

**City of Rainier  
Regular City Council Meeting  
January 10, 2022  
6 p.m.  
Rainier City Hall**

Mayor Jerry Cole called the Regular Council Meeting to order at 6 p.m.

**Council Present:** Connie Budge, Scott Cooper, Robert duPlessis, Jeremy Howell, Mike Kreger and Levi Richardson

**Council Absent:** Jenna Weaver

**City Attorney Present:** No

**City Staff Present:** Sarah Blodgett, City Recorder; Gregg Griffith, Police Chief; W. Scott Jorgensen, City Administrator; Sue Lawrence, Public Works Director

**Flag Salute**

**OPEN PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING NUISANCE HOUSE AT 313 WEST 7TH STREET – ACCEPT PUBLIC COMMENT – CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING**

Mayor Jerry Cole opened the public hearing at 6:01 p.m. He read an email into the record that had been submitted by Kathy Meier. She was unable to attend the hearing in person. Meier lives on West 8<sup>th</sup> Street and has observed many people coming and going from the property over the years and many disabled vehicles, furniture and garbage spread throughout it. The house on the property was eventually made uninhabitable but the eyesore remains. She's not proud of the disarray on the property and feels it's a nuisance for the community. City Administrator W. Scott Jorgensen said the property had been scheduled for a sheriff's office auction January 5. He called the sheriff's office that afternoon and was told that the attorneys representing the bank that owns the property requested that the same be postponed until February 9. Council President Mike Kreger said the property has been discussed by council for years. The nuisance is an issue and the city needs to be diligent in resolving it. Councilor Scott Cooper agreed. Cole concurred and said the property is a blight on the area. Cole closed the hearing at 6:05 p.m. Kreger moved to declare the property a nuisance. That motion was seconded by Cooper and adopted unanimously.

**Additions/Deletions from the Agenda:** There were no additions or deletions to the agenda at this time.

**Mayor's Address:** Cole wished everyone a Happy New Year. He commended the public works staff for doing its due diligence during the recent heavy rains. There's potential for flooding, but the city was prepared and is working on a long-term fix. Staffing was low at the police department over Christmas break, but the city's officers did well.

**Visitor Comments:** Dave Davies from David Evans and Associates said he was the project manager for the A Street Project. It was nominated for an American Public Works Association award and got first place in Oregon. A Street is now much safer. Davies praised Public Works Director Sue Lawrence for her work on the project and said she's a good asset for the city. Davies presented the award to Cole and the council. Cole said it was a great honor. Mark Whiteley said he's concerned about speeding on A Street and suggests that there be speed bumps or additional signage.

### **Consider Approval of the Consent Agenda**

Consider Approval of the December 6, 2021 Regular Council Meeting Minutes—Kreger moved to approve the consent agenda. That motion was seconded by Councilor Robert duPlessis and adopted unanimously.

### **New Business**

- a. Adoption of Columbia County Hazard Mitigation Plan—Columbia County Emergency Management Director Chris Carey said the plan is updated every five years by the county and local communities. Cole asked if there were any major changes to the plan since it was last adopted. Carey said the hazards tend to stay the same. Councilor Connie Budge asked if the geohazard and slide problems on the east and west side of town are included in the plan. Carey said that slips and slides are things that the county and city need to adapt to. Once they reach a certain magnitude and there's damage, that can be aggregated and the county can make an ask for federal mitigation funds. As long as those issues are acknowledged in the plan, the county can request the funding to build back with more resilience to mitigate the hazard. Jorgensen said that once the Fox Creek Feasibility Study is complete, the City can apply for flood mitigation funding through the Oregon Office of Emergency Management or the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Cooper moved to adopt the plan. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously.
- b. Appointment of Candace Forrest to the REDCO Budget Committee—Cole said he recommended that Forrest be appointed to the position. Budge asked if the appointment should take place at a REDCO board meeting. Cole said the mayor and council have traditionally done appointments to the REDCO Budget Committee. Cooper moved to approve the appointment. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously.
- c. RFP for Certified Public Accountant Professional Services—Jorgensen

said the City advertised the RFP and received one proposal from a firm that staff directly engaged. The proposal was included in the council packet and was for just under \$60,000. He recommends that the RFP be extended for another month so staff can reach out to other firms for additional proposals. Cooper agreed. Kreger said some of the fees proposed by the firm were excessive. Council agreed by consensus to extend the process for another month. City Recorder Sarah Blodgett said the services included in the proposal that was received are more than the city needs. Most of what is required is preparation for the budget. Cole said the item would be moved to Unfinished Business for the February council agenda.

- d. Resolution 22-01-01—For the Assessment of Costs for Demolition of Nuisance House at 516 East E Street—Kreger moved to approve the resolution. That motion was seconded by Cooper and adopted unanimously.
- d. Code Enforcement Survey Results—Jorgensen summarized the results, which were included in the council packet. Budge said she would have preferred to see it include input from people who live outside of the city. She wants more consistency with survey methods. Cooper suggested that a future work session be scheduled on the code enforcement issue. Jorgensen said he could follow up with the Department of State Lands (DSL) and the county about the intergovernmental agreements that should be in the works that would help with code enforcement issues. He said that Planning Commission Chair Erin O’Connell had some ideas for an ordinance to address the issues involving RVs. Planning Commission will be discussing that at its February meeting.
- e. Scope of Work for Fox Creek Feasibility Study—Jorgensen asked about the deadline for the study to be completed. Lawrence said it should be done by September. Kreger moved to approve the scope of work. That motion was seconded by Budge and adopted unanimously, with Cooper abstaining.
- f. Council Goal Setting Session—Budge said she would like to schedule the goal setting session before the budget process begins. She also wants the members of the city’s other committees to be involved to the session. Council agreed by consensus to schedule the session for March 14 at the Masonic Lodge, with a 6 p.m. start time.

### **Unfinished Business**

- a. Riverfront Trail Update—Lawrence said the plan is to have the project’s third phase completed in March.
- b. Fox Creek Update—Lawrence said the alarm system worked during the recent high water weather events in the city. Cole said that Mark Buffington from the Oregon Department of Transportation was in town during all of that to make sure there was a plan in place if Highway 30 had to be shut down.
- c. Senior and Multigenerational Housing

**Staff Report**—Police Chief Gregg Griffith said that the recent donut fundraiser brought in just over \$4,000. Testing for the officer applicants is scheduled to take place January 29. Lawrence said she’s working on repairs to the water plant. The repairs for the land slippage on First Street are almost finished. Public works was busy maintaining the roads during the recent snowstorm. Jorgensen said today was his first day back at the office after taking two weeks off for paternity leave. His wife gave birth Christmas morning to a baby girl. He and the city planner met with a representative of the Department of Land Conservation and Development November 30 regarding the possible adjustment of the city’s urban growth boundary. On December 6, he spoke with Rep. Brad Witt’s office about having him do a town hall meeting in Rainier after the February legislative session. Jorgensen has offered up the use of city hall for that purpose. He had a discussion with DSL staff about the IGA for code enforcement on property in city limits that’s owned by that agency. Jorgensen continues working with the Rainier Oregon Historical Museum board of directors about the memorandum of understanding for the use of city facilities and met with Carey from county emergency management. Along with Cole, he attended the Rainier Chamber of Commerce meeting December 15 and presented former Senator Betsy Johnson with a plaque for her years of service in the legislature. He, Blodgett and the city planner coordinated on the publication of legally required notices for the public hearing on the nuisance property and some ordinances that will be considered by the Planning Commission at its next meeting.

**Council Reports**

**City Calendar/Announcements**—Cole said the next council meeting is scheduled for February 7.

Cole adjourned the regular council meeting at 7:05 p.m.

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Mayor Jerry Cole

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W. Scott Jorgensen, City Administrator