

**CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
SPECIAL JOINT MEETING
CITY COUNCIL AND HUMBOLDT COUNTY COMMISSION
JANUARY 17, 2017**

The Winnemucca City Council met in a special joint meeting with the Humboldt County Commission on Tuesday, January 17, 2017 8:00 a.m. in the Humboldt County Courthouse meeting room at 25 West Fifth Street. City Officials present: Mayor Di An Putnam, Councilmen Mike Owens, Theresa Mavity, Vince Mendiola, Jim Billingsley and Paige Brooks. City Staff present: City Manager Steve West, City Attorney Kent Maher, and City Clerk Lorrie Haaglund. County Officials present: Commission Chairman Mike Bell, Commissioners Marlene Brissenden, Jim French, Ken Tipton, and Ron Cerri. County Staff present: County Administrator Dave Mendiola, County Clerk Tami Spero and Assistant District Attorney Gabrielle Carr.

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Putnam called the City Council portion of the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT - PERSONAL COMMUNICATION - CORRESPONDENCE:

There were no public comments, personal communication or correspondence.

BUSINESS ITEMS - OTHER REPORTS:

BUSINESS IMPACT DETERMINATION

After review and consideration of the effect each item could potentially have on a "business," as the term is defined by statute, the Council agreed and Councilman Owens moved to make a finding that no item on this agenda appears to impose a direct and significant economic burden on a business or appears to directly restrict the formation, operation or expansion of a business. Motion carried unanimously.

GP JOULE SOLAR PROJECT PRESENTATION

Linda Bullen (Environmental Attorney), Perry Fontana (Project Developer), and Philip Prause (Project Development and Project Finance) presented information regarding the GP Joule Battle Mountain Solar Project. Prause said they have been working on the Battle Mountain Project for the past year and that the GP Joule Company is proposing a 70 megawatt plant which will be located off the Mote exit in Humboldt County. The project will cover 640 acres, which is one square mile (a section) of land. A power line from the Battle Mountain substation to Valmy crosses the corner of the otherwise undeveloped section of land. GP Joule has secured a Large Generator Interconnection Agreement with NV Energy. The projected timeline of the project is: final environmental assessment May 2017; BLM access right-of-way June 2017; start of construction at beginning of 2018; and, in-service date January 2019. Commissioner French asked if the project will require any upgrades to the NV energy infrastructure. Fontana said there would be no network upgrades required. French asked about the BLM permitting process. Bullen said BLM follows NEPA guidelines and a study under the direction of the BLM will be done by a private consultant. Phillips said the number of employees during the construction period will be 150 people, most of which will be hired locally. The cost of construction is estimated to be \$120-140M. Mayor Putnam asked how many permanent employee positions will be created by the project. Phillips said that 10-15 employees will be required to maintain the low-maintenance panels. The project has an operating life of 20-30 years. Commissioner Tipton commented this is good timing with the closure of the Valmy Power plant scheduled for

2026. GP Joule will actively look at other property in Humboldt County to expand as Valmy makes plans to leave. Putnam commented that Humboldt County and the City of Winnemucca look forward to working with GP Joule management on this project.

The meeting was recessed at 8:30 a.m.

The meeting was reconvened at 8:50 a.m.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRESENTATION

County Administrator Mendiola presented two economic development options for 2017 in anticipation of the retirement of Business and Economic Development Specialist Bill Sims.

Option 1: Hire a full-time local Economic Development Agent: 1) Revenue - \$50,000 from GOED funding – GOED has said they would likely continue this funding next year but the level of funding could deteriorate rapidly if substantial jobs are not created. GOED is suggesting that individual counties and cities join regional groups as they have seen significantly better results with that approach. Funding Option 1 will require the current \$30,000 contribution from the City/County to be increased. 2) Expenses – the current budget will likely increase by as much as \$50,000 in order to hire someone with an adequate level of experience. The current budget is approximately \$157,000. The budget, however, includes funding from UNR (SBDC), which is being moved to the NNRDA, who will provide the SBDC services for this area in the future. There will be a full-time person located in the Winnemucca, and costs will increase substantially. The Humboldt Development Authority (HDA) will continue to meet monthly.

Option 2: Join the Northeastern Nevada Regional Development Authority (NNRDA): 1) Revenue to NNRDA - \$50,000 GOED funding with a \$19,000 membership fee from Humboldt County and the City of Winnemucca for a total of \$69,000. This is \$11,000 less than currently given to HDA. The current projected HDA fund balance of \$262,307.28 can continue to be used by the HDA Board to supplement activity by NNRDA that directly impacts the City/County. 2) Expenses will be covered by NNRDA. The City/County will get continued oversight/direction from NNRDA Executive Director Pam Borda. A part-time person will be located in Winnemucca a minimum of 3-days a week and will be in the Lander/Eureka County offices the other two days of the week.

Borda said they have an individual with excellent credentials and experience that is willing to move to Winnemucca. NNRDA will provide proactive recruitment of businesses looking to relocate, strategic planning and marketing expertise. Small Business Development will be supported part-time out of the Elko NNRDA office. The office expenses will be covered by NNRDA. The Humboldt Development Authority Board will stay in place and meet quarterly with Borda and the locally based employee. The HDA will be able to meet with the local person anytime.

County Administrator Mendiola said that he and City Manager West felt that a full-time local person is not needed due to the fact that the NNRDA office will be doing a lot of the work on a daily basis to recruit firms and prepare marketing materials from the Elko office. Mendiola commented that Peter Wallish, Director of the State of Nevada Office of Rural Community Economic Development, felt there is not a lot of success in "going it alone" and he would like to see the City/County join a regional development authority. West said he strongly favors the second option because it will remove much of the uncertainty and risk that the other option has,

it will be less expensive, and it will add substantial expertise to the local economic development efforts. Several Commissioners and Council members expressed their support for joining the NNRDA. Councilman Owens said it is important to have the NNRDA employee here three days a week and to keep the HDA Board intact. Borda said the entities have the ability to drop their membership in the NNRDA any time that they feel it is not working for them. Administrator Mendiola said the proposed inter-local agreement was submitted and some changes were recommended. Commissioner French moved to approve the draft inter-local agreement, with the revisions suggested by the staff attorneys, in order to join the NNRDA. Motion carried unanimously. Councilman Brooks made the same motion for the City. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:12 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorrie Haaglund
City Clerk

PASSED AND ADOPTED: February 7, 2017

VOTE OF COUNCIL:

AYES:	Councilmen	<u>Owens, Mavity, Mendiola, Billingsley, Brooks</u>
NAYS:	Councilmen	_____
NOT VOTING:	Councilmen	_____
ABSENT:	Councilmen	_____

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Di An Putnam
Mayor

Lorrie Haaglund
City Clerk