliation. Phil is very well known and is a big boy with a big attitude. I do not think we should have to live where we are afraid to speak out."

City Council was unanimously in agreement. Councilor Smith stated intimidation is categorized under law enforcement.

Gary Robeson (405 Water Street) "I offered to volunteer for this job. A retired attorney. I did 32 years of Code Enforcement in the State of California. I was responsible for 13 counties to do the OSHA Program. Some of the things we got because of the geographical area I handled by mail. I received the complaint. Here's the application. Please respond until I can abate it. That can be done responsibly within one or two days. A volunteer is not a volunteer. You look at their qualifications. The same thing is, I have talked to Stan about this before, I will do nothing until I get the approval of City Council to take action. So there would not be the perception of liability because I would only do anything upon approval of City Council before or Stan on the interim. So I don't believe that the statement about volunteers is appropriate nor is it valid."

Mayor Carlson reiterated the action items to move forward with the noise complaint.

Donnie Bement (431 W Water Street): "Just one quick thing. Carol and I, just ourselves, we actually pursued this months ago with Animal Control per our Police Department's advice. Basically saying they didn't want to deal with it. They wanted us to deal with it through 911, and so we did. Well, like everything else, they washed their hands of it once they contacted Phillip Bragg's girlfriend. She said, 'Oh no. They have bark collars on' and all this stuff that we have documented that no. If they have a bark collar on, it is when we push when they are home, and they are never home. But anyways. Animal Control wrote it off. They closed the case."

Polly Ticker (405 Water Street): "It is back open."

Carol Bement (431 W. Water Street): All of us has recordings and pictures."

Polly Tickner (405 Water Street): "It's back open."

No further public comment followed.

BUDGET HEARING:

- City Recorder Hernandez stated the dates May 14, 2020 and May 21, 2020 Budget Meetings were held. The budget for the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 is \$1,719,382. The General Fund has appropriated \$324,364; the Street Fund \$83,040; the Water/Sewer Fund \$764,854 totaling \$1,717,988 in appropriations and \$547, 394 in total unappropriated and reserve amounts. Councilor Smith stated for the record that business license revenue was transferred to the Street Fund for the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year. The transfer was not budgeted for the 2020-2021 Fiscal Year. City Recorder Hernandez stated revenue for certain line items are forecasted to decrease by 2/3. The transfer would irreparably harm the General Fund. Approve Budget (Resolution 2020-818): Councilor Smith made a motion to approve the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year Budget. Councilor Carleton 2nd the motion. The motion passed 3-0 in favor.
- Approve Tax Rate (Resolution 2020-818): Councilor Smith made a motion to pass Resolution 2020-818
 Tax Rate at 3.121 for The City of Merrill. Councilor Carleton 2nd the motion. The motion passed 3-0 in favor.
- Ordinance/Resolution Declaring the City's Election to Receive State Revenues (Resolution 2020-817):
 Councilor Smith made a motion to approve Resolution 2020-817. Councilor Hinton 2nd the motion. The motion passed 3-0 in favor.

CONSENT AGENDA:

• Meeting Minutes:

Councilor Smith made a motion to approve the May 12, 2020 Council Meeting Minutes. Councilor Hinton 2^{nd} the motion. The motion passed 3-0 in favor.

- Phone Poll:
- Business License Renewals:
- Business Licenses:
- Accounts Payable:

Councilor Smith made a motion to approve the May 2020 account payables. Councilor Carleton 2nd the motion. The motion passed 3-0 in favor.

Councilor Smith made a motion to approve the May 2020 Water Transfer. Councilor Carleton 2nd the motion. The motion passed 3-0 in favor.

STAFF REPORTS:

Police:

• Marshal Bicknell submitted a report to City Council and read. Marshal Bicknell reported on bustling activity with minimal crime. Marshal Bicknell had the honor of witnessing the free exercise of the First Amendment. The City of Merrill was the staging area for a massive procession of agriculture vehicles, commercial trucks, pick-up trucks, and other supporters. Marshal Bicknell counted 800 vehicles passing through the City of Merrill and was informed other vehicles joined the procession on the way to Klamath Falls. Marshal Bicknell maintained communication with other law enforcement agencies throughout the demonstration. As the last vehicle left the City of Merrill, the procession has already travelled through downtown Klamath Falls. The protest was held with respect for the communities and law enforcement. In contrast, two days later, another protest occurred in Klamath Falls that threatened the safety of individuals and property. Marshal Bicknell stated the honor of serving the community.

Marshal Bicknell and Officer Srch have provided assistance to other agencies due to incidents reported to have occurred in the City of Merrill, but were determined to be in the jurisdiction of Klamath County Sheriff's Office or Malin Police Department. Marshal Bicknell elaborated on two of the crimes involving a sexual assault and canines killing livestock.

In conclusion, May 2020 began with a quarantine due to COVID-19 and ended with protests and riots across the nation against law enforcement. Nurses, doctors, Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT), and law enforcement were praised in regards to the COVID-19 pandemic response only to call for the dismantling and persecution of Police Departments across the nation in a transition of two days. The last event that brought a nation together was September 11, 2001, which was to fight a foreign enemy. The largest issues affecting the City of Merrill will be the results of new, reactive state and federal legislation hampering the abilities of local law enforcement to provide service to communities. Marshal Bicknell sought the support of City Council to voice stance to state and federal legislators. The Merrill Police Department continues to provide the best service to residents with resources provided.

City Council discussed the nation's response to law enforcement and stated action item for Merrill Police Department Letter of Support.

Councilor Smith inquired whether legislation can approve laws directly affecting City of Merrill. Marshal Bicknell affirmed. The Federal Government has the authority to mandate Police Departments if federal grants are appropriated. Federal funding may be revoked if Police Departments are out of compliance. The City of Merrill does not receive federal funds. The State has the authority to change state laws and policies regarding law enforcement because the State of Oregon licenses law enforcement. The State of Oregon is being reserved; however, there are proposals that all law enforcement must wear a body camera and record with any public contact. The recording must be made available for public inspection within two weeks. Imagine a requirement where a victim is recorded regarding a very personal issue where the conversation becomes public record. Another is each law enforcement officer is personally responsible for the first \$100,000.00 in any lawsuit whether the City settles or not. Unless the law or policy is grossly violated, law enforcement has a certain amount of immunity. The legislation would eliminate qualified immunity, which is to be heard before the Supreme Court this week. Law enforcement is regulated under the federal law by Color of Authority. Law enforcement is upheld through

multiple courts. Marshal Bicknell stated preparing a unified statement from City Council for state level would help create independence. Councilor Carleton stated City Council expects the Merrill Police Department to uphold the Constitution. Marshal Bicknell stated swearing to uphold the United States Constitution when hired.

Marshal Bicknell addressed the residents of 405 W. Water Street for procedures to assist alleviating the dog complaints.

Public Works:

Public Works Director Matthews submitted a report to City Council and read: Checked lifts; took water and sewer samples; filled out DMR; read meters; performed multiple locates; cleaned restrooms; flushed hydrants; unclogged one sewer plug; mowed park lawns; repaired two water breaks; pumped Willow Street; hung flowers baskets, distributed flower buckets, and set up watering system; sprayed at lagoon, streets, PacifiCorp lot, and county shop; repaired sprinklers at park; Zaidyn painted curbs at fire hydrants and has been doing an excellent job; located all the water valves within the City; dragged and leveled lagoon property; replaced two risers, two meters and two meter boxes; filled in sinkhole on N. Garfield; worked on budget; registered Utility Worker II Taylor for a Water Treatment Class in Klamath Falls July 17, 2020; City Recorder Hernandez and Public Works Director Matthews met with Tim Tice from Oregon Association of Water Utilities (OAWU) in regards to pump power usage; City Recorder Hernandez and Public Works Director Matthews completed and submitted the Small City Allotment Grant for Third Street in the amount of \$92,000.00; conversed with a business owner interested in establishing a brewery; West Coast Pipe is connecting water lines on Third Street, which will create disruptions no longer than one hour; booster pumps are working; the new tank is leaking and the company will arrive on Thursday to repair and vacuum test. Councilor Hinton inquired whether the tank will need to be dismantled. Public Works Director responded with unknown. Councilor Carleton inquired about a generator. Public Works Director Matthews stated a generator has been installed, which saved the City of Merrill approximately \$30,000.00.

• City Recorder:

City Recorder Hernandez submitted report.

Lawyer:

Code Enforcement:

Discuss Code Enforcement Officer: Mayor Carlson stated Marshal Bicknell's intention to resign from Code Enforcement but willing to participate upon the decision of City Council. Councilor Hinton stated allowing Officer Srch Code Enforcement support was the last communication with Marshal Bicknell. The City of Merrill will need to obtain a Code Enforcement Officer in the event Marshal Bicknell resigns from Code Enforcement. Marshal Bicknell requested complete charge of Code Enforcement when appointed. Councilor Hinton stated Liaison Officer as self. Councilor Hinton stated law enforcement does not have adequate time for Code Enforcement. Code Enforcement is daily. Code Enforcement is not law enforcement responding as a crime occurs. Law enforcement is only used as back-up in difficult situations. Councilor Hinton stated Marshal Bicknell is beginning to realize Code Enforcement is not simple as originally thought. Councilor Smith stated Code Enforcement is Marshal Bicknell's responsibility whom has the authority to delegate to subordinate, Officer Srch. Officer Srch is a paid employee who may be held liable and the City of Merrill has recourse. Office personnel was discussed. Discussion of Code Enforcement and law enforcement caseloads ensued. Mayor Carlson stated the action item to meet with Marshal Bicknell, Councilor Hinton, and self to create a plan for City Council feedback and approval. Councilor Hinton stated the dog complaints and the Gallagher citation must be addressed and reinstated immediately. City Councilor inquired to why the complaint was dismissed. Councilor Hinton stated City Clerk Jensen signed the citation. Councilor Smith stated another staff member should have represented the City of Merrill before the court. Discussion of prosecutor of court ensued.

Planning:

- Discuss Merrill Commercial Offer: Mayor Carlson recused self due to conflict of interest. President Smith presided. Councilor Hinton inquired whether the hotel will be individually owned or a chain. An open forum ensued with Mayor Carlson representing Stukel Mountain Ranch Planned Unit Development Plan. Mayor Carlson stated the previous offers: \$12,500.00 and \$15,000.00 involving sheds. Mayor Carlson stated previous work experience with Holiday Express Corporation and land development. Mayor Carlson proposed a development plan, which involves a hotel as an anchor, several pads for either service centers or retail, and housing. The solar panels were once residential; therefore, the development plan proposes housing by the solar farm. The hotel would be individually owned. A partnership group of investors funds the hotel. Councilor Hinton inquired whether the hotel would be a chain. Mayor Carlson stated the hotel may be a chain. Mayor Carlson stated approaching Holiday Inn Express first due to past experience; however, the options are numerous. Mayor Carlson discussed hotel rates and tourism. Councilor Hinton inquired to the township houses. Mayor Carlson stated single family detached on 7,000 square foot lots. Councilor Hinton inquired whether the housing would be a subdivision. Mayor Carlson stated the houses would be a subdivision. Mayor Carlson stated the property would require a zone change, a preliminary plat, approval and conditions of approval. Councilor Carleton stated approval for the development plan. The issue will be the zone change, which will take time. Council President Smith stated the plan reflects the desire of City Council creating new business and new home will increase the population and beneficial. Council President Smith stated no vote unless in case of a tie vote. Mayor Carlson stated the plan was brought before the Planning Commission with unanimous approval. Mayor Carlson is proposing to purchase the 5.12 acres. The previous offers were \$12,500.00 and \$15,000.00 per acre. Mayor Carlson's purchase offer is for \$23,000.00 per acre. Mayor Carlson paid a \$2,000.00 non-refundable deposit. Margaret Moore stated the offer is two-parts with contingencies. Milestone one is agreement to the purchase offer with a \$2,000.00 non-refundable deposit. Milestone two is nine months for permits and the purchase of one acre for \$23,000.00. The remaining balance of \$21,000.00 will be paid in full. Milestone three for engineering and sales will be three years. At the end of the three years, the balance of \$115,000.00 will be paid for the remaining acreage. The offer is for the 5.12 acres and a triangular parcel in front of Les Schwab. Mayor Carlson stated the City of Merrill owns the property and Mayor Carlson acts as the developer; therefore, the proposal is to divide engineering fees, publishing fees, and application fees. The City Engineer would survey the property. Councilor Carleton stated the Zone Change Application fee is \$1,000.00. There will be engineering fees, publishing fees, and subdivision fees. Mayor Carlson would pay \$1,500.00. The City of Merrill would waive \$1,500.00 of \$3,000.00. Councilor Hinton stated a benefit to the community. Councilor Smith stated concern to the perception of waiving fees and the future impact the proposal may create. Councilor Carleton stated the City of Merrill proposed a three year moratorium on taxes with the Cheese Factory. Councilor Carleton stated an incentive for prospective businesses. The City of Merrill will receive more revenue than the \$3,000.00 waived fees. Public Works Director Matthews inquired whether Mayor Carlson would perform most of the engineering. Mayor Carlson stated profession as a professional engineer with experience drafting hundreds of houses, motels, and tank farms. Councilor Carleton made a motion to accept Bill Carlson's purchase offer. Councilor Hinton 2nd the motion. The motion passed 3-0 in favor will Council President Smith voting in favor. Margaret Moore requested approval to extend the listing for four years in the event the closing takes that amount of time. An addendum needs to be added to the listing agreement adding tax lot 1101 due to Bill Carlson purchasing the triangular parcel. Discussion of tax lot 1100 and 1101 ensued. Due to the incorporation, Margaret Moore would list tax lot 1101 to be determined until the property has been surveyed. Bill Carlson affirmed. Council President approved to proceed forward and will be reviewed July 14, 2020.
- Discuss Merrill Commercial Counteroffer: Margaret Moore of Fisher Nicholson Realty stated the
 interested party counteroffered \$30,000.00 for two acres for storage units. Councilor Carleton
 discussed generated revenue and visual appeal. Councilor Carleton made a motion to decline Mr.
 Fuller's purchase offer. Councilor Hinton 2nd the motion. The motion passes 2-0 in favor.
- 403 Water Street Building Application (Fence): Council President made a motion to approve the fencing application approved by the Planning Commission. Councilor Hinton 2nd. The motion passed 3-0 in favor.

- 236 McKinley Street Building Application (Fence): Council President made a motion to approve the fencing application approved by the Planning Commission. Councilor Hinton 2nd. The motion passed 3-0 in favor.
- 314 Roosevelt Building and Land Use Compatibility Statement: Councilor Carleton stated the alleyway setback is two feet. The side setback is ten feet from the property line. Though the Planning Commission approved the application, the side setback from the property line must be 10 feet and noted on the application. Tabled.

PROJECT MERRILL:

LOST RIVER ARTS AND CULTURAL ALLIANCE:

- Public Works Director Matthews stated inquiries to The Lost River Bluegrass Festival are continuing.
 Public Works Director Matthews met with other Bluegrass Festival coordinators and the festivals have been cancelled as expected. There are no Bluegrass Festival's in the United States currently.
- A meeting was held with Daughters of the American Revolution. A grant has been completed and submitted requesting \$2,500.00 for Nathan Merrill Marker. May 1, 2021 is the response deadline for approval or denial.
- Public Works Director placed a twelve flags on Veteran's graves at the Merrill Cemetery for Memorial Day. A couple of the deceased served in the Civil War.
- Merrill Historical Society donated 100 pounds of dog food to the Klamath County Humane Society.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Appoint Nominated City Council Member: Mayor Carlson appointed Regina Picke for City Council.
 Councilor Carleton made a motion to approve the appointment of Regina Picke to fill the unexpired term on City Council. Councilor Smith 2nd the motion. The motion passed 3-0 in favor.
- Oath of Office: Tabled.
- Letter of Appreciation for Klamath Basin Water Protest Convoy: Mayor Carlson sought the opinion of City
 Council to coordinate with City Recorder Hernandez to draft a Letter of Appreciation for the Klamath
 Basin Water Protest Convoy as a positive event. City Council was unanimous to proceed with a Letter of
 Support. Public Works Director Matthews stated the protest resulted in restoration of 142,000 acre-feet of
 water. The draft will be presented to Bob Gasser for review.

OLD BUSINESS:

Discuss Solar Plant Landscaping Maintenance: Councilor Carleton stated Mr. Henderson responded and
volunteered to meet with the Mayor Carlson, Councilor Carleton, and Andrea Walker. The design was to
screen the Solar Plant from public view. The agreement should be discussed with Mr. Henderson. Mr.
Henderson confirmed dead trees. The Solar Plant is required to obtain certification from Klamath Irrigation
District that the water is used beneficially to maintain water rights. The City of Merrill has received no
certification. The action item was taken to set a date for a meeting with Mr. Henderson.

ORDINANCES:

RESOLUTIONS:

- Resolution 2020-819: Transfer Funds for Budget Compliance: City Recorder Hernandez stated Resolution 2020-819 lists the General Fund, Police Fund, Water Sewer Fund, and Street Fund line items amounts which must be brought into Budget Law Compliance. Councilor Carleton made a motion to approve Resolution 2020-819. Councilor Hinton 2nd the motion. The motion passed 3-0 in favor.
- Resolution 2020-820: Signature Authorization: City Recorder Hernandez stated Resolution 2020-820
 allows Councilor Picke signature authorization. Councilor Carleton made a motion to approve Resolution
 2020-820. Councilor Smith 2nd the motion. The motion passed 3-0 in favor.
- Resolution 2020-821: Transfer Funds to Comply with Budget Law: City Recorder Hernandez stated
 Resolution 2020-821 allows for the transfer and reimbursement of monies to the correct fund where the
 credit debit machine or the debit card was used for purchases. Councilor Smith made a motion to approve
 Resolution 2020-821. Councilor Carleton 2nd the motion. The motion passed 3-0 in favor.

FUTURE AGENDAS:

City Council Members are to be charged the flat rate of \$82.00. The decision may not be documented but was decided upon approximately eight years prior.

Councilor Carleton purchased flowers for City Clerk Northcutt for reimbursement.

Discussed Resident Lee Harris's health.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

The public is invited to provide their comment and opinion to the City Council at this time on issues of their concern. Non-emergency issues brought up in this forum will not be considered tonight other than in this preliminary discussion, but if found to be warranted, may be considered at a future meeting of the City Council. Public comment is limited to 5 minutes per person.

Public Works Director detailed a segment from the evening news about Sesame Street. Sesame Street is teaching children that they are born racist. Systemic racists. Public Works Director Matthews stated teaching children our values. No one was responsible for the man's death except for the person who had his knee on his neck. We live in a town 50% White and 50% Hispanic peacefully and the friendship with Lee Harris. Discussion of contradictions ensued.

Councilor Carleton stated a quote posted on Facebook, removed by Facebook, and reposted by Councilor Carleton. Marshal Bicknell stated a confirmed statistic: a police officer is 18 1/2 times greater risk of being killed by an African American than an African American being killed by ANY law enforcement officer. Discussion of crime ensued that is unreported by the media.

Diana Bicknell (Marshal Bicknell's Wife, Resident of Merrill): Diana Bicknell reported behind the scenes and the little crime in City of Merrill, which is from being proactive instead of reactive. Marshal Bicknell talks to all age categories that creates mutual respect. The City of Merrill has the feeling of a safe community. Marshal Bicknell receives numerous calls on off days, people come to the door, Marshal Bicknell will go to the store for a couple items and come home two hours later, and all is done happily. There is no day off. Most Police Departments have officers charge for the listed services while off duty. Marshal Bicknell has never charged for the questions asked while off duty because of budget constraints. Marshal Bicknell has days where he functions on a few hours' sleep from call outs in the middle of the night.

Councilor Smith stated appreciation for the Merrill Police Department.

Councilor Carleton stated improvement in the Police Department since the hire of Marshal Bicknell.

ADJOURN MEETING:

Councilor Carleton made a motion to adjourn the June 09, 2020 Meeting. Councilor Hinton 2nd the motion. With all in favor, the meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bill Carlson - Mayor

Date

Rayna Hernandez - City Recorder Date