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CITY COUNCIL MEETING COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY HALL APRIL 28, 2025 5:30 p.m.

VIA ZOOM/ IN PERSON

PRESIDING: President McGlothlin

COUNCIL PRESENT: Ben Wring, Tim McGlothlin, Rod Runyon, Scott Randall, Dan Richardson, Mayor Mays

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Matthew Klebes, City Attorney Jonathan Kara, City Clerk Amie Ell, Public Works Director Dale McCabe, Police Chief Tom Worthy, Community Development Director Joshua Chandler, IT Director David Collins.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by President McGlothlin at 5:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL OF COUNCIL

Roll Call was conducted by City Clerk Ell. Wring, McGlothlin, Runyon, Randall, Richardson, Mays present

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Mays asked Councilor Richardson to lead the Pledge of Allegiance. Councilor Richardson invited the audience to join in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

President McGlothlin noted changes to the agenda; The addition of consent agenda item E. Authorizing the City Manager to make application and be the designee for signing of the application for the FFY – 2025 Drinking Water Source Protection Grant through Oregon Health Authority (OHA) Drinking Water Services; the removal of consent agenda item D. A Resolution

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Concurring with The Mayor's Appointments to The Planning Commission; and the removal of the Executive Session.

It was moved by Richardson and seconded by Wring to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried 5 to 0, Richardson, Wring, Randall, Runyon, McGlothlin voting in favor; none opposed; none absent.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Adam Rahmlow, resident of The Dalles, addressed the Council regarding concerns about local water quality. He stated he previously served on the Beautification Committee and had attempted to raise the issue through that forum and through ongoing emails with City leadership. Rahmlow expressed frustration about the City's lack of movement on concerns related to emerging contaminants, such as PFAS, micro plastics, pharmaceuticals, and fluoride. He questioned the adequacy of current water testing methods and raised concerns about the potential leaching of plastic into drinking water through new piping. Rahmlow submitted a packet of information and volunteered to lead a water task force to help address the issue. He urged the Council to more carefully consider the proposed \$300 million water infrastructure project in light of these concerns.

Russ Brown, resident of The Dalles, addressed the Council regarding the closure of Lewis and Clark Park due to ongoing vandalism. He criticized the decision to post "park closed" signs, suggesting it punishes responsible taxpayers and proposed a different solution: keep the restrooms closed except during special events, post signage directing the public to City Park restrooms, and provide security during events. He expressed strong opposition to the closure, stating he would continue to walk his dog at the park daily as a form of protest. He said there was a need for a more practical approach and invited a Council representative to follow up with him regarding any decisions.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

City Manager Matthew Klebes reported;

- Introduced new Economic Development Officer, Jake Anderson, a former Klickitat County Commissioner with experience in bridge authority and economic development work.
- Reported that the QLife Board met last week; the new director was progressing with grant applications and a future City Council presentation was expected.
- Attended the Community Outreach Team meeting.
- Noted that staff had been engaged in budget preparation and presentations ahead of the

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upcoming budget meetings.

- Informed Council that Mayor Mays was in Washington, D.C., testifying on legislation introduced by Congressman Bentz regarding watershed land transfer.
- Shared that the City Attorney had coordinated with Klickitat County and Commissioner Zoller to begin work on a Joint Operating Agreement, as directed during the recent joint session.
- Proposed a special City Council meeting on either April 27 or June 2 due to the May 27 holiday; staff would follow up to confirm the date.
- Reported that a Planning Commission appeal had been received that afternoon; additional information was expected from the City Attorney the following day.

CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilor Runyon reported;

- Attended a Wasco County Pioneers Association meeting and promoted the annual public luncheon featuring speakers on Wasco County history.
- Participated in a QLife meeting with the City Manager.
- Attended a QLife special meeting.
- Took part in performance evaluations for the City Manager, City Attorney, and Municipal Judge.

Councilor Richardson reported;

- Met with the City Attorney.
- Attended an Urban Renewal Budget meeting.
- Participated in a Traffic Safety Commission meeting.
- Took part in a State mandatory public meeting law refresher webinar.
- Participated in full-day staff evaluations.
- Commented that the evaluation process had been cumbersome and ineffective, and noted that he and Councilor Wring planned to revise the evaluation questions, with support from the Assistant City Manager and Human Resources, and sought informal Council approval to move forward with the revisions.

Councilor Randall reported;

- Attended an executive session for performance evaluations.
- Participated in the Cherry Festival parade with Mayor Mays and Councilor McLaughlin.
- Visited the Neon Sign Museum after the parade, where local artist Danae Manion was restoring a 1920s pony from the Jantzen Beach Carousel. Encouraged citizens to get involved by visiting the museum or checking out the Jantzen Beach Carousel website for more information.

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Councilor McGlothlin reported;

- Attended the performance evaluations.
- Attended the Cherry Festival parade.
- Indicated he had been busy in recent weeks but deferred additional reporting, including on the airport, to the next meeting.

Councilor Wring reported;

- Attended the executive session with the City Council and Mayor.
- Attended the Sister Cities Association meeting and noted their upcoming trip to Japan.
- Met with the City Attorney, City Manager, and Mayor regarding improvements to the evaluation process and looked forward to working with the new HR Director to refine the process for the following year.

Mayor Mays reported;

- He was attending via Zoom from Washington, D.C. where he would be testifying on H.R. 655, the Dalles Watershed Development Act, supporting the transfer of 150 acres from the U.S. Forest Service to the City for completion of water infrastructure projects on City land, and emphasized the importance of securing the City's water supply while acknowledging past cooperation from the Forest Service.
- Commented on the evaluation process and thanked Councilors Wring and Richardson for taking steps to improve it with assistance from the new HR staff, City Attorney, and City Manager.

CONSENT AGENDA

Runyon asked for confirmation that one of the items had been removed from the consent agenda. He confirmed the Planning Commission nomination had been taken off.

It was moved by Wring and seconded by Randall to approve the Consent Agenda as amended. The motion carried 5 to 0, Wring, Randall, Runyon, Richardson, McGlothlin voting in favor; none opposed; none absent.

Items approved on the consent agenda were: 1) The minutes of the April 14, 2025 Regular City Council Meeting; 2) Approval of the April 3, 2025 City Council Joint Work Session Minutes; 3) Authorization of Updated ACH Signers and Notification Recipients; 4) Authorizing the City Manager to make application and be the designee for signing of the application for the FFY – 2025 Drinking Water Source Protection Grant through Oregon Health Authority (OHA) Drinking Water Services.

CONTRACT REVIEW BOARD ACTIONS

Contract No. 2025-003 Safe Routes to School - Chenoweth Elementary/West 10th/Bike and Pedestrian Facilities

Dale McCabe Public Works Director reviewed the staff report.

Councilors asked if there would be separation between asphalt walkway and roadway in front of the Wahtonka campus, for a description of what a continental crosswalk was, for a project timeline, and if any money left over unused from the grant could be used for other similar projects.

McCabe explained that the asphalt walkway in front of the Wahtonka campus would be widened and separated from the roadway with bollards; it would be slightly raised but remained an asphalt surface. He stated that continental crosswalks were the wider, highly visible crosswalks already in place near schools and on Third Street. Regarding the timeline, he said that if the contract were awarded that evening, Crestline could begin work by the end of May. However, construction near the school would not begin until after school let out for summer. Work would begin between Pomona and Snipes Street first, then proceed toward Chenoweth Loop, with completion scheduled by August 29. He confirmed the original grant-funded project was estimated at \$2.4 million with an 80/20 match—\$1.994 million in grant funds and \$200,000 each from the City and School District. He indicated there might be room to add project elements with remaining funds, pending discussion with ODOT, but not for unrelated locations. He added that the next priority project from the Master Plan was West Seventh Street and that the City planned to apply for the next Safe Routes to School grant in spring 2026.

It was moved by Randall and seconded by Wring to authorize the City Manager to enter into contract with Crestline Construction for the West 10th/Bike and Ped Facilities, Contract No. 2025-003, in an amount not to exceed \$1,505,847.00. The motion carried 5 to 0, Randall, Wring, McGlothlin, Richardson, Runyon voting in favor; none opposed; none absent.

ACTION ITEMS

Federal Street Plaza Recommendations

Matthew Klebes City Manager reviewed the staff report.
McGlothlin asked if there was anyone in the audience who would like to speak.

Klebes noted there had been substantial engagement with the representatives and owner of the

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Craig's building, located just west of the plaza. Although they had planned to attend the meeting to comment, he spoke briefly on their behalf. He emphasized the excitement and momentum surrounding the plaza project, describing it as something The Dalles truly deserved. He stated that this energy appeared to be influencing the Craig's building ownership to consider revitalization and redevelopment of their property. He reported recent discussions with various staff, consultants, and the new Economic Development Officer, and said the Craig's representatives were interested in opening the west side of the building to better connect with the proposed plaza. He explained that the landscaping and seating layout on that side of the plaza could change as final design progresses, to harmonize with any redevelopment efforts by the Craig's building. He described the interactions as very positive and anticipated that aspect of the design would likely evolve as final construction documents were prepared. Additionally, Klebes mentioned that a door on the northeast side of the Craig's building had been incorporated into the plaza design, with a nook for landscaping proposed for that side. However, there was a desire to open that side of the building further, with the potential removal of the mural on that side. These were all preliminary conversations with the property owner, who was very supportive of the plaza but hoped to see design adjustments to better engage with the space and help activate the area.

Mayor Mays expressed appreciation to the committee members for their hard work over several months and acknowledged the City Manager for his excellent work as the staff liaison. He highlighted the success of the open house on February 12 at Free Bridge Brewing, where a standing-room-only crowd attended. The event had generated a lot of enthusiasm and positive feedback.

Bets Stelzer, a member of the Federal Street Plaza Committee and a downtown business owner, shared her experience working on the project. She had joined the committee in the summer of 2024, eager to contribute despite being new to the 2030 vision. She had been deeply involved in the process, including interviewing consultants, drawing concepts, and working with the community. Throughout, she felt her voice, and those of the committee members and the community, had been heard. A lifelong resident of Wasco County, she emphasized her strong ties to the area, where she lived, owned a business, and raised her children. She reflected on how, as a teenager, The Dalles had few places to gather, with Fred Meyer's furniture section being the only option. As an adult, she often sought out plaza spaces in Hood River and Portland. She noted how COVID had highlighted the need for such spaces, leading her to add an outdoor patio to her Hood River business. Since returning to The Dalles, she had observed that many locals, like herself, still spent leisure time outside the city. She viewed the plaza as a vital first step to changing this trend. She stressed the plaza's potential to serve as a "living room for The Dalles," noting that recent private investments in downtown had shown the community's commitment to growth. She urged the Council to approve the project to continue this momentum.

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Richardson expressed his appreciation for the committee members and echoed the Mayor's compliments. He highlighted the extraordinary dedication and positive experience throughout the project, which was not always typical in committee work. He thanked the committee members for their hard work, acknowledging that many had other responsibilities, such as running businesses, caring for children, and attending evening meetings, yet they all fully participated. He praised the collaborative nature of the project, noting that members had set aside personal ideas and egos to work together for a common goal. He expressed gratitude for their dedication and emphasized that the plaza project would complement existing private and public investments, enhancing the city's quality of life for years to come.

It was moved by Wring and seconded by Runyon to accept the recommended site plan for the Federal Street Plaza with the described additions, direct the City Manager to move the project forward, and adopt the Resolution 25-018 extending the Federal Street Plaza Ad Hoc Committee through project completion. The motion carried 5 to 0, Wring, Runyon, Richardson, Randall, McGlothlin voting in favor; none opposed; none absent.

Mayor Mays left the meeting (via Zoom)

Authorizing the City Manager to Execute Intergovernmental Agreements with Wasco County and Mid-Columbia Fire and Rescue District for Computer-Aided Dispatch and Police Records Management System Services

Police Chief Tom Worthy reviewed the staff report.

Runyon commended the time and effort put into the project by all three entities involved, including the Fire Department, County Sheriff's Department, and City Police. He acknowledged the complexity of the report, noting that it was a lot of information to remember and present coherently.

Chief Worthy expressed appreciation for the strong collaboration between the City and County leadership over the past four years. He clarified that while the project was poised to begin, it had not started yet, and the implementation scope of work would likely take 12 to 18 months. He acknowledged that the most challenging part was ahead and emphasized the importance of getting the project right, given the significant investment.

Richardson asked what the biggest risk was in moving forward with the project, requesting both a worst-case and best-case scenario, and a description of what success would look like for the project.

Chief Worthy highlighted "scope creep" as a key concern, explaining that any additions to the project after the initial outline would increase costs and delays. He emphasized the importance of

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staying close to the original scope to avoid complications. He noted that the project's timeline could range from 11 to 24 months, depending on factors like vendor interaction with state law enforcement systems. Delays could occur if the vendor had prior commitments he said the State would not engage until the project was officially initiated. Success would look like a clean implementation and effective use of the software, particularly the core CAD and RMS modules. This would ensure proper data management and quality, allowing for predictive insights on call volumes based on historical data. Additionally, success would include making crime data publicly accessible through a dashboard, enabling residents to view case information in their neighborhoods, contributing to improved community engagement and police management.

Richardson asked for a rough estimate of the annual dispatch costs both now and post-project completion. He asked if the project would result in ongoing, significant expenses or if the improved product would ultimately offer a more cost-effective solution.

Worthy explained that many of the expenses for the project would be front-loaded—covering project management, infrastructure, and hosting—but the ongoing costs would decrease once the system was live. Regular software costs would increase by 3% annually for at least five years. Over time, the infrastructure would require replacement, but those costs were incorporated into the ongoing 911 agreement, ensuring the equipment fund was maintained and preventing large, unexpected expenses during the software's lifecycle.

Klebes referenced Exhibit C1 on page 33 of the packet, showing annual costs of over \$100,000 from 2026 to 2031, with an initial \$700,000 cost in the first year. He mentioned that the proposed budget would be adjusted at the upcoming meeting based on final figures that may differ from those in the staff report, and the five-year software budget would be used in future presentations. He highlighted the significant cost of the partnership with the County and Fire and Rescue, with the City covering most of the expenses due to its status as the largest city in Wasco County. Even without the added costs, 911 operations were a major budget item.

Richardson expressed appreciation for the dedication to raising the bar and providing excellent service, thanking everyone involved.

Worthy noted that while the project carried risks, the risk of inaction—such as system outages forcing a return to outdated methods—was greater. He emphasized that addressing these issues proactively was crucial for public safety.

McGlothlin asked when the current system being used had been put in place.

Worthy explained that the two systems were extremely outdated, with one last updated in 1999. While they served current needs when functioning, they were rudimentary and had only received minor patching since his arrival.

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McGlothlin noted that the rudimentary systems likely caused slow access times, which created safety issues for both officers and citizens. He then asked if other entities, such as tribal police, could potentially share in the project, aside from Fire and Rescue, Wasco County, and the City.

Worthy explained that Sherman County had considered joining the City's dispatch system but chose to improve its own center. Hood River was pursuing a separate project, and tribal police had selected a different vendor. While no other entities were currently interested, future collaborations were possible, and any new participants would share in initial costs.

Wring asked two questions: First, he expressed concern about the time and effort required to convert the City's old data to the new system, cautioning that it could lead to unforeseen challenges. Second, he inquired about potential future equipment upgrades or ancillary devices that might need to be accounted for down the road.

Worthy disagreed with concerns about data conversion, stating that the team had made careful decisions to bring forward only essential case data as searchable PDFs, not through complex field mapping. He noted the County had the capacity to support this and that the system could interface with national platforms like the FBI's N-DEx. Regarding equipment, he said future upgrades could include printers in patrol cars for electronic ticketing and crash reporting, and barcode scanners for the evidence room. These were not yet budgeted but were part of the long-term plan to improve efficiency.

It was moved by Wring and seconded by Runyon to authorize the city manager to execute the intergovernmental master 911, agreement, intergovernmental dispatch agreement and intergovernmental CAD RMS use agreement as presented, contingent upon County and district agreement and subject to any reasonable modifications approved by the city manager. The motion carried 5 to 0, Wring, Runyon, Randall, Richardson, McGlothlin voting in favor; none opposed; none absent.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Planning Commission Restructuring Opportunities

Joshua Chandler Community Development Director reviewed the staff report and introduced Dr. Kelly Howsley-Glover Wasco County Community Development Director who was invited to attend and share about the County's experience with transitioning to having a Hearings Officer.

Howsley-Glover, Wasco County Community Development Director, shared that transitioning quasi-judicial land use decisions to a hearings officer had been highly successful. The change relieved planning commissioners of meeting fatigue due to a heavy long-range planning

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workload and frequent state rule updates. It also significantly reduced hearing times—from several hours to under 30 minutes—improving efficiency for staff and applicants. The use of a professional land use attorney helped minimize perceived bias and strengthened legal findings, reducing procedural errors and the likelihood of appeals. She expressed strong support for the model and welcomed questions.

Runyon asked whether all hearings officer decisions go to the County Commission or if the hearings officer had final authority, and whether certain types of decisions were always elevated to the County Commission while others were not.

Howsley-Glover said most decisions made by the hearings officer were final, with some exceptions. Subdivisions still required final review by the Board of County Commissioners, and all appeals—whether from a planning commission or hearings officer decision—went to the Board. The only role that had been removed from the Board was handling code compliance cases, which they previously managed due to the County's lack of a municipal court.

Runyon said that as a former City Planning Commissioner, he supported reducing regular meetings while retaining the option for special sessions. He questioned the value of a hearings officer if most matters would still come before the City Council, noting that appeals had been rare in recent years. He asked which decisions would remain solely with the hearings officer and which would require Council review.

Chandler said if the City opted to use a hearings officer, the impact on City Council would be minimal. The hope was the hearings officer, especially if a qualified land use attorney were hired, it would provide for defensible cases, reducing appeals. City Council would still retain control and could decide to hear appeals if necessary. If all decisions were delegated to a hearings officer, the application process would be expedited, significantly reducing review times. Ultimately, City Council would have final control in the event of an appeal.

Klebes stated that when he and Chandler had discussed the concept, one exciting aspect was the benefit it would bring to the Planning Commission. Rather than focusing on individual appeals or applications, the Planning Commission could concentrate on policy-level discussions, such as the sign code and other long-term policy topics. He hoped the Commission would be able to dedicate more attention to guiding frameworks and principles for decision-making, while the hearings officer would handle the application of those principles or address appeals. The primary benefit would be to the Planning Commission, rather than the City Council, in terms of time and focus.

Chandler said one planning commissioner supported the hearings officer having the final decision to reduce the City Council's workload, as appeals were infrequent. He reiterated that staff recommended the City Council retain the final decision, but the Council had the authority to

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decide. The focus was on allowing the Planning Commission to concentrate on policy issues, with the City Council determining their structure and operations.

Richardson expressed support for reducing meetings to once a month, finding it a sensible approach, and appreciated Dr. Howsley-Glover's insights. He then asked if the City Attorney had any thoughts on the idea of hiring a hearings officer.

City Attorney Jonathan Kara supported hiring a hearings officer, explaining it would reduce the risk of planning commission members failing to apply clear standards. He highlighted that while the City had been fortunate with its current commission, new members could bring challenges. A hearings officer would ensure more consistent decisions and allow the commission to focus on long-range planning. Kara emphasized the efficiency of experienced land use professionals and noted the benefits of time and resource savings for staff, while maintaining City Council's final authority.

Wring agreed with holding one meeting per month and asked if anything significant had been missed in the current process due to the complexity of land use decisions. He expressed concern about the potential lack of expertise and suggested that onboarding and education for new or current commissioners could help address this.

Kara shared concerns about planning commissioners not always being fully engaged, citing instances where commissioners were absent, mentally disengaged, or lacked the time to fully understand complex land use matters. He emphasized that while no significant errors had occurred, inconsistencies and lack of quorum at meetings had occasionally diminished public trust. Kara believed that a hearings officer, especially a land use professional, would provide more regularity, transparency, and fairness in decision-making, helping to enhance the public's confidence in the process. He acknowledged the challenges of managing a volunteer commission and stressed that state laws often heavily govern land use decisions, making them complex to navigate.

Chandler explained that, with or without a hearings officer, the process would continue as usual. He noted that long Planning Commission meetings strain staff time and that quorum issues have led to meeting cancellations, negatively affecting the City's reputation. A hearings officer would address quorum concerns and help prevent overreach in planning decisions, ensuring legal compliance.

Wring expressed appreciation for the quick access the City Council had to the City Attorney, especially as a new Councilor. He suggested it would be beneficial to provide similar access to the Planning Commission, whether or not a hearings officer was appointed. If that wasn't possible, he recommended offering educational resources and reference materials. He

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acknowledged that it required a personal commitment to learn but emphasized that providing proactive support with foundational knowledge and access to outside counsel, particularly a land use attorney, would be a sound approach.

Kara clarified that, while he attended Planning Commission meetings and provided legal advice, he was not a land use specialist. He assured that the City had access to top land use professionals and the Commission received all necessary legal support. He stated that if a hearings officer were appointed, he would still attend those meetings, as the officer would need legal counsel due to their lack of local knowledge and potential gaps in understanding the City's code.

Wring asked what a meeting with a hearings officer would look like, both organizationally and in terms of scheduling. He noted that there was general agreement on having one Planning Commission meeting per month, but with the addition of a hearings officer, he wondered if meetings could be more frequent, while still being public.

Kara confirmed that hearings officer meetings would be public, scheduled as needed, and noticed a week in advance.

Chandler said that hearings officer meetings could be scheduled during off weeks from Planning Commission meetings. He suggested inviting the Wasco County Community Development Director to share their approach and whether they have flexibility or set times for hearings.

Howsley-Glover stated that they had debated whether to keep a consistent schedule for hearings, similar to Planning Commission meetings, held the first Tuesday of each month from 3 to 5. However, they had found an ad hoc schedule more effective, working directly with applicants and citizens to schedule cases as needed. This approach had been quicker, allowing applicants to avoid waiting months for a Planning Commission hearing. She noted that while consistency was an option, the ad hoc method had proven beneficial.

McGlothlin said that during his tenure as a council member, the two most common complaints he had heard were about potholes and Planning Commission bias. He expressed support for the proposed restructuring, which aimed to streamline the land use review process while maintaining transparency and public engagement, both of which were important to him. He agreed with the idea of having a land use expert as an intermediary for reviewing decisions but emphasized the need for the final step to involve the City Council, as elected officials should hold the ultimate decision-making responsibility.

Runyon asked if, once the hearings officer has made a decision, the applicant would acknowledge it and consider the process complete, meaning it would not then come before the City Council.

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Chandler explained that the process could include an option where the hearings officer made a decision, followed by an appeal period. If the City Council was the final decision-maker, the appeal would need to be submitted during that period. However, he clarified that this option was not used by Wasco County, where decisions still went back to the Board of County Commissioners.

Runyon said that the final question with a hearings officer should be whether the applicant was satisfied with the process or still wished to appeal to the City. He preferred this approach, as it allowed citizens the opportunity to come forward if they chose to. He also noted that it might save applicants money, as they would likely be hiring attorneys, and the process could reduce their legal costs.

Kara clarified the City Council's decision to explore this idea was highly customizable. The Council could choose to hear certain types of applications for final decisions or leave routine final decisions in the hands of a hearings officer.

Runyon said the idea of having a list of criteria to determine which items should come forward or not.

Randall said that the frequency of the meetings made sense and asked whether approval from the City Council would be needed to proceed or if a code would be required. He expressed support for the hearings officer concept, noting that the benefits seemed to outweigh the cons, and he was in favor of proceeding with those options.

Chandler said it would require a code amendment as well as an update to the bylaws.

Wring asked about the mix of professional land use developers versus non-professionals, like himself, who might find the process intimidating. He wondered how often individuals unfamiliar with city code, such as early learners, would feel the need to hire a lawyer when approaching a hearings officer.

Howsley-Glover explained that County staff had spent time preparing citizens for the process and suggested Chandler could develop materials to help applicants understand the process better. Citizens who had gone before the hearings officer found it easy and straightforward, with questions similar to those at the planning commission level. The process was perceived as less intimidating than the planning commission's large, interactive discussions.

Chandler thanked everyone for the conversation and expressed appreciation for the Planning Commission members, acknowledging their volunteer efforts in helping move the City forward.

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He also gave a special mention to Mark Poppoff, who had served on the Planning Commission for 25 years. He noted that there would likely be a council appointment item at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Submitted by/
Amie Ell, City Clerk

SIGNED:

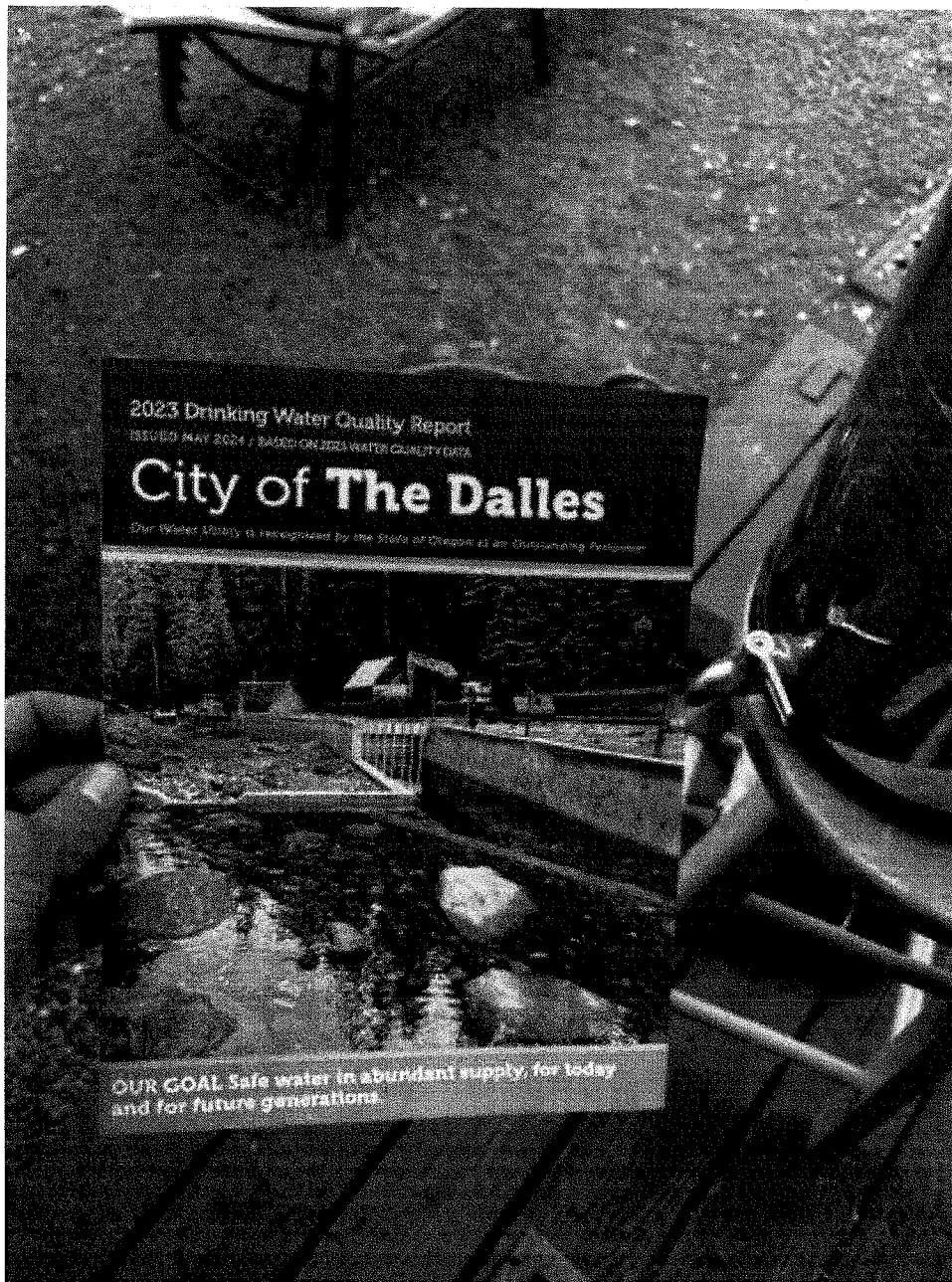


Richard A. Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:



Amie Ell, City Clerk



[Quoted text hidden]

Adam Rahmlow <adam.rahmlow@gmail.com>
 To: Matthew Klebes <mklebes@ci.the-dalles.or.us>
 Cc: Richard Mays <rmays@ci.the-dalles.or.us>

Thu, Jun 13, 2024 at 9:28 AM

Rich - I'd love to connect about water, and Beautification.

Context on the Water Issue:

I've been beating the drum about our city water for about 6 months now and have run into dead ends with the beautification committee and the city on how to address it. So, I will be resigning from BTC after we speak and hope to find an outlet to work on the city's water situation. It is much more dire than the email from Matt suggests and in my opinion, much more important work than another wind-sculpture installation, trees downtown, or any other non-substantive activity of beauty. Water quality should be a much higher priority for the city than what I've encountered, which currently seems apathetic on every level. This is potentially a more life-or-death issue than anything else your administration is working on. Please review the tragic case of Flint, Michigan to understand the criminal liability non-action exposes the city to and the horrible disease(s) that the city's residents have suffered and will likely continue to suffer for the rest of their lives as a result of apathy toward the water issue. It is a cautionary tale about what happens when municipalities blindly follow state and federal testing schematics to their doom.

Problem

Matthew, thank you for the follow-up. You'll have to forgive my candor when I say this is a rather dismissive response to the questions I have raised about our water. I am largely unsatisfied by the response "we are in compliance with State and Federal requirements... and have been recognized as an outstanding performer." Simply reasserting that claim does not address the issues raised. For the sake of clarity I have summarized the hereto unaddressed issues raised in my original email; aka major issues with our city water / testing scheme.

1. **The city does not have any data about the quality of drinking water *at the tap* for citizens in The Dalles.** This means the City and its residents do not know what contaminants are in their drinking water, but they are claiming it is safe. Again, claiming bureaucratic compliance doesn't change the fact that the testing is inadequate. We are both aware of legal considerations to testing, of course. Hopefully we all understand (including Dave Anderson) that **test results taken from the treatment facility do not equate to contaminant profile consumers get at their tap**, yes? Yet, this is exactly what the 2023 water quality report implies, and that is the second issue, hereto unaddressed.
2. **The Dalles Water Quality Report is grossly misleading citizens by highlighting tests from the treatment plant and omitting any information about contamination that exists between the plant and the consumer tap.** The 6-page report reads like a marketing document, selling our citizens on the idea of safe water, without nuance or an accurate SWOT. The report contains absolutely zero education around the need for second-source filtration. The report moves people further away from understanding water issues, and ultimately further away from attaining healthy and contaminant-free water.
4. **Local, state and federal testing schemes all miss a common-sense fact: that 'clean' city water becomes filthy, disease-laden, and yes, even poisonous, after travelling through hundreds of miles of old pipe!** So how can the city (or State, or EPA for that matter) claim our drinking water is 'outstanding' when testing at the consumer tap is wholly absent? That's like saying your hands are clean because you washed them last week. Gross! If you washed your hands this morning, then played in shit all day, how can you claim your hands are still clean? This metaphor summarizes the disgusting logic behind our water testing schemes, yet our city is presenting this logic as evidence for clean water.
3. **There are life-threatening consequences to this level of negligence and naivete.** In case you didn't read up on the history of Flint, linked above, two city officials were charged with involuntary manslaughter for their role in mismanaging the water crisis there and eight other officials (including the state's governor) were charged with 44 felony counts. This issue is dead-serious. "We are in compliance" isn't a satisfactory answer when it comes to a health issue as critical as drinking water.
4. **Testing: To summarize, here are some things, as an outstanding performer, we aren't testing (even at a treatment plant).**
 - Microplastics
 - Hormones & pharmaceuticals
 - PFAS - commonly known as 'forever chemicals'
 - UCMR 1 List 2: chemicals associated with pharmaceuticals (1,2-diphenylhydrazine and Nitrobenzene) These are MAJOR hormone disruptors, btw
 - Contaminants that are present in the hundreds (if not thousands?) of miles of city pipe - dating back to the turn of the century.

Yes, the situation is that bad. Yes, it is very possible tap water in The Dalles is poisonous. Yes, there is a lot of work to be done and this is a big issue. But we can do it.

Solutions

No one likes a Negative Nancy so here are some solutions which have already been proposed to Matt and the beautification committee:

1. **A public awareness campaign** for 'second source filtration' could help. Communicate the need and/or benefits of filtering city water at home. Re-work the City's 'drinking water quality report' to present a more nuanced and truthful perspective about our water - this is a massive opportunity to do right by our citizens and 'low-hanging fruit.'
2. **Organize and start testing at the consumer tap** - you don't know how bad it is until we get the data - so let's do that! It's relatively inexpensive and there are PLENTY of citizens who would help... I'm sure Jonathan would be able to help the city navigate any legal landmines.
3. **Form a citizen advisory committee for public works** - it is my understanding that there is no citizen oversight or involvement in our water system - or public works? Yikes!
4. **Ensure on-going water projects incorporate water are informed by data - including data from the tap** (The current project is mainly, to replace old mains - if I'm not mistaken). We should expand this effort to - at the very least - incorporate water-quality data from the tap, but ideally come up with a data-driven long-term plan for water like we are

doing for trees.

5. **Direct the Water Utility to start testing for all emerging contaminants on the UCMR schedule.** See email(s) below about state and federal guidance around 'emerging contaminants', please see which UCMR's are being tested or not. Just because the EPA and/or State do not require testing for hormones, microplastics, or PFAS, in our water doesn't mean we shouldn't be testing for them. Again, those tests are relatively inexpensive, and there is massive liability.

6. **Reduce the city's liability and protect citizen's health by actually taking this issue seriously:** take immediate action to ensure citizens aren't being poisoned by city water.

Please review these issues and ask yourself what can be done. I'm happy to help, and would much rather be involved in designing solutions than writing finger-waving emails. This issue needs to be addressed. Perhaps we can meet or chat to discuss next steps? I'm happy to chat about this issue and clarify any of the information presented here.

Thanks for your time Mayor Mays, and for the follow-up Matthew. I'll wait for your response and look forward to helping solve this critical health issue.

Sincerely,

Adam Rahmlow
262 271 0839

EMAIL SENT TO BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE earlier this Spring; presented to Matthew Klebes in March.

Hi All,

You may recall my foreshadow about water last meeting, here's a little update on one of our most beautiful resources. Aimee mentioned giving this update during the work session section on the agenda. It has some really important information for our friends, families and neighbors, so want this information in the minutes, at least.

Update about our beautiful city water from a conversation with Dave Anderson, Public Works Director, towards beautification:

Resources:

- The 2022 water Quality Report for the Dalles can be found here: https://www.thedalles.org/departments/public_works/public_works_divisions/water_quality_report.php
- The Oregon Health Authority publishes the full chemical test results - here is the link for The Dalles: <https://yourwater.oregon.gov/inventory.php?pwsno=00869>
- Here's a list of chemicals the system is required to sample which includes location and frequency
- The Dalles is compliant on all EPA/State Testing

Notes from my call with Dave Anderson.

- The Dalles is a member of Partnership for Safe Water (much like tree city USA for water) and complies with all EPA and state regulations for testing and water quality.
- The Dalles has electively tested for some of the "Emerging Contaminants" (UCMRs) tracked by the EPA, but not all. The email below from Gregg Baird explains what those are, but generally, include hormones, pharmaceuticals residue, PFAS, and Microplastics.
- See info from Gregg about which of the emerging contaminants (UCMRs) have been tested in The Dalles
- Our water has never been tested for microplastics and a range of other (by now) very well-known contaminants
- Testing occurs at the treatment center, not at the consumer tap for these contaminants and many others.
- The Dalles primarily uses surface water from S. Mill Creek and supplements with three wells during the summer

Insight

- No organized, (city, state, county, NGO, or otherwise) testing at the consumer-tap has ever been conducted in The Dalles for emerging contaminants nor most of the other EPA schedule of contaminants (to the best of my knowledge). Context: almost all other cities in Oregon are in the same boat - no one is testing for contaminants in household water.
- Many known sources of contaminants exist in the city and residential/consumer piping and transportation systems post-treatment; for example, copper, iron, and PEX (yes plastic) will all leach material into the water supply.
- We are not testing for any microplastics
- Fluoride exists naturally in our well water but is being added to our surface water
- The Public Works dept has no citizen advisory board;
- There is an inherent liability risk when testing water for the city - if they find a problem, they have to fix it :(
- Cities and municipalities can voluntarily test for any other contaminant and as frequently as they want, as long as EPA required testing on known contaminants still occurs and meets standards.

Hope this is insightful for folks. I don't have a call to action yet, but at the very least, I would like to raise awareness about this precious resource and call attention to potential threats.

Thanks for reading.

Excited to hear what you all have to say,

Adam

EMAIL from STATE of OREGON REGARDING UCMRs; sent/received sometime late Winter 2023

Hi Adam, regarding your questions about pharmaceuticals, testosterone/estradiol:

The contaminants that are regulated with MCLs are in our rules at the link Chantal sent to OAR 333-061-0030. If the contaminant you are interested in is not listed in this section, then it is not regulated with an MCL.

UCMR1:

Nationwide monitoring for unregulated contaminants including 2 chemicals associated with pharmaceuticals (1,2-diphenylhydrazine and Nitrobenzene) occurred during the first round of the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR1). A subset of 120 large PWS serving more than 10,000 people monitored for these contaminants (referred to as Screening Survey List 2 Contaminants) during a 12-month period from January 2001 through December 2003. UCMR1 results are publicly available on EPA's webpage [here](#).

- Although The Dalles monitored for UCMR1, they were not required to monitor for the Screening Survey List 2 Contaminants so no data for those 2 contaminants is available for this public water system from UCMR1.

UCMR3:

Nationwide monitoring for unregulated contaminants including 7 hormones occurred during the third round of the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR3). All community and non-transient non-community public water systems (PWSs) in serving more than 100,000 people, 320 representative PWSs serving 10,001 to 100,000 people, and 480 representative PWSs serving 10,000 or fewer people monitored for these 7 hormones (referred to as Screening Survey List 2 Contaminants) during a 12-month period from January 2013 through December 2015. UCMR3 results are publicly available on EPA's webpage [here](#).

- Although The Dalles monitored for UCMR3, they were not required to monitor for the Screening Survey List 2 Contaminants so no data for those 7 hormones is available for this public water system

from UCMR3.

UCMR4:

Nationwide monitoring for unregulated contaminants including 3 alcohols and 3 semi-volatile chemicals associated with pharmaceuticals, personal care products and food additives occurred during the fourth round of the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR4). All community and non-transient non-community PWS serving more than 10,000 people and a representative sample of 800 PWSs serving 10,000 or fewer people monitored for these contaminants (referred to as Assessment Monitoring - Additional Contaminants) during a 12-month period from January 2018 through December 2020. UCMR4 results are publicly available on EPA's webpage here.

- The Dalles monitored for these 6 chemicals in the finished water served by their groundwater wells (twice at each well), and the finished water served by their surface water source (4 times), and there were no detections.

UCMR5:

Nationwide monitoring for unregulated contaminants including lithium (a naturally occurring metal associated with pharmaceuticals) and 29 PFAS chemicals is occurring during the fifth round of the Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR5). All community and non-transient non-community PWS serving more than 3,300 people and a representative sample of 800 PWSs serving 3,300 or fewer people are monitoring for these contaminants during a 12-month period from January 2023 through December 2025. UCMR5 results (as of October 2023) are publicly available on EPA's webpage here.

- The Dalles detected lithium in the finished water served by all three wells in UCMR5 monitoring that occurred September 2023. The lithium results were 39.1 ug/L (EP-C: Jordan Well), 38.1 ug/L (EP-D: Marks Well), and 16.9 ug/L (EP-B: Lone Pine Well). These 3 wells are scheduled to be tested again in March 2024. Two of four scheduled samples have been collected from finished water served by The Dalles surface water source (EP-A: EP for South Fork Mill Creek) and all results have been non-detect.
- EPA has not established a health advisory level for lithium in drinking water. EPA is using a health reference level of 10 ug/L to compare UCMR5 results to which is based on a therapeutic dose (not a drinking water exposure). While these results exceed this health reference level, it is difficult to interpret the health risks, if any. See this link for more information on lithium from EPA: <https://www.epa.gov/dwucmr/fifth-unregulated-contaminant-monitoring-rule#lithium>.

Gregg Baird, REHS

Emerging Contaminants Specialist

OREGON HEALTH AUTHORITY

Public Health Division

Drinking Water Services

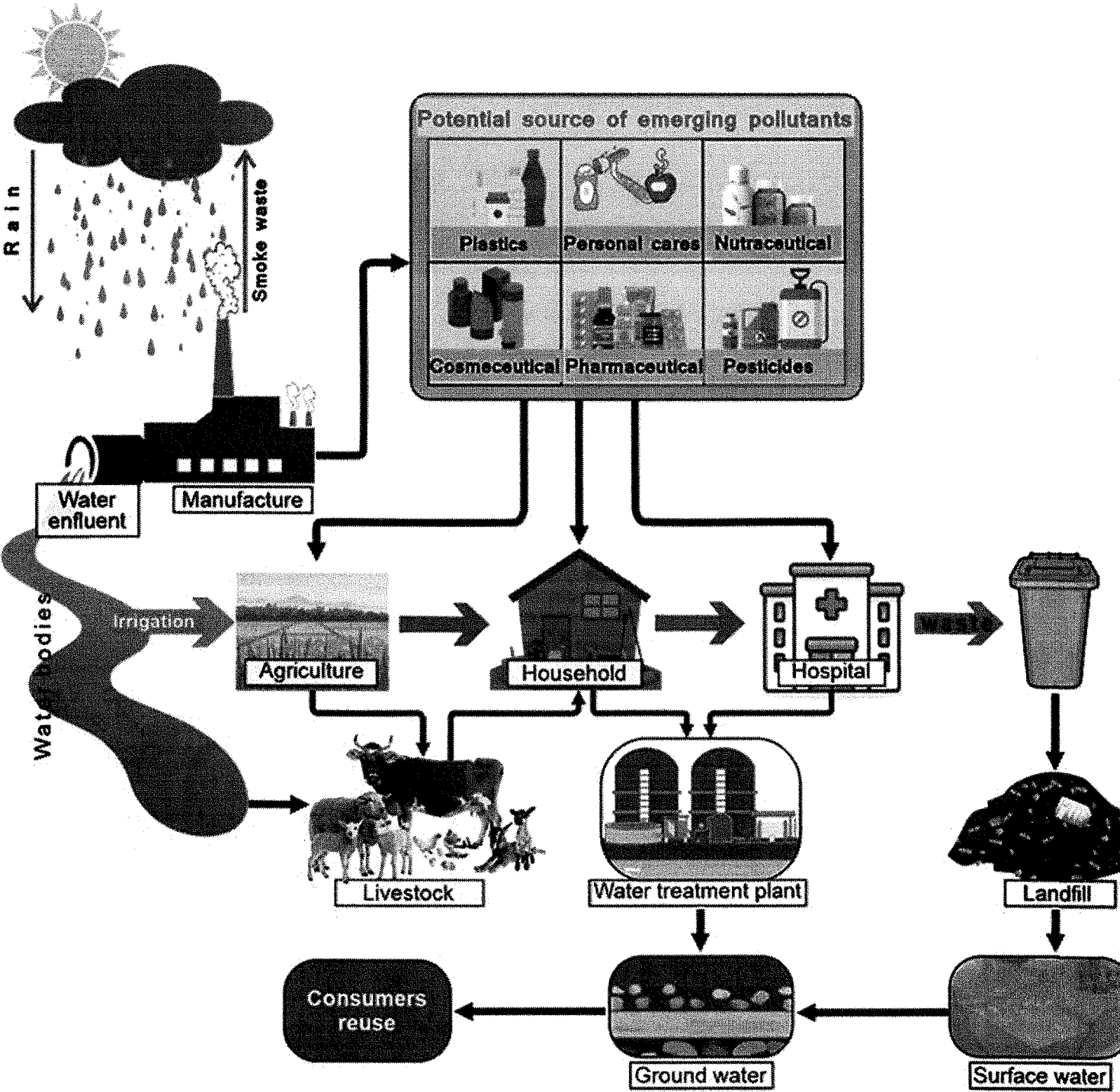
gregg.c.baird@oha.oregon.gov

Direct: 503-936-1657

Fax: 971-673-0694

www.healthoregon.org/dwp

[Quoted text hidden]



(541) 506-2008

Sent from my iPad

Adam Rahmlow <adam.rahmlow@gmail.com>

To: Dave Anderson <danderson@ci.the-dalles.or.us>

Cc: Matthew Klebes <mklebes@ci.the-dalles.or.us>, Richard Mays <rmays@ci.the-dalles.or.us>

Dear Dave, Matthew, and Mayor Mays,

I'm growing increasingly frustrated, not less, at the dancing around specific questions and issues raised. I would like direct and written answers to the questions I have raised. I have been patient thought these issues were going to be directly addressed. While I appreciate the time you all are now investing in the city's water quality, the response below is a great example of how little you even acknowledging or understanding the health related issue(s).

Please see the email sent on June 13th below, where specific questions were bolded and presented with concise detail. **Dave, this email does not address any of these specific issues;** not you, Matthew, or by you, Mayor Mays, despite a willingness to hear them. I have prepared an executive summary so you can address the actual questions, please. If you don't know the answers please admit it and we can get to work on solutions.

Questions and issues to be directly addressed:

1. Test results taken from the treatment facility do not equate to the contaminant profile consumers get at their tap, is this correct? Claiming bureaucratic compliance doesn't change if inadequate and the city does not really know what contaminants are present at the tap - please address this elephant in the room.

2. The Dalles Water Quality Report is grossly misleading citizens by highlighting tests from the treatment plant and omitting any information about contamination that exists between consumer tap. What is the actual water quality report and contaminant profile for water the citizens are drinking at the tap? And I'm not talking about copper and lead from 10 households.

3. Local, state and federal testing schemes all miss a common-sense fact: that 'clean' city water becomes filthy, disease-laden, and yes, even poisonous, after travelling through pipe! So how can the city (or State, or EPA for that matter) claim our drinking water is 'outstanding' when testing at the consumer tap is wholly absent? What contaminants are in those pipes?

4. Testing: To summarize, here are some things, as an outstanding performer, we aren't testing (even at a treatment plant). Can we still claim tap water in The Dalles is safe to drink?

- Microplastics
- Hormones & pharmaceuticals
- PFAS - commonly known as 'forever chemicals'
- UCMR 1 List 2: chemicals associated with pharmaceuticals (1,2-diphenylhydrazine and Nitrobenzene) These are MAJOR hormone disruptors, btw
- Contaminants that are present in the hundreds (if not thousands?) of miles of city pipe including excess iron, heavy metals and legionella.

5. I have also repeatedly asked for a visual inspection of an old pipe. Where can citizens see the city pipes their water travels through? Not hand-picked new line, but old pipe, the same planning to replace. Pipe that exists between the treatment facility where all of your testing is done and the consumer tap, which is where all of The Dalles residents get their drinking water. Testing in 10 households a year is a laughable sample size and a fundamentally unserious claim to 'testing at the tap,' especially because it only tests for lead and copper - as if those are the only two matters.

These questions are almost verbatim from a summary sent in June. I'd like them to be directly addressed please.

To clarify my suggestion, it is not to test at the tap, it is to, firstly, STOP claiming that the water residents are getting at their tap has the same contaminant profile as your tests at the treatment facility. It is common of a common sense solution. Stop misleading residents about the quality of their water. Be honest. If you wanted to go above and beyond and the city lacks any regulatory power, the public works citizen advisory board would be happy to help collect the data, especially given the very old state of pipes and upcoming investment(s). An advisory committee could gather much more information... much more than an average of 10 homes/year for just 2/50+ contaminants!

The water bill is one of the citizen's largest city expenses, if the City can not guarantee water is remaining contaminant free as it travels from treatment facility to households across the city, then before making a massive investment in the same system. Please don't shirk from the enormity of the problem. This is a matter of life and death for many citizens; much more consequential than the expenditures demanding your time today.

As Mayor Mays said in our discussion "delivering quality water is arguably the #1 job of a local municipality." I took the time to identify some basic solutions the City could consider to move forward and re-posted them just below. The original email is below that and contains my initial summary, sent June 13th, verbatim. I ask that you put your frustration at me (or the contents of this email) approaching this problem, and do the right thing. I look forward to your direct response.

Sincerely,
Adam Rahmlow

1. **A public awareness campaign** for 'second source filtration' could help. Communicate the need and/or benefits of filtering city water at home. Re-work the City's 'drinking water quality report' to provide a nuanced and truthful perspective about our water - this is a massive opportunity to do right by our citizens and 'low-hanging fruit.'
2. **Organize and start testing at the consumer tap** - you don't know how bad it is until we get the data - so let's do that! It's relatively inexpensive and there are PLENTY of citizens who would be able to help the city navigate any legal landmines.
3. **Form a citizen advisory committee for public works** - it is my understanding that there is no citizen oversight or involvement in our water system - or public works? Yikes! Even an ad-hoc plan would work.
4. **Ensure on-going water projects are informed by data - including data from the tap** (The current project is mainly, to replace old mains - if I'm not mistaken). We should expand this effort to incorporate water-quality data from the tap, but ideally come up with a data-driven long-term plan for water like we are doing for trees.
5. **Direct the Water Utility to start testing for all emerging contaminants on the UCMR schedule.** See email(s) below about state and federal guidance around 'emerging contaminants', which are being tested or not. Just because the EPA and/or State do not require testing for hormones, microplastics, or PFAS, in our water doesn't mean we shouldn't be testing for them. Again, this is inexpensive, and there is massive liability. There is no reason we can not do this.
6. **Reduce the city's liability and protect citizen's health by actually taking this issue seriously:** take immediate action to ensure citizens aren't being poisoned by city water. Contend with these issues directly.



Adam Rahmlow <adam.rahmlow@gmail.com>

to Matthew, Richard

Thu, Jun 13,

10:28AM



Adam Rahmlow <adam.rahmlow@gmail.com>

Water quality questions

2 messages

Dave Anderson <danderson@ci.the-dalles.or.us>
To: "adam.rahmlow@gmail.com" <adam.rahmlow@gmail.com>
Cc: Matthew Klebes <mklebes@ci.the-dalles.or.us>

Wed, Aug 14, 2024 at 9:12 AM

Mr. Rahmlow-

Your water quality inquiries to the City Manager have been forwarded to me. You may recall that we talked by phone for nearly an hour a few months ago on many of these same topics. With this email, I will attempt to respond to your subsequent questions.

First and foremost, I want to reiterate that public drinking water standards in the US are established by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), not the Environmental Working Group (EWG) which you have referenced. In Oregon, the state usually adopts and enforces these drinking water regulations; there are some regulations that EPA directly enforces on public water utilities. EPA drinking water regulations are established based upon contaminant occurrence and health affects data, and they can change over time as better data becomes available.

You stated that I said I "was not informed on water-quality related health issues". Your statement lacks the context of our discussion. In our telephone conversation, you were asking about the feasibility of a water utility setting its own water quality standards that are stricter than EPA standards. I was explaining that a local water utility does not have the expertise or resources to establish new reliable analytical methods where they do not exist, or to set its own health-based standards which requires extensive population-level epidemiological research. With that said, the City is a member of the Partnership for Safe Water which is a program that voluntarily adopts water quality standards for turbidity at its treatment plant that are more stringent than EPA rules require.

You have mentioned the legal liabilities of water utilities and their employees and decision makers for failure to meet drinking water standards, and cited the issues in Flint, Michigan as an example that EPA regulations are not sufficient to protect public health. The Flint public health crisis is not an example of failure of a water quality standard but rather a failure of a public water utility to meet the standard. Flint's water utility was not in compliance with the Lead and Copper Rule when it supplied water to its customers with elevated lead levels. The Flint failure is also an example of what can happen when public utility decisions are made by well-meaning people who are not knowledgeable in water utility operations and issues. Flint made a decision discontinue its water supply from the City of Detroit which was in compliance with drinking water regulations, and failed to provide effective corrosion control to its new water source which resulted in elevated lead levels from the lead water pipelines in its system.

You have suggested that the City should conduct water quality sampling at customers taps and incorrectly alleged that the City only monitors water quality as it leaves the treatment plant. We discussed this extensively when we spoke on the phone. Water utilities do not have authority or jurisdiction to conduct its water sampling at the tap **except** as it relates to the Lead and Copper Rule (LCR). The LCR was promulgated in the early 1990s. It required water utilities to control corrosion in piping systems so that lead and copper wasn't leached into water supplies. Utilities had to identify homes and buildings that had a source of lead in its water supply piping and then conduct tap sampling in those homes. The City sampled water in at least 60 homes, at the tap after the water had stood unused for at least 6 hours, every year for three years. Because of the success of the City's corrosion control program and all test results being within standards, monitoring was reduced to 30 homes every three years and continues to this day.

All other water quality sampling to operate the water system must be conducted within the City's water supply and distribution systems where it has jurisdiction. As part of its normal operations and in compliance with drinking water regulations, the City collects water samples from throughout the distribution system every week. These samples are analyzed for bacteriological and chemical parameters to ensure continued compliance with drinking water regulations. Weekly test parameters include coliform bacteria, pH, free and total chlorine residual, turbidity, phosphates, calcium, alkalinity, hardness, iron, and fluoride. Any time test results indicate the beginning of water stagnation, the affected part of the system is flushed to maintain water freshness. Monitoring for disinfection byproducts occurs quarterly from established stations in the distribution system that represent maximum water residence time. All test results remain within regulatory limits. The entire water distribution system is flushed annually to remove accumulated sediments, much of which comes from naturally occurring minerals in the City's well water sources.

Lastly, you have raised the issue of point-of-use filtration systems. The City does not recommend the general use of home filtration systems because the water supplied to our customers is of excellent quality that meets and exceeds water state and federal water quality standards. Conversely, the City also does not actively discourage the use of private filtration systems for those who want to use them, but cautions that they must be properly maintained so that they don't actually degrade water quality. There have been instances where unmaintained devices actually become the source of disease. For most people, it is an unnecessary expense. Consumers who are immunocompromised may get some peace of mind from the perception of an added level of protection from a NSF-approved point-of-use filtration system; others may want to remove the chlorine taste. Both are valid reasons for point-of-use filtration devices.

I hope that this information is useful.

Dave Anderson
Public Works Director
City of The Dalles
1215 W 1st Street
The Dalles, OR 97058

Rich - I'd love to connect about water, and Beautification.

Context on the Water Issue:

I've been beating the drum about our city water for about 6 months now and have run into dead ends with the beautification committee and the city on how to address it. So, I will be resigning and hope to find an outlet to work on the city's water situation. It is much more dire than the email from Matt suggests and in my opinion, much more important work than another wind-sculptu downtown, or any other non-substantive activity of beauty. Water quality should be a much higher priority for the city than what I've encountered, which currently seems apathetic on every level more life-or-death issue than anything else your administration is working on. Please review the tragic case of Flint, Michigan to understand the criminal liability non-action exposes the city to disease(s) that the city's residents have suffered and will likely continue to suffer for the rest of their lives as a result of apathy toward the water issue. It is a cautionary tale about what happens if you blindly follow state and federal testing schematics to their doom.

Problem

Matthew, thank you for the follow-up. You'll have to forgive my candor when I say this is a rather dismissive response to the questions I have raised about our water. I am largely unsatisfied with compliance with State and Federal requirements... and have been recognized as an outstanding performer." Simply reasserting that claim does not address the issues raised. For the sake of the hereto unaddressed issues raised in my original email, aka major issues with our city water / testing scheme.

1. **The city does not have any data about the quality of drinking water *at the tap* for citizens in The Dalles.** This means the City and its residents do not know what contaminants are in their water, and they are claiming it is safe. Again, claiming bureaucratic compliance doesn't change the fact that the testing is inadequate. We are both aware of legal considerations to testing, of course. He (including Dave Anderson) that **test results taken from the treatment facility do not equate to contaminant profile consumers get at their tap**, yes? Yet, this is exactly what the 2023 water quality report says, and that is the second issue, hereto unaddressed.

2. **The Dalles Water Quality Report is grossly misleading citizens by highlighting tests from the treatment plant and omitting any information about contamination that exists between the treatment plant and the consumer tap.** The 6-page report reads like a marketing document, selling our citizens on the idea of safe water, without nuance or an accurate SWOT. The report contains absolutely zero information about second-source filtration. The report moves people further away from understanding water issues, and ultimately further away from attaining healthy and contaminant-free water.

4. **Local, state and federal testing schemes all miss a common-sense fact: that 'clean' city water becomes filthy, disease-laden, and yes, even poisonous, after travelling through the distribution system.** So how can the city (or State, or EPA for that matter) claim our drinking water is 'outstanding' when testing at the consumer tap is wholly absent? That's like saying your hands are clean after you wash them last week. Gross! This metaphor summarizes the disgusting logic behind our water testing schemes, yet our city is presenting this logic as evidence for clean water.

3. **There are life-threatening consequences to this level of negligence and naivete.** In case you didn't read up on the history of Flint, linked above, two city officials were charged with their role in mismanaging the water crisis there and eight other officials (including the state's governor) were charged with 44 felony counts. This issue is dead-serious. "We are in compliance with all regulations" is a meaningless answer when it comes to a health issue as critical as drinking water.

4. **Testing: To summarize, here are some things, as an outstanding performer, we aren't testing (even at a treatment plant).**

- Microplastics
- Hormones & pharmaceuticals
- PFAS - commonly known as 'forever chemicals'
- UCMR 1 List 2: chemicals associated with pharmaceuticals (1,2-diphenylhydrazine and Nitrobenzene) These are MAJOR hormone disruptors, btw
- Contaminants that are present in the hundreds (if not thousands?) of miles of city pipe - dating back to the turn of the century.

Yes, the situation is that bad. Yes, it is very possible tap water in The Dalles is poisonous. Yes, there is a lot of work to be done and this is a big issue. But we can do it.

Solutions

No one likes a Negative Nancy so here are some solutions which have already been proposed to Matt and the beautification committee:

1. **A public awareness campaign** for 'second source filtration' could help. Communicate the need and/or benefits of filtering city water at home. Re-work the City's 'drinking water quality report' to provide a nuanced and truthful perspective about our water - this is a massive opportunity to do right by our citizens and 'low-hanging fruit.'
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6. **Reduce the city's liability and protect citizen's health by actually taking this issue seriously:** take immediate action to ensure citizens aren't being poisoned by city water.

Please review these issues and ask yourself what can be done. I'm happy to help, and would much rather be involved in designing solutions than writing finger-waving emails. This issue needs to be addressed. Perhaps we can meet or chat to discuss next steps? I'm happy to chat about this issue and clarify any of the information presented here.

Thanks for your time Mayor Mays, and for the follow-up Matthew. I'll wait for your response and look forward to helping solve this critical health issue.

Sincerely,

Adam Rahmlow
262 271 0839

EMAIL SENT TO BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE earlier this Spring; presented to Matthew Klebes in March.

Hi All,

You may recall my foreshadow about water last meeting, here's a little update on one of our most beautiful resources. Aimee mentioned giving this update during the work session section on really important information for our friends, families and neighbors, so want this information in the minutes, at least.

Update about our beautiful city water from a conversation with Dave Anderson, Public Works Director, towards beautification:

Resources:

- The 2022 water Quality Report for the Dalles can be found here: https://www.thedalles.org/departments/public_works/public_works_divisions/water_quality_report.php
- The Oregon Health Authority publishes the full chemical test results - here is the link for The Dalles: <https://yourwater.oregon.gov/inventory.php?pwsno=00869>
- Here's a list of chemicals the system is required to sample which includes location and frequency
- The Dalles is compliant on all EPA/State Testing

Notes from my call with Dave Anderson.

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- Many known sources of contaminants exist in the city and residential/consumer piping and transportation systems post-treatment; for example, copper, iron, and PEX (yes plastic) within the water supply.
- We are not testing for any microplastics
- Fluoride exists naturally in our well water but is being added to our surface water
- The Public Works dept has no citizen advisory board;
- There is an inherent liability risk when testing water for the city - if they find a problem, they have to fix it :(
- Cities and municipalities can voluntarily test for any other contaminant and as frequently as they want, as long as EPA required testing on known contaminants still occurs and meets

Hope this is insightful for folks. I don't have a call to action yet, but at the very least, I would like to raise awareness about this precious resource and call attention to potential threats.

Thanks for reading.

Excited to hear what you all have to say,

Adam

[Quoted text hidden]

Good evening, esteemed members of the City Council. Thank you for addressing a critical issue for The Dalles: the quality of our drinking water. Safe water is the backbone of our health, economy, and environment. Yet, emerging contaminants like PFAS (linked to cancer and immune disorders), pharmaceuticals (disrupting hormones), microplastics (carrying toxins), and excess fluoride (risking neurological and skeletal harm especially in our infants and children) threaten our community. The Dalles does not participate in UCMR testing, leaving us without data on these unregulated pollutants, unlike nearby cities like Portland. Add to this cyanobacteria blooms in the headwaters on Mt. Hood, which can produce toxins, and aging water infrastructure that risks lead and microplastic contamination. These issues strain healthcare, erode trust, and harm our ecosystem. Solutions like advanced testing (mass spectrometry), treatment (reverse osmosis, activated carbon), and policies (UCMR participation, water quality infrastructure upgrades and education) can protect us. By acting now, we ensure safe water and a thriving future for The Dalles.

Local Context: References The Dalles' lack of UCMR testing and contrasts it with Portland's proactive approach, grounding the issue locally.

- Specific Contaminants:
 - PFAS: "Forever chemicals" from firefighting foam and consumer products, linked to cancer and immune issues.
 - Pharmaceuticals: Residues from medications in wastewater, disrupting endocrine systems.
 - Microplastics: Tiny plastics carrying toxins like BPA, found in 93% of bottled water.
 - Fluoride: Added for dental health but linked to cognitive impairment at high levels (e.g., 2019 JAMA Pediatrics study).
- Other Relevant Issues:
 - Cyanobacteria: Algal blooms in the Columbia River, a potential source for The Dalles, can produce cyanotoxins harmful to the liver and nervous system.
 - Aging Infrastructure: Old pipes risk lead leaching, especially in a historic city like The Dalles, posing neurological risks, particularly to children.
- UCMR Testing Gap:
 - The Dalles, as a smaller system (serving ~15,000), is not required to participate in UCMR 5 (2023–2025), which monitors 29 PFAS and lithium. Larger systems like Portland and Hillsboro conduct this testing.
 - Lack of UCMR data leaves The Dalles vulnerable to undetected contaminants, limiting informed decision-making.
- Impact Statements:

- Health risks (cancer, hormonal disruption, neurological harm) emphasize human stakes.
- Broader impacts (healthcare costs, public distrust, ecosystem damage) highlight urgency.
- Local framing (Columbia River, infrastructure) ties issues to The Dalles.
- Specific Solutions:
 - Advanced Testing: Liquid chromatography-mass spectrometry detects trace PFAS and pharmaceuticals.
 - Treatment Technologies: Granular activated carbon and reverse osmosis remove PFAS, microplastics, and pharmaceuticals.
 - Policies: Join UCMR voluntarily, Correct Water Quality Report and educate residents on water quality and second source filtration, fund water-quality infrastructure upgrades – re-consider plastic tubing.