



**2014 PLANNING CONFERENCE MINUTES**  
**Saturday, January 25, 2014 at 9:00 a.m.**  
**Lacamas Lake Lodge & Conference Center**  
**227 NE Lake Road, Camas, WA**

*Note: This recording contains audio only.*

**I. OPENING COMMENTS/PLANNING CONFERENCE AGENDA REVIEW (9:00 a.m.)**

Day two of the City of Camas Planning Conference began at 9:04 a.m.

In attendance were Mayor Scott Higgins, and Council members Greg Anderson, Don Chaney, Linda Dietzman, Tim Hazen, Steve Hogan, and Melissa Smith.

Staff members present were Jerry Acheson, Kristin Berquist, Kim Berry, Phil Bourquin, Pete Capell, Leisha Copsey, Sherry Coulter, Jennifer Gorsuch, Cathy Huber Nickerson, Eric Levison, Randy Miller, Shyla Nelson, Ron Schumacher, Nick Swinhart, and David Zavortink.

Heather Acheson, Editor, of the Camas-Washougal Post Record was also in attendance. Library Board of Trustees Chair Brian Christopher and trustees Carolee Dewars and Julie Ann Hill were also present.

Camas School District Superintendent Mike Nerland was present to facilitate the conference.

There were approximately three members of the public present during the conference.

Nerland made opening comments and briefly reviewed the agenda for the day.

Council member Smith participated in the same team building exercise that was performed on Friday afternoon.

**II. FIRE DEPARTMENT (9:15 a.m.)**

**A. Special Events Permits Allowing Fireworks Discharge Outside Prescribed Times**

Details: For many years, the Camas Fire Department (CFD) has issued special events permits for the discharge of fireworks outside the normally allowed times. Typically, these permits would be for celebrations like anniversaries and birthdays. In an opinion rendered on July 29, 2013, City Attorney Roger Knapp issued an opinion stating that the ordinance language that the CFD had always used as authorization for issuing such permits, in fact, did not grant the proper legal authority required. The Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 70.77.311 does allow the issuance of special events permits for fireworks. However, the

City Attorney states that Camas Municipal Code 5.20.050 (Special Events Permits) must be amended to contain a reference to RCW 70.77.311 for such a provision to be used for fireworks. Based on the suggestion from the City Attorney and on order from the Fire Chief, the issuance of special events permits for fireworks have been prohibited since that time. Several months ago, Fire Chief Nick Swinhart approached the Council at a workshop and asked for direction on this issue. The direction requested was if the Council wished such permits to be issued in the future, and if so, whether they were prepared to make the necessary ordinance changes to do so. Direction of Council at this meeting was that they desired the continuation of such permits, but with more strict guidelines. They asked the Fire Chief to investigate what kind of restrictions other municipalities used, and to report back with sample guidelines when completed. Based on this research, sample restrictions were attached to the agenda for Council to discuss.

Department/Presenter: Nick Swinhart, Fire Chief

#### [Sample Fireworks Permit Restrictions](#)

Council discussed the sample guidelines and provided staff with feedback regarding the restrictions that they believe should be imposed.

This topic will come back before Council at a future workshop for further discussion.

Swinhart asked Council if they want to discuss the current dates and times that fireworks can be purchased and discharged at a future workshop. Council confirmed that they would like to have this discussion sometime after July.

Throughout the conference Nerland asked Council to participate in an exercise to get to know each other better.

### **III. PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT (9:45 a.m.)**

#### **A. [Utility Rate Subsidy Program for Low Income/Seniors](#)**

Details: During the adoption of the 2014-2018 utility rates, Council requested that staff research options to provide a safety net for low income/senior constituents. Staff tasked the FSC Group with identifying legal parameters for subsidies, and to provide examples of other Washington City programs (see attached memorandum). Shawn MacPherson, City Attorney, confirmed with the Washington Cities Insurance Authority (WCIA) that the Utility Fund can make a direct contribution to an outside rate assistance program. Funding contribution levels and rate impacts have been identified for each utility in the attached spreadsheet. During the utility rate discussion, staff recommended that any assistance program should have minimal impact on existing City staff, and should have no or minimal impact on existing rate payers.

Department/Presenter: Eric Levison, Public Works Director, and Cathy Huber Nickerson, Finance Director

## FCS Group Memorandum

### Rate Impacts

After discussion, Council directed staff to move forward with the implementation of a utility rate assistance program similar to that of the City of Spokane example that was described in the FCS Group Memorandum. More discussion about this topic will occur during the summer when the utility billing modification discussion takes place.

#### **IV. BREAK (10:15 a.m.)**

The conference went into recess at 10:05 a.m. The conference reconvened at 10:30 a.m.

Library Director David Zavortink announced that the break was sponsored by the Library Board of Trustees. Zavortink introduced the trustees that were present.

#### **V. CITY ADMINISTRATION (10:30 a.m.)**

##### **A. Salary Review Commission**

Details: The session consisted of a discussion relating to the creation of a Salary Review Commission for the purpose of setting the salary for the Mayor and Council members. The Commission would study the relationship of salaries to the duties of the Mayor and City Council members. The Commission would be required to hold at least one public hearing prior to establishing the salaries.

Department/Presenter: Pete Capell, City Administration

[City of Vancouver Salary Review Commission - City Charter](#) 

[City of Washougal Salary Commission - Municipal Code](#) 

Council directed staff to work with the City Attorney to begin drafting an ordinance for the creation of a Salary Review Commission.

#### **VI. FINANCE DEPARTMENT (10:45 a.m.)**

##### **A. 2014 Budget, Debt Outstanding and Financial Policies**

Details: The purpose of this presentation was to walk through the new 2014 City of Camas Budget Document. This document was reformatted to conform to the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA's) Best Practices. Included in the document is a section on the debt outstanding for the City as well as financial policies. There was discussion around debt about potential future obligations and the possible need for short term financing. The financial policies discussion centered on the need to bring the policies up to date with the GFOA Best Practices and what that effort provides.

Department/Presenter: Cathy Huber Nickerson, Finance Director

[Finance Department Presentation \(attachment added - January 23, 2014\)](#) 

When the financial policies are created or updated they will be brought back to Council for discussion at future workshops.

There will be more discussion around debt during financial review presentations that will occur thru the year.

## **VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS/CLOSING REVIEW (11:45 a.m.)**

There were no comments from the public.

Mayor, Council, Capell and Nerland made closing comments.

Mayor also mentioned that a bench will be placed at the Lacamas Lake Lodge and Conference Center in memory of past City Administrator Nina Regor.

## **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 11:42 a.m.

## **Quick Preview of Agenda and Supporting Documents - Posted January 22, 2014**

[Planning Conference Agenda - Day Two with Supporting Documents](#) 

*NOTE: The City of Camas welcomes and encourages the participation of all of its citizens in the public meeting process. A special effort will be made to ensure that persons with special needs have opportunities to participate. For more information, please call 360.834.6864.*

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Mayor

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City Clerk