

## GRANGER CITY COUNCIL

June 27, 2023,  
7:00 p.m.

City Hall  
102 Main Street

### MINUTES

#### CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Hilda Gonzalez called the meeting of June 27, 2023, to order at 7:00 p.m.

#### FLAG SALUTE

Mayor Pro Tem led everyone in the flag salute.

#### COUNCIL AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT

Mayor Jose Trevino - Absent	Steve Araguz, Police Chief
Susie Munoz	Frank Tijerina, Interim. Public Works Director
Ryan Stonemetz -Absent	Kimberly Grimm, Clerk-Treasurer
Juan Isiordia	Terry Carter, Fire Chief-Absent
Hilda Gonzalez	
Israel Bustamante	

#### AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

**Silvia Zarate** – My name is Silvia Zarate. My address is 313 D St Granger, WA 98932. I am here because I was asked by several residents of Granger to be here on their behalf. I also have some concerns as well about our last meeting that we had on June 13<sup>th</sup> I believe. We had asked about the situation with the water rate increase. I know that is something that was talked about in the last meeting on May 9<sup>th</sup>. But the group of people that came on June 13<sup>th</sup> are a whole new group of people not the same ones that came on May 9<sup>th</sup>. They just wanted to let the community know that they felt disrespected, they felt not heard when the mayor walked out. I honestly felt disrespected as well because I was being honest about what was going on and I didn't hear a response. So, we also have concerns about the city's income and expenses. We um sent a letter to the mayor which maybe you have seen already. Asking for clarification on the main street project but he has not responded yet. We did give him a deadline so we hope that we can get some answers. We are also. Several of the members of granger would like the status of this project and what are the final cost figures of this project. The transportation board lists the cost to complete as \$1,268,144. Of which the city of granger is required to contribute \$206,705. Of which granger already paid \$56,182 in 2022, however on May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, the HLA Project Engineer recommended the project be awarded to Tri Valley Construction. Which came in as \$1,046,684. What is the city's required contribution? And where are these funds coming from? Is this the reason for the high increase in water rates to cover the city's required contribution? If so, is there not alternative sources of funding or grants that the city could seek to lessen the residents burden? We just want to make the city council aware that we are aware of other new projects being undertaken or currently in the process such as the railroad and Sunnyside water replacement such as over here in dean ave. A water improvement project. We want to know how much the city has been contributing to these projects and what is the source of this contribution. These are all valid questions that I think that the city council should answer the people. I am just here like I said on behalf of the residents right now its cherry season and a lot of people work and have long hours. I just want you guys to take into consideration that I am here by myself because of that situation. Thank you.

**Ryan Stonemetz** – My name is Ryan Stonemetz I live at 312 E Ave at Granger WA, and I am the guy that owns the business where the flea market is and various other things over there. And um I'm here

today not only as a community member but also as a business owner. And trying to resolve an issue. And the issue I have has always been that for 6 years my conditional use permit.

Councilman Isiordia asks to stop him there: I believe that this same issue has come up. Although not with you, with other people that are business owners and that don't let us speak as business owners. You have to have someone come in in your position to speak. And I think That's the rule.

Ryan: oh, this is aside from my conditional use.

Councilman Isiordia: but you're talking about your conditional use permit? And I think that someone needs to come and talk to you. That's the way it worked for us.

Ryan: unless you have documentation from your lawyer that's not the way it's going to work today.

Councilman Isiordia: the lawyer is closed today.

Ryan: I am trying to tell you that that is not the way that it is going to work today. I am explaining to you that I am going to be very direct about what I am doing. Because there has been a misperception out there. There has been false statements out there that concern me. As a community member and as a business member toward this conditional use permit that I have not done this, and I have not done that.

Councilman Isiordia: that is something that needs to be addressed with city staff.

Pro Tem Mayor Gonzalez: Councilman Isiordia as a community member as a business member Mr. Stonemetz is allowed to address his comments and concerns which is what he's doing and again there is a time limit so please.

Ryan: well if I wouldn't be interrupted I would be done already.

Councilman Isiordia: okay I will give you your minute back.

Ryan: So, I just want to be very direct on what I am doing and clear a lot of things up. Also, I don't want to have a miscommunication with council and so fourth. my conditional use had to be approved by city council which it was. And the conditions could also be improved. Where the complaint comes from is. I have an issue here. We have a mayor here, mayor Trevino that likes to take power to a different level than what is done in most cities right. And so basically what I have prepared for you is an email that I have emailed to your council is a packet that shows a packet that shows I received a letter from him. I submitted it to him on the 24<sup>th</sup> of April and he did not respond until June 14<sup>th</sup>. Two months later, within 7 days I re-responded to him. So that you as council members can see that and understand that because that is public knowledge that you can get that information and see for yourself. Now the issue that I was run into is that stuff needs to be approved but people unfortunately this is where I come in as a business owner. Are being put and employees are being put in a position where they have to choose. And that choice is not good. I feel as a community member and business member I have never done that to my employees. And that is what has stopped the progression of what is going on with what I am doing there, and I am clearing that up so basically I wrote earlier that I am recusing myself, which I did, and I am going to present a copy of my book which I did. With the corrections showing those various things done from start to finish and clear what misperception is out there is not true and 2. 3 I am addressing issues that I have received letters that 1. I applied for an alcohol permit and the police chief wrote a letter to the alcohol board that is my understanding that was not from him. That was written and asked to be sent from him. I received tickets. 1 ticket from mike for the flea market because I was in the hospital the Tuesday I had to pay my \$5 per vendor. The very next week I showed up he gave me a \$1000 ticket and he goes "I looked up and down and says I have no choice my boss which is the mayor told me I have to give you this ticket." I look at ALL the conditions and if you look under exemptions you will see that if you buy wholesale, retail fruit grown local Yakima County you are exempt from paying the \$5 per vendor. There will be a request for that \$5 per vendor returned to me for 2022 and 2023 which will become in the sum of probably twelve thousand dollars.

Pro Tem Mayor Gonzalez: Mr. Stonemetz if you could please wrap it up.

Ryan: So anyway, those are also sent to you because what I would like is for you to have an investigation done internally by the council looking into this if employees were asked to write these

illegal tickets. I received 2 of them. One of them is addressed in his letter that he sent to me on June 14<sup>th</sup>, the mayor. Saying that he will recuse.

Councilman Isiordia: I am going to stop you; your time is there. It has been your 3 minutes. And you also have an employee here.

Ryan: no, I don't.

Councilman Isiordia: he works for you.

Ryan: He's never received a paycheck from me.

Councilman Isiordia: Councilman Bustamante, wasn't it you that told me that you were being paid by him in cash?

Councilman Bustamante: I don't work for him.

Pro Tem Mayor Gonzalez: Councilman Isiordia

Councilman Isiordia: and then,

Pro Tem Mayor Gonzalez: Councilman Isiordia

Councilman Isiordia: yes I am sorry I just have to address somethings. You can not come and bash someone.

Ryan: I am not bashing anyone I am asking for an internal investigation and if that does happen and they do find truth to it I would like to propose to the council to vote for the lack of confidence right and set a standard that employees not be held in a standard that is uncomfortable.

Pro Tem Mayor Gonzalez: Mr. Stonemetz thank you for expressing your concerns and your comments to the council. Bring our attention and awareness to the issues that you are experiencing. I would like to advise you that the open public meetings act is something that we have to abide by as elected officials and any type of correspondence shared between and amongst us cannot be corresponded to. So, your request for us to be able to respond to your email. Unfortunately, we cannot do that.

Ryan: oh, there is no response to my email.

Pro Tem Mayor Gonzalez: I know and because of the open public meeting act we would be violating that if we have to. I would also advise you to continue if you have already sought out legal guidance and follow through with any issues, those issues to the attention of your legal advice.

Ryan: I have brought that to the city and the city has spent probably an excess of forty thousand dollars trying to put off/shade and prolong approval of anything and everything.

Pro Tem Mayor Gonzalez: so, I will also advise you that as council members we are not authorized to conduct any business on behalf of this city. We are individuals of recommended bodies. And we can recommend to the mayor how to possibly facilitate the work and the business of the city however we are not authorized in any way to supervise city staff or anything like that. So, these issues of concern we are made aware of that but our duty to us from the public is to ensure that the city follows the policies and rules and regulations. So, if there is any violations of those rules and regulations then you can provide a packet in writing to us through the city. So, the city can then provide it to us for review. We cannot conduct business in this manner where we have to respond to your internal investigation.

Ryan: does the council have a response to the protection of its employees.

Pro Tem Mayor Gonzalez: the employees of this city are protected employees already because they are part of a union. Union protected employees so if there are any allegations that employees are being harassed or threatened in any way then I would recommend that there be a conversation with the chief, the city staff, and the mayor together so that those allegations and concerns are brought to the attention of and remedied in a legal manner. We don't have any legal authority to conduct any type of authorizations to do a vote of no confidence on the mayor. We have a duty of making recommendations for the business of the city. The mayor has to report to somebody above us.

Ryan: and who would that be?

Pro Tem Mayor Gonzalez: that is a really great question. Unfortunately, I don't know.

Councilman Isiordia: the state probably

Ryan: that's the ongoing problem. I understand That as the city council that you can facilitate and intervene on issues that become detrimental in a legal aspect to the city.

Pro Tem Mayor Gonzalez: yes and I agree we can make recommendations.

Ryan: that is why that was brought up is because the position of what is happening is going to be detrimental, the legality sense for the city of granger. That the council should be very aware of that if stuff continues its only going to fester into a bigger problem.

Pro Tem Mayor Gonzalez: and as I mentioned you need to move forward with your concerns under your legal guidance so you can bring those concerns to the city.

Ryan: I just did

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **City Hall**

*None.*

### **Public Works**

*None*

### **Fire Dept**

*None.*

## **MINUTES**

It was moved by Councilmember Munoz to approve the minutes of June 13, 2023, as presented.

Motion was seconded by Councilmember Bustamante seconded.

**MOTION CARRIED 3-0**

## **BILLS**

It was moved by Councilmember Isiordia to pay the bills of June 27, 2023, in the amount of \$36,558.42

Motion was seconded by Councilmember Munoz.

**MOTION CARRIED 3-0**

**Fund Totals 06/27/2023.**

C/E	\$ 12,787.26
Parks & Rec	\$
STREETS	\$ 1,203.08
CRIMINAL JUSTICE	\$ 10,774.93
Fed Housing Rehab Grant	\$
Crime Prevention	\$ 68.42
Festival/Float Fund	\$ 169.28
Bell Memorial Fund	\$ 466.35
EMS FIRE TRAUMA	\$ 46.79
PUBLIC SAFETY	\$
WATER	\$ 1672.38
SEWER	\$ 828.39
GARBAGE	\$ 8160.98
Consumer Deposit Refund	\$
IRRIGATION	\$ 380.56
Court Bound Fund	\$
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 36,558.42</b>

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**COUNCIL**

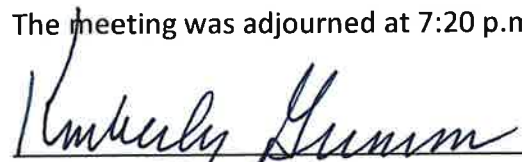
**Mayor**

**ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved by Councilmember Isiordia to adjourn the meeting. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Bustamante.

**MOTION CARRIED 3-0**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

  
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Kimberly Grimm, Clerk-Treasurer

  
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Hilda Gonzalez, Mayor Pro Tem