

Local

Capital Plans and Pavement Management Plan approved



Gina K. Swartz / The Baker County Press

Members of the Public Works Advisory Committee deliberate.

BY GINA K. SWARTZ
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Tuesday evening the Public Works Advisory Committee (PWAC) met in Council chambers at City Hall.

On the agenda were approval of the 2017 Capital plans and approval of the 2017 pavement management plan.

Present for the meeting were committee members John Wickert, Jim Bruce, Keith Magnuson and Baker City Manager Fred Warner, Public Works Director Michelle Owen, City Councilor James Thomas and City Engineer Doug Schwin.

After officially calling the meeting to order, John Wickert asked for approval of the minutes from the last meeting in October of 2016.

Councilor Thomas moved to approve those minutes with a second by Keith Magnuson.

All committee members voted to accept the minutes as presented.

The next item on the agenda called for the election of a new chair and vice chair, John Wickert, current vice chair, chose to table the election as current Chair Gary Carter was not present at the meeting.

Tuesday night's meeting gave the PWAC an opportunity to hear and overview of the Capital Plans and the Pavement management plan with the goal of approving both plans to take before the City Council for approval and then present to the budget board in anticipation of all projects being funded when the budget is set.

The Committee focused next on the Capital Plans. Outlined in the Capital Plans are projects that the Public Works Department is hoping to complete within a three-year window.

Outlined were the three-year water capital plan with a cost of \$287,898.

That three-year plan includes a reservoir meter replacement, which is required by state or federal regulatory agencies that is slated to be completed in the current fiscal year which ends June 30, 2017.

In the current fiscal year, various water line replacements, hydrant replacements, surveys to determine areas of corrosion and electrolysis and consulting by outside agencies for well sites,

water rights and designs are slated and funded to be competed.

In year one, July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018 of the Water Capital plan additional improvements to the mountain line are needed, that project is also required by federal or state regulatory agencies.

It was noted that alternate funding would be required to meet the federally mandated regulations.

Year one also included hydrant replacements, reservoir maintenance, waterline extensions, a watershed fuels reduction project and groundwater source development for new wells.

Year one projects estimate costs to be \$1.2 million.

Year two outlines additional replacement of mountain line pipe, federal or state mandated requirements, hydrant replacements, water line extensions, pipe replacement and continued work on watershed fuel reduction.

Year two costs are roughly \$1.5 million.

Year three of the plans include federally or state mandated mountain line pipe replacement, chlorine system upgrade, waterline extensions, hydrant replacements, continued work on watershed fuel reduction and groundwater source development. Costs for year three are projected to be \$1.4 million.

The Committee then looked at the Wastewater Capital Plan.

Owen reminded the committee that an MAO with DEQ had been entered into recently and they were required to abide by the terms of that MAO.

In this current fiscal year cured in place pipe (CIPP) to prevent leakage and improve structural and flow character of the city's deteriorating sewage lines.

A Facility Plan Update is required and engineering support and water quality testing for a feasibility study for the City to move toward with tentative plans for land application to dispose of effluent water.

Cost this fiscal year are estimated at \$232,947.00. Costs in year one of the plan are estimated at \$447,975 and include installation of additional CIPP, a complete wastewater facility plan update, replacing mainline pipe and the engineering and design of an effluent disposal op-

tion. Year two will see additional CIPP work being done, and upgrade to the H Street lift station, possible acquisition of property and easements for wastewater effluent disposal and the beginning of construction of such.

Estimated costs just over \$1 million.

Year three of the plan continues to see additional install of CIPP, additional construction of effluent disposal system and replacement of the grinder at the wastewater treatment facility.

Costs for year three estimate \$2.6 million.

Owen stated that a public meeting is being held on April 11, 2017 at 5 p.m. at Baker City Hall to talk about the City's intended use of land application for effluent water.

The meeting is to inform residents of how the process works and hopefully bring possible partners to the City's attention.

Next in the Capital Plans was the storm water capital plan. In the current fiscal year costs are expected to be \$27,619.

Projects include CIPP install, a new catch basin install at 15th street and an inspection of storm mainlines—the inspection is required by State or federal regulatory agencies. Year one costs estimate at \$5,973.

Year two estimates costs to be \$37,136 and include continued mandated storm mainline inspection, upsizing existing mainline pipes in the D Street, Main Street, and 1st Street areas to improve flow and eliminate surcharging.

Year 3 of the storm water plan includes additional install of CIPP and continued inspection of storm lines. Costs for year three are estimated to be just over \$37,000.

It was stated that many of the projects simply will not and cannot happen with the current rate structure and that a possible rate hike is eminent.

Warner noted that Baker City is the 5th lowest in the state currently with water rates.

Owen acknowledged that as well but stated a loan could be obtained for most of the work if necessary but funds from a rate hike would be need to repay any loans.

After the presentation, the committee voted to send the capital plan to

City Council for approval. Next the committee heard about the pavement management plan.

Owen began by warning the committee that there were some big numbers in the outline.

She told them, "The streets are not getting any better. More are in fair or poor shape than we've ever had before. Winter was hard on our roads."

Also brought up was the Street fund paid for a lot of the snow plowing this winter, that was unexpected.

In information given to the committee there was a rundown of City streets in very good to very poor condition.

Very good streets included F Street from Grove Street to Elm Street and Jackson Street from 10th Street to 8th Street.

Currently Baker City has no streets rated as very poor, however Church Street from Main Street to Resort Street and Plum Street from Madison Street to Campbell Street are rated as poor.

In 2017 a large project is slated to occur on Auburn Street that will be a full depth reclamation with cement project.

Public works is also focused on maintenance of city streets, with a goal of keeping the majority of streets in a "good" rating.

Chip seal projects are in the plan, as are thin overlay projects, crack fills and fog seals.

Cost estimates for preventative maintenance is \$1.2 million.

Ways to improve funding were discussed, as coming up with the required money may be difficult. High gas taxes were one topic discussed.

Warner indicated that a transportation bill currently in the legislature may provide some relief however, he was unsure of any specifics.

Wickert threw out the idea of a GoFundMe page, in jest but all agreed that was not realistic. Owen said she was unaware of grants available but would certainly do more research on the matter.

Again, the committee voted in favor of approving the plan and forwarding it to Council.

Owen told the Committee to expect another meeting in April regarding equipment purchases.

The meeting then adjourned.

TCWMA

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"In my mind, there's no dispute at all, that we've gotten a lot of benefit from Tri-County; no question about that..." Grammon said. But he said that, for a couple of years now, he's been concerned with the lack of coordination, and with his department being kept in the loop regarding projects and other details. In his opinion, he said that communication would be greatly improved with TCWMA staff presence in the County. "In my mind, it addresses a lot of concerns...Personally, I think it can be done..." he said, whether part-time, or full-time.

TCWMA co-founding member Dave Clemens said, "The first few years of Tri-County--I'd say, the first five, six years--most of the benefits came to Baker County..." as he explained different weed control programs. He said he wants to see more involvement from the County, and Harvey said that's what the County's been attempting in recent years. Bennett said that, with over three-quarters of the funding being spent in Baker County, "...it's a hard argument to make, not to position a staff person here... You would certainly focus your efforts where the funds are..."

Baker County Natural Resource Advisory Committee (NRAC) Chair Doni Bruland, who attended the meeting, asked if the County has the budget to fund a part-time position, and Harvey said that the County doesn't, but that the position should be funded through TCWMA, and that it would not be a County employee position.

Bennett said that the consensus seems to be that a staff person would be placed in Baker County. Nichols said, "It all appears to be a communication problem...In this day and age of technology, why can't the minutes go out to everybody, of your Board meetings, and then, we can find out what is going on, and have the minutes detailed enough, to describe some of the things that are missing..."

Sharratt said, "We are working on that, and the attempt is going to be, within a week or two after the meeting, we'll get the minutes out..." Nichols said that would help, and that he'd like to see policy details in the minutes, which Sharratt said is the plan. Nichols said that the lack in representation from the County is partly the County's fault, but that seems to have been remedied.

Harvey stressed the importance of holding regular public meetings to discuss the issues and projects involved, and improved communication between TCWMA, the Baker County Weed Department, and the Baker County Weed Board. Bennett said that the County wishes to see projects advertised in a designated paper of record (currently the Baker City Herald), as part of raising the level of transparency, and informing the public.

Baker County Weed Board meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of each month (no meetings are held from November through January), at the Oregon State University (OSU) Extension Service building, 2600 East Street, Baker City.

ODFW art submissions wanted

Artists are invited to compete in the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's 2018 Habitat Conservation Stamp, Waterfowl Stamp and Upland Game Bird Stamp art competitions. Collector's stamps and other promotional materials are produced from first place artwork and each winning artist receives \$2,000.

Entries are accepted between 8 a.m. August 25 to 5 p.m., September 29, 2017 at ODFW headquarters, 4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE, Salem, OR 97302.

A panel judges original artwork on criteria including artistic composition, anatomical accuracy of the species and general appeal. All qualifying submissions are displayed for public viewing at ODFW's annual fall art show, date TBD.

Habitat Conservation Stamp

Art entries must feature a Strategy Species in the Oregon Conservation Strategy in its natural habitat. The list of eligible mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish, invertebrates, and plants and algae are on the entry form. Proceeds from the program are used to restore native habitats and benefit Oregon's native fish and wildlife.

Upland Game Bird Stamp

Art entries must feature Blue Grouse in its natural habitat setting. The sale of upland game bird stamps funds game bird research, surveys, habitat improvement and conservation projects.

Waterfowl Stamp

Art entries must feature one of the following species in its natural habitat setting: Ring-necked Duck, Ruddy Duck, Bufflehead, or Harlequin Duck. The sale of waterfowl stamps funds game bird research, surveys, habitat improvement and conservation projects.

Visit here for more information: www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/hunting/waterfowl/contest/docs/Waterfowl_contest_rules_and_entry_form_2018.pdf

Hiring workshop to be held in April

Northeast Oregon Economic Development District and WorkSource Oregon offer a free workshop to help entrepreneurs and small-business owners understand the legal considerations of hiring employees. Register by March 31 to reserve a seat. Workshops take place in Baker City Wednesday, April 5; 6 to 9 p.m. at Hatch Baker, 2019 Main St. and Thursday, April 6; 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. To register, call 541-426-3598 or 800-645-9454.