

Officials in Attendance: Mayor Greg McCunn; Councilwomen Tracy Ling and Jolene McGee; Councilmen Aaron Alvarado, Payton Norvell, Bruce Nupp, Evan Schalock and John Kabosky
Staff Present: City Administrator Jim Caruso, City Attorney Mike Waters, Deputy Clerk Catherine Konzal

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM

Audience Comments: None

Approval of/Changes to Proposed Agenda: *Motion made and seconded to approve agenda as proposed. Roll call vote taken with all in favor. Motion carried.*

Presentations: Brad Shaffer, Manager of the Chewelah Farmers Market and Representative of the Chewelah Creative District signage – The Creative District received a grant for projects and one of the projects is signage on 395, indicating the entrance to the Chewelah Creative District. If approved by Council, there will be zero cost to the City and the Creative District will take full responsibility of maintaining the sign. The next step would be to get proposals. *Motion by Councilwoman Ling, seconded by Councilman Nupp. Roll call vote taken with all in favor. Motion carried.*

Mayor’s Report : None

City Administrator’s Report : None

Public Hearing #1 Shoreline Master Program (SMP)

The Mayor opened the Public Hearing.

Alicia Ayars, Planner with SCJ Alliance provided a brief overview of the Shoreline Master Program, explaining that it establishes guidelines for development along the shoreline to protect natural habitats. The Shoreline Master Program specifically addresses the shoreline along Chewelah Creek. The program is required for all municipalities in the state with shoreline or wetlands. The purpose of this Public Hearing is to obtain input. The draft of the Shoreline Master Program is available online, and the City Council will approve the SMP to move forward into a 60-day intent to adopt with the Department of Commerce and the Department of Ecology's process for initial determination.

There was no public comment.

The Mayor closed the Public Hearing.

Public Hearing #2 Emergency Moratorium Established by Ordinance 976 on Acceptance of Applications for Licenses, Permits, or Approvals for Any Behavioral Health Treatment Facilities, Specialized Dementia Care Facilities, or Other Behavioral Health Facilities

The Mayor stated the purpose of the Public Hearing, explaining the reasons behind the moratorium and the need for a public hearing within 60 days, as mandated by state law. This will allow adequate time for the City to draft new regulations that will adequately address the unique characteristics of Behavioral Health Facilities (BHF).

Aaron Qualls, Planner with SCJ Alliance provided additional context, stating that the Council had taken swift action to put a hold on permits in order to draft an ordinance addressing the facilities. The Council plans to work with other communities and the Department of Commerce, who have provided guidelines, to establish appropriate rules, regulations, and processes. Aaron emphasized that the hearing was not focused on a specific project but rather the moratorium itself.

The Mayor opened the Public Hearing for public comment.

There were 15 city and county residents signed up for comment. Most giving reasons why they don't want an IBHTF within the city limits, especially close to the schools, a few gave suggestions on what could be done to protect citizens. There was no written comments received.

Mayor McCunn stated the City Council is hoping to hear specific ideas for ways to craft legislation to protect the City. They want to hear interesting ideas that could be added to a City ordinance that would address concerns in a legislative way. The City Council creates the ordinances, and this is a brand-new program from the state. There will be a series of workshops and a subcommittee could be set up to work on this. A minimum time frame would be a few months. The 60-day review period with the Department of Commerce is mandatory for any zoning ordinance. The ordinance would fall within the zoning chapter and would define the use, definitions, standards, and procedures.

City Attorney Mike Waters stated the opposition is clear, but this is also an important opportunity for everyone to voice their suggestions and help the Council craft guidelines that will direct how such facilities may or may not be incorporated into our community. He also stated that not following the law is not an option and that the City of Chewelah could be on the hook for millions of dollars if found guilty in a court of law. He advised the City to do this within the law and not put the city at risk. We are here asking for specific ideas from citizens that we might be able to add to the guidelines.

Planner Aaron Qualls stated the City has not crafted a work plan yet, the first step is to engage with Commerce and get examples from other cities. Essentially there will be a series of workshops and maybe setup a sub-committee. We are intending to get ahead of this as soon as we possibly can.

Councilmember McGee stated that laws were made outside of the City Council and that private citizens have the right to reach out to the legislators and give their justification for why they believe the law is wrong. The council members are only representatives at the City level and citizens can take action themselves, such as creating a committee, without waiting for the council to do it. Councilwoman McGee asked for help from the public to find information on other town's ordinances and codes.

City Administrator Jim Caruso offered his email cadmin@cityofchewelah.org for citizens to offer solutions.

Everyone in the meeting was encouraged to make their voices heard to the state legislators by writing letters, sending emails, or making group or individual efforts. The city council members were doing what they felt was best for the city, and they hoped that the people would trust them. The city council members would be going to Olympia, but everyone was encouraged to make their voices heard.

The Mayor closed the Public Hearing.

Committee/Commission Reports: None

Old Business: None

New Business: None

Adjournment:

At 8:39 pm, *motion by Councilwoman McGee to adjourn, seconded by Councilwoman Ling. Roll call vote taken with all in favor. Motion carried.*

Mayor M. Gregory McCunn

Deputy Clerk Catherine Konzal

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