

# CITY OF POLSON COUNCIL MEETING

Library Meeting Room

September 3, 2014

7:00 p.m.

**ATTENDANCE:** Mayor Heather Knutson, City Commissioners: John Campbell, Todd Erickson, Dan Morrison, Jill Southerland, Stephen Turner, City Manager Mark Shrives, and City Clerk Cora Pritt.

**ABSENT:** Commissioner Siler

**Others present (that voluntarily signed in):** Elsa Duford, Rory Horning, Murat Kalinyaprak, Rick LaPiana, Carlisa London, Bonnie Manicke, Andrew Speer, and Diane Speer.

**CALL TO ORDER** - Mayor Knutson called the meeting to order. The pledge of allegiance was recited. Roll call was taken.

**APPROVAL OF PROPOSED AGENDA- Commissioner Turner motion to approve the proposed agenda. Commissioner Campbell second.** Commission Discussion: none Public Comment: none  
**VOTE: Unanimous Motion carried**

**APPROVAL OF CITY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES AUGUST 18, 2014-Commissioner Southerland motion to approve City Commission Meeting Minutes August 18, 2014. Commissioner Morrison second.** City Commission discussion: none Public Comment: none.  
**VOTE: Unanimous Motion carried**

**CONSENT AGENDA-a. Additional Claims June, 2014 b. Claims August 14-273, 2014. Commissioner Campbell motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Southerland second.** Commission discussion: none Public Comment: none **VOTE: Unanimous Motion carried**

**CITY MANAGER COMMENTS**-City Manager Mark Shrives stated he only had one thing to report. Cora had sent out an email asking if you were interested in attending the Montana League of Cities and Towns Conference which is the 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> of October. If you are, and you could get that information back to her we need to get registrations in for anyone that is planning to go. Sooner the better.

**APPROVE SECOND READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 2014-002 TO AMEND THE CITY OF POLSON'S ASSESSMENT OF WATER CHARGES.** City Manager Mark Shrives discussed the Ordinance and Resolution together. The Ordinance is to amend the City of Polson's water charges. This is the re-structuring of how the charges are made. The consultant noted that there was a residential charge and a commercial charge for the same gallon of water. So, the re-structuring in balancing out the charges for water for both residential and commercial. This then would lead into the Resolution which sets the actual rates. The Ordinance re-structures how we charge for water and then the Resolution actually sets the rates that we charge for both water and sewer. One question that came up, that City Manager Shrives clarified was the question on the snowbirds. The snowbirds will be paying the capital costs, essentially they will still be paying for the capital costs but no other charges were in that original discussion. The different charges were all removed. If they turn their water off, they won't be charged usage but they will be paying for having the service at their home. That charge will remain. **Commissioner Campbell motion to Approve the second reading of Ordinance No. 2014-002 to amend the City of Polson's**

**assessment of water charges. Commissioner Southerland second.** Commission discussion: Mayor Knutson amends one word under Section 4.02.320 the word *property* needs to be changed to **proper**. **Commissioner Campbell amends his motion to include this correction. Commissioner Southerland approves the amendment.** Public comment: **Murat Kalinyaprak**, “Actually I have a question. Is this just for the water re-structuring water rates or also the sewer?” City Manager Shrives, “This is just re-structuring how we charge water.” Murat Kalinyaprak, “Okay. Just one comment about this same gallon for the business and residential. I don’t agree with that. I don’t know if it is too late to do anything about it. But my comment is just like electricity or things in other places there is a difference because a business can re-sell the water they buy from the City like a carwash or whatever versus residential they just use it for showering and cooking or whatnot. So, I think there may be good reason why to charge more for businesses but that’s my comment. Maybe it’s too late for that. If it’s not, you may want to think about that. Thank you.” **Elsa Duford**, “I would like to comment but it doesn’t do any good so I don’t know what to say. Looking at this Resolution and the information tonight that you’ve come up with different figures on that, on the increases. That was all new just tonight. So the public doesn’t get the advanced notice of what’s happened because you’re having discussions amongst yourselves between the meetings that the public isn’t aware of. It makes it really difficult to comment and think you have the information when you make your comment and then find out well, no we made some changes before. It’s just very difficult to do enough. I don’t think it’s a fair way to do it. Thank you.”

**VOTE: Unanimous Motion carried**

**APPROVE RESOLUTION TO RESTRUCTURE THE WATER SYSTEM RATES AND PROVIDE FOR A CHANGE IN THE WATER AND SEWER RATES-City Manager Shrives had**

one correction to the Resolution. The 4<sup>th</sup> WHEREAS *the fiscal year 2015-16* should be **FY 2014-15.**

**Commissioner Southerland motion to approve resolution to restructure the water system rates and provide for a change in the water and sewer rates. Commissioner Erickson second.** Commission

Discussion: Commissioner Campbell, “I’d like to say that just to answer a little bit of what Elsa said. The changes that we made to this were made because of the public comment. At least in my part. I can’t speak for everybody. I think when we requested questions or changes to be done. We got that information from you people. What was most important to the town to try to make this thing livable, we all know this is going to be hard, but we took the most important items that everybody gave to us and tried to work those changes into this. This is what we have. Just so you know, we did listen and those changes that have been made and they seem to come out quickly but they had been made because of comments from the people.” Commissioner Turner, “I was just wanting to verify that it’s going to be increased by \$25 not \$25.17.” City Manager Shrives, “That is an average.” Mayor Knutson, “Adding to that too, it is an average of \$25 for residential. The amount is different, based on the structure, for commercial. I just wanted to make sure that I am pointing that out to everybody else as well. Meter size.” Mayor Knutson, “I would like to present something for consideration from the Council on taking another look at the 5<sup>th</sup> WHEREAS. I would like to adjust that. I would like to suggest adjusting that so that we do not put solid dates in there so that we can have the flexibility that has potentially been offered to us and that we are going to continue to research. How I would suggest that that read: **WHEREAS the City has recently completed a preliminary engineering report (PER) and the Polson City Commission (Commission) has chosen to support, in the public interest, the construction of a mechanical wastewater treatment plant using a membrane bioreactor treatment (MBR) process to replace the existing lagoon system in the coming years.** I think that would take out the specific 2016-17, 2017-18 dates in there so that we can respond to the potential flexibility without limiting that. So I would make that recommendation to the Commission. **And I change the chosen to a preference as well.**” Commissioner Campbell, “That does give us a lot more flexibility than putting it down in black and white.” Mayor Knutson, “Yes and as we’ve talked about this and we did have a Public Hearing and as everyone knows if we move forward with this plan, this wastewater treatment facility, clearly we are going to need to do additional rate adjustments in the future than what we are intending tonight. It is an opportunity for us to get the ball rolling on this. It’s a situation where we’ve not had rate increases in the

past. In order for us to be responsible to our community I feel we need to make the rate adjustment at this point and then take a look at where we are as we continue to gather more information and as we continue to find out what the flexibility level is. I think moving forward with this while (inaudible) some flexibility is a responsible thing for us to do.” City Manager Shrives, “So you need to have whoever made the motion accept that amendment.” **Commissioner Southerland and Commissioner Erickson accepted the amendment as mentioned by Mayor Knutson.** Public Comment: **Rory Horning**, “You’ve made adjustments, or attempted to make adjustments, or talked about adjustments for snowbird people. Are these rates going to be equally applied to tribally owned properties within the City who use water?” Mayor Knutson, “Yes.” Rory Horning, “Okay. Thank you.” **Elsa Duford**, “It’s like repeating myself. The new information that was presented tonight, the \$25.00 increase and the \$3.00 on the sewer, I think that’s what it said, that was completely new information tonight. So, what I was referring to was previous information and so I was commenting on something that wasn’t even relevant because you changed it. So, thank you.” City Manager Shrives, “I do want to clear one thing up. The agenda item summary and the Resolution that we are looking at tonight were part of your packet and were posted to the City’s website when the packets went out on Friday. So, there’s no new information that came out tonight that was not already in the Resolution that was put out on Friday.” Mayor Knutson, “Other than the changes I’ve just amended.” **Murat Kalinyaprak**—“I’m not going to say anything more about the amount of the increase. I understand this Council is really trying hard to do the right thing. I appreciate that without personalizing it. One concern I have or comment is now that the Council acknowledges this was a hard decision, it’s going to be hard for some people to pay and all that. I would expect this Government to be really frugal and responsible in spending this money for the intended purposes and not for something else. I’m not sure if you know the history of all of this issue in the past. A lot of money has been wasted on this unnecessary studies after studies. Repeating the same thing and trying to buy a building that wasn’t suited for the purpose. Some people are hell bent on that and money was wasted studying and finding out that it wasn’t going to work out. To find that the City paid for not complying, monitoring and reporting, not violating necessarily but not even complying with monitoring and reporting and all of that. So I guess I would like to see with the new plant and new things that I don’t think you can build something new on the old broken system with the same people. That’s my suggestion for the future maybe look into hiring different people, more competent people who can handle this better in house without this endless studies done again and again by outside sources and getting the City fined and all that unnecessarily. So that’s my comment. Hopefully things will be better and I appreciate that this Council is trying it’s time to slow down and think and explore possibilities and trying to do the right thing. I appreciate that. Thank you.” **VOTE: Unanimous Motion carried**

Mayor Knutson, “Before moving on to Public Comments on Significant matters to the public not on the agenda, I want to take just a moment to say thank you to everybody for your time and your input and working through this process. I do feel like your Commission has taken this extremely serious. This has been an issue that has weighed heavily on all of us. I do know that everyone is trying to do the right thing for our community. While this tonight may not be the end of what we hear about this and very certainly this will not be the end of what we hear about this tonight, as we continue to move forward I continue to invite you to be a part of the process and to help us with this. I feel like the Commission responded to the citizens from the public meetings. I feel like we listened very well and adjusted things so that, because we were hearing you. Yes we did additional research on our own. That is what we need to do as Commissioners. I think you want us to work more than just sitting here in front of you so we have done additional research on our own. I assure you that I appreciate the efforts that have gone by the Commissioner. I appreciate the input that has come to us from the citizens. I think that the process itself worked very well. I do appreciate all of the citizens who either came to the meetings, called, emailed and got in touch with us and shared their perspectives. It has been extremely helpful. I further add that I appreciate the City and the work that everyone has done to help us get to this point. You fielded numerous questions and looked at things a million different ways. I appreciate all the efforts that have gone into it to this point. I know it hasn’t been easy for any of us at any level but we are a community

and we're working on this and we're going to get through this. So I just wanted to share a few words with you all tonight."

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON SIGNIFICANT MATTERS TO THE PUBLIC NOT ON THE AGENDA**-there was no public comment.

**Mayor Knutson asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Southerland motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Morrison second. Vote: Unanimous Motion carried**

**ADJOURN 7:25 p.m.**

**Mayor Knutson**

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Mayor Knutson

ATTEST:

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Cora E. Pritt, City Clerk