

City of Wendell
Regular Council Meeting Minutes
April 3, 2025

Mayor Rebecca Vipperman called the regular meeting of the Wendell City Council to order at 6:33 PM. Council members present were Council President BJ Marshall; Councilman Juan Gonzales and Councilman Donald Dunn. City Attorney Tim Stover was also present (by phone).

APPROVE AMENDED AGENDA

None

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Councilwoman Marshall made a motion to approve the March 20, regular council meeting minutes, as amended. **Councilwoman Marshall** noted two spelling errors of names of citizens who attended the March 20, 2025, Irrigation Public Hearing. **Councilman Dunn** seconded the motion. Roll call vote taken; **Councilwoman Marshall-Aye, Councilman Gonzales- Aye and Councilman Dunn-Aye**; motion passed.

BILLS

Councilman Gonzales made a motion to approve the bills as presented in the amount of \$20,791.53. **Councilman Dunn** seconded the motion. Roll call vote taken; **Councilwoman Marshall-Aye, Councilman Gonzales- Aye and Councilman Dunn- Aye**; motion passed.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Vacate Application- Martinez

Mayor Vipperman opened the Public Hearing at 6:35 PM. She briefly introduced the topic to be discussed and explained the rules of conduct for anyone who would like to comment regarding the topic of tonight's public hearing. **Code Enforcement Officer Nathan Lewis** stated Juan Martinez had submitted a Vacate application because his parcel, #RPW2000068004A, was split by the city's alley due to the "L" shape of the parcel.

Mayor Vipperman asked if the Clerk's Office had received any responses from the public. **City Clerk Karri French** stated that thirty-one certified letters were sent out, and three letters were returned: two of the letters were marked neutral and one was marked in favor. **Mayor Vipperman** asked if there were any written comments. **City Clerk Karri French** stated that no written comments had been received.

Mayor Vipperman asked the council if they had any questions, comments, or anything to discuss. There was no discussion. **Mayor Vipperman** opened the public hearing for public comment.

Juan Martinez was present and stated that he was requesting the city vacate the portion of alley because his parcel is split by the alley. He stated that, if granted, he would take responsibility for the upkeep of the portion splitting his property.

Opposed:

None

Neutral:

None

In Favor:

None

Rebuttal:

None

Mayor Vipperman asked the council if they had any questions, comments, or anything to discuss. There was no discussion. **Mayor Vipperman** closed the public hearing at 6:42 PM.

NEW BUSINESS (discussion/action items)

Consideration of Bat House-Girl Scout Troop 512

Girl Scout Troop 512 members were present to ask the city's permission to build and install bat houses at Hub City Park. The three presenters gave a detailed presentation on the project and the value of having bat houses at Hub City Park. The primary purpose, aside from providing bats with homes, is to help reduce the mosquito population at Hub City Park. The girls said that it may take time to establish a bat population at Hub City Park, but once they are established, it will help reduce the mosquito population. The Girl Scouts troop members also stated that this project will also help them earn their Bronze Award. **Councilwoman Marshall** asked where the bat houses would be located. The Girl Scouts troop members stated that they would be in the trees right behind the park. **Councilman Gonzales** asked how many bat houses would be built. The Girl Scouts troop members stated one or two to start. **Mayor Vipperman** asked what color the houses would be. The Girl Scouts troop members stated black and green. **Councilwoman Marshall** asked how the Girl Scouts troop members knew the bats would use the houses. The Girl Scout troop members stated that they had researched how bats live and hope the bats will like the houses they build for them. **Councilman Gonzales** asked if they were purchasing the houses or building the houses themselves. The Girl Scout troop members stated that they would buy them and assemble them. **Mayor Vipperman** asked the Girl Scout troop members if Public Works could help them install the bat houses in the trees with their bucket truck. The Girl Scout troop members stated that they would welcome the help. **Councilman Dunn** asked them to come back and let the city council know how the bat houses work out. The Girl Scout Troop members stated that they would give the council an update. After discussion, **Councilwoman Marshall** made a motion to allow Girl Scout Troop 512 to install bat houses at Hub City Park. **Councilman Dunn** seconded the motion. Roll call vote taken; **Councilwoman Marshall-Aye, Councilman Gonzales- Aye and Councilman Dunn- Aye**; motion passed.

Consideration of Revised ESPA City Agreement-Water Mitigation-Candace McHugh

City Clerk Karri French stated that she received an email earlier this week that she shared with **Mayor Vipperman** from Candace stating she is on vacation. **City Clerk Karri French** stated that she received another email from Candace this morning stating that she had passed the information on to her partner Chris Bromley. She also stated that if he were not available, the agreement could wait until

the next city council meeting. **City Clerk Karri French** stated that she had not heard from Candace's partner as of the time of this meeting. Tabled. No motion.

Consideration of Vacate Application-Martinez

Mayor Vipperman asked the council if they had anything to discuss or questions for Juan Martinez regarding the Vacate application. **Councilwoman Marshall** stated that, due to the unusual shape of the plot, she originally thought the property used to be part of the old railroad, but the map in city hall clearly shows it is not. **Councilman Gonzales** stated that it was a platted lot and part of the original city plats. **Councilwoman Marshall** asked how this lot came to be separated by an alley. **Juan Martinez** stated that without a Planning & Zoning committee or department, splits like this were common. With a Planning and Zoning committee or department, any splits or combining parcels/lots would be reviewed and voted on, potentially eliminating these types of situations. He mentioned a couple of properties he dealt with during his time as the building inspector for Gooding County. When he first looked to purchase the property, he thought it was two lots, but it is one "L" shaped lot with the alley running through it. **Councilman Gonzales** asked **Fire Chief Bob Bailey** if the alley ran 20 ft through the lot. **Fire Chief Bob Bailey** stated that it did. **Mayor Vipperman** asked Juan Martinez about the issues EMS currently have getting in and out if there was to be an emergency at his house or at one of his neighbors on Alley Drive. **Juan Martinez** stated that he would put a swinging gate on both ends of the alley going through his property and maintain the alley section with gravel. This would allow EMS to have safe access whenever needed. The council stated concerns for the agreement being honored by any future owner of the property. **Juan Martinez** stated that it could be put into the description of the deed with a new survey of the property stating the agreement must be honored by any future owner. **Councilman Gonzales** stated that Juan Martinez had a letter from his neighbor stating that the neighbor was willing to share with the maintenance. **Councilman Gonzales** asked what Juan Martinez planned to do if the vacate application was approved. **Juan Martinez** stated that he planned to run water lines across to water the part of his property on the other side of the alley. He also stated that his kids, as well as several neighborhood kids, play in the area since it does not have through traffic. **Councilman Dunn** asked if there was any land to build homes on beyond Juan Martinez's house. **Juan Martinez** stated no, there was no land, just a rocky area. **Mayor Vipperman** stated it was city property. **Councilwoman Marshall** asked what would happen if the lot was ever split into two separate pieces. **Juan Martinez** stated that if it were to be split, it would be in the deed description that the owner must maintain the section of alley. **Mayor Vipperman** asked if there was access from the other side of the alley. **Juan Martinez** stated that there was access from both ends of the alley. **Councilman Gonzales** stated that the city has water and sewer lines in the alley and if vacated, the property would no longer belong to the city. **Councilman Dunn** stated that once you give land away, you usually cannot get it back unless you purchase it back. He is not in favor of giving city property away. **City Attorney Tim Stover** stated that the city could consider granting an easement agreement for the water and sewer lines. **Councilman Gonzales** stated that an easement agreement would allow **Juan Martinez** use of the property, providing access to the city and EMS as needed, while the city retains ownership of the alley section. **Mayor Vipperman** asked **Fire Chief Bob Bailey** if going through the alley or having a turnaround would be better for EMS access. **Fire Chief Bob Bailey** stated that either option would work for EMS. **Mayor Vipperman** stated that a decision on the Vacate application was needed and that any discussion of a potential easement agreement would need to be discussed at a future meeting. **Councilman Gonzales** made a motion to deny the Vacate application from Juan Martinez. **Councilman Dunn** seconded the motion. Roll call vote taken; **Councilwoman Marshall-Aye, Councilman Gonzales- Aye and Councilman Dunn- Aye**; motion passed.

Consideration of Sealed Bids-City Shop Addition

These bids are still under review by **City Attorney Tim Stover** and **Public Works Director Steve Devereaux**. Tabled. No motion.

Consideration of Sealed Bids-Library Remodel

These bids are still under review by **City Attorney Tim Stover** and **Public Works Director Steve Devereaux**. The city is also waiting for an abatement study for the Library Remodel project site. Tabled. No motion.

Consideration of 2025 Child Abuse Proclamation

Mayor Vipperman read the proclamation into the record. After discussion, **Councilwoman Marshall** made a motion to allow **Mayor Vipperman** to sign the 2025 Child Abuse Proclamation. **Councilman Gonzales** seconded the motion. Roll call vote taken; **Councilwoman Marshall-Aye**, **Councilman Gonzales- Aye** and **Councilman Dunn- Aye**; motion passed.

Mayor Vipperman announced that there would be a ceremony at the City Library on Monday (April 7, 2025) at 9:45 am to plant pinwheels for Child Abuse Prevention and she would also read a story to preschoolers attending the event.

Consideration of 2025 Fair Housing Proclamation

Mayor Vipperman read the proclamation into the record. After discussion, **Councilwoman Marshall** made a motion to allow **Mayor Vipperman** to sign the 2025 Fair Housing Proclamation. **Councilman Gonzales** seconded the motion. Roll call vote taken; **Councilwoman Marshall-Aye**, **Councilman Gonzales- Aye** and **Councilman Dunn- Aye**; motion passed.

Consideration of Pinnacle Technologies Bid for Hub City Park

Due to vandalism and motorized vehicle activity in Hub City Park, Pinnacle Technologies was contacted for onsite security measures. Pinnacle is still working on the bid. Tabled. No motion.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS (discussion/action items)

None

PUBLIC COMMENT

Justin Peer thanked the council for denying the Vacate application. He then stated that he works for the State of Idaho and was also a former inspector and knows the road rules. He recommended the city uses the MUTCD (Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices). He stated that there were rules for changing a traffic pattern (adding a stop sign, changing the speed limit, etc.) that the city needs to be aware of. He also stated that he was having a problem with the alley being blocked by vehicles. He talked to **Code Enforcement Officer Nathan Lewis** about it and **Nathan** did talk to the vehicle owners. **Justin** stated that one of the vehicles left but came back later. He stated that **Code Enforcement Officer Nathan Lewis's** response was great, but he did not respond when the vehicle came back and blocked the alley again. **Mayor Vipperman** stated that if it is a continuing problem, calling the Gooding County Sheriff's Office to help with the situation is also an option.

COUNCIL

Councilwoman Marshall thanked **Public Works**, **Fire Chief Bob Bailey**, and **Code Enforcement Officer Nathan Lewis** for all their hard work.

Councilman Gonzales stated that the alleys look great after Public Works finished them. He also announced that the Library Board meeting will be held on Monday April 14th at 6:00 PM.

Councilman Dunn asked **Fire Chief Bob Bailey** to tell **Public Works Director Steve Devereaux** and the Public Works crew that the parking lot at City Hall looks much nicer now with the new parking bumpers they installed.

MAYOR

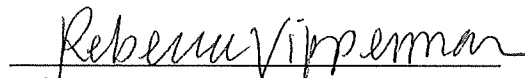
Mayor Vipperman announced that the Annual Easter Egg Hunt is scheduled for April 19, 2025 at 9 AM at McGinnis Park. She thanked the LDS kids for filling eggs. She stated that donations for this year's event have been much better than last year and are appreciated. She thanked Public Works for doing a great job repairing the water main break and the fire hydrant that someone ran over. She also thanked Gooding County Sheriff's Office for doing a great job patrolling the school routes and Main Street.

Adjourn

Councilman Gonzales made a motion to adjourn the meeting of the Wendell City Council at 7:31 PM. **Councilman Dunn** seconded the motion. Motion passed.



Karri French, City Clerk/Treasurer



Rebecca Vipperman, Mayor

