

**City of Rainier  
Regular City Council Meeting  
February 7, 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, Mike Kreger and Levi Richardson

**Council Absent:** Robert duPlessis and Jeremy Howell

**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**

**Additions/Deletions from the Agenda:** City Administrator W. Scott Jorgensen said he would like to add an item under new business. The Community Action Team has a new program to provide water bill assistance to low-income residents and is asking the City to enter into an agreement in order to implement it. Council President Mike Kreger moved to add that item to the agenda. That motion was seconded by Councilor Connie Budge and adopted unanimously. Jorgensen also suggested that item 6c be moved up, as CPA Summer Sears told him she would only be available for the first half an hour of the meeting. Council agreed by consensus.

**Mayor's Address:** Mayor Jerry Cole commended the police department for its handling of a recent case. The district attorney's office and other law enforcement partners have praised the department's efforts.

**Visitor Comments:** Dan Graham asked about the removal of signs on Second Street. Public Works Director Sue Lawrence said her department is in the process of ordering \$2,000 worth of signs to replace the ones that were in bad shape. Public works has already removed and collected some of those.

**New Business**

- a. Appointment to Council Position #2—Jorgensen said that there are two applicants, as one has withdrawn. Tess Poat said she moved to town in July 2020. She is involved with HOPE and volunteers at the thrift store.

Councilor Scott Cooper asked what she feels the city's biggest deficiencies are. Poat said there were many vacant storefronts downtown when she first arrived but they've since been filled. She would like to see more police officers. Denise Watson said she does work with the senior center and serves on the Parks and Budget committees and is active with the Ladies of Rainier. She thinks there should have been more community involvement when stop signs were installed and replaced with speed humps. Kreger asked the applicants what their biggest challenges would be if serving on council. Watson said gathering the perspectives of long-term residents. Poat said getting to know everyone in town. Councilor Levi Richardson asked what skills the applicants will bring to improve the council. Poat said she has worked with student development and various committees, has been a project manager and done many research projects. Watson said she has organizational skills and attention to detail. She serves as secretary and treasurer for a local Kiwanis organization. Budge said council has scheduled a goal setting session for March 14. What needs and solutions will the applicants bring to the upcoming Budget Committee meetings? Watson said she would like to see an updated parks master plan, efforts to boost local tourism and more youth activities. She has examples from other parks in and beyond the area. Poat said she would like to incorporate the efforts of student organizations like the National Honor Society on a year-round basis. She wants to see an expansion of outreach to people on the verge of homelessness. Kreger said Watson has previously applied to council and ended up going on the Parks and Budget committees. He thinks council should appoint her and see if Poat would be interested in serving on Parks and Budget. Cooper concurred. Budge agreed that Poat could help on those committees. It would be an asset to have both applicants involved. Richardson said Watson has consistently attended Parks Committee meetings. Cooper moved to appoint Watson to the council. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously. Cole recommended that Poat be appointed to the Parks and Budget committees at the next council meeting. Watson took her oath of office and took her seat at the council dais.

**Visitor Comments:** Marvin Greer said a drain was improperly installed across the street from his house and his basement has flooded three times. Jorgensen said he has the paperwork for Greer to file a claim with the city's insurance and provided it to him.

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

Consider Approval of the January 10, 2022 Regular Council Meeting Minutes—Kreger moved to approve the consent agenda. That motion was seconded by Cooper and adopted unanimously.

### **New Business**

- b. Approval of Contract with Summer Sears CPA for Accounting Services— Cole said Sears comes highly recommended by the City of Clatskanie. City Recorder Sarah Blodgett said the city’s auditing firm also recommended her. Sears said she worked as an auditor at an Idaho firm before working for the City of Redmond doing government accounting and finance. She started her own practice and supports cities and special districts with audits and budgets. Cole asked what challenges or successes Sears sees. She said there’s a hole in the city’s finance function right now and pieces she can fill based on capacity. She can help make sure crucial functions are covered. Jorgensen said he ran her proposed agreement by Blodgett and Finance Clerk Elisha Shulda and they said it would work for them. Kreger moved to approve the contract. That motion was seconded by Budge and adopted unanimously.
- c. Audit Report Presentation—Tracy Jones from Pauly, Rogers and Co summarized the draft audit report that was included in the meeting packet and the methodologies used to conduct the audit. Cole asked if there were any discrepancies. Jones said the management letter has not yet been reviewed by the firm’s managing partner. Budge said it can be reviewed by council once it is completed and received. Jones said it should be done in the next couple of weeks.
- d. Liquor License Renewals—Kreger moved to recommend the license renewals. That motion was seconded by Watson and adopted unanimously.
- e. Planning Update—Jorgensen said that a public hearing will be scheduled at the next council meeting for items that have been recommended by the Planning Commission. They include an updated flood plain ordinance and a text amendment for the code in the Waterfront Mixed Use zone. The commission is still working on the language for an annexation ordinance.
- f. Senior Center Street Light—Lawrence said she’s been working with the city’s insurance to make a claim and expects it to be covered. The estimate to replace the light is \$5110. Kreger moved to approve the expenditure to replace the light. That motion was seconded by Watson and adopted unanimously.
- g. Water Bill Assistance Agreement—Kreger moved to approve the agreement. That motion was seconded by Cooper and adopted unanimously.

### **Unfinished Business**

- a. Riverfront Trail Update—Lawrence said she’s looked at multiple options for the decking and got estimates. One option is a concrete deck and the other is a trex deck with black iron handrail. She recommends the trex decking for \$26,725. Budge moved to approve the trex decking. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously.
- b. Fox Creek Update—Lawrence said she signed the contract for the feasibility study work.

c. Senior and Multigenerational Housing

**Staff Report**—Lawrence said she received an insurance payment for the water plant repair and is working on the roof replacement. Blodgett said council tablets will be coming soon. Jorgensen said he advertised the vacant council position and presented former councilor Jenna Weaver with a plaque and a letter thanking her for her service to the city. He engaged Sears and attended Col-Pac, Rainier Oregon Historical Society and Rainier Chamber of Commerce meetings and met with new state Senator Rachel Armitage. Jorgensen also spoke with Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici about federal grant funding for the Veterans Way and Fox Creek projects.

**Council Reports**

**City Calendar/Announcements**

Cole adjourned the regular council meeting at 7:21 p.m.

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Mayor Jerry Cole

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W. Scott Jorgensen, City Administrator