

City of Rainier
Regular City Council Meeting
September 12, 2022
6 p.m.
Rainier City Hall

Mayor Jerry Cole called the council meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Council Present: Connie Budge, Scott Cooper, Jeremy Howell, Mike Kreger, Levi Richardson and Denise Watson

Council Absent: Robert duPlessis

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: Public Works Director Sue Lawrence said she wanted to add a vehicle purchase to the agenda. Council President Mike Kreger moved to add vehicle purchase to the agenda. That motion was seconded by Councilor Scott Cooper and adopted unanimously.

Mayor's Address: Mayor Jerry Cole took a moment to recognize the tremendous loss resulting from the events of September 11, 2001.

Visitor Comments: Ron Roche said that he contracted with a plumber to have a line replaced 169 feet from his house in July. A break was found and he had it repaired but it was still clogged. Some excavation was done and an old part of the curb was discovered against the lateral line and was digging into it, which caused the hole to occur. He looked into which repairs had been done by the city and county near 4th and D streets and reviewed the city code to see who was responsible for what. Roche incurred costs and filed a claim with the city's insurance. That claim was denied. The repair work he had done totaled nearly \$30,000. He presented council with a letter from his attorney asking that the city cover those costs. Cole said he would have the city attorney review the materials Roche presented. Gary Skoch said he filed written complaints about two of his neighbors. One had litter around their property and Officer Phillip George called him to follow up on it. Another neighbor has a rooster and put up wind chimes. Skoch complained about the wind chimes and the noise they cause. Cole said the police department would work on those abatement issues.

Consider Approval of the Consent Agenda

Consider Approval of the July 25, 2022 Regular Council Meeting Minutes and Monthly Financial Statements— Kreger moved to approve the consent agenda. That motion was seconded by Councilor Denise Watson and adopted unanimously, with Cooper abstaining.

New Business

- a. Columbia Economic Team Small Business Development Center Update—SBDC

Director Jason Moon said many businesses requested assistance during COVID. The CET approached cities in the county and they've all pledged to contribute to the startup funding for the SBDC. Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici secured federal funding for it. The SBDC works with businesses on advertising, plan development, loan packaging, marketing, accounting, regulations and hiring management. It has thus far advised dozens of clients and eight Rainier-based businesses. An advisory committee is being established and he would like to see one Rainier business represented on it.

b. Downtown Beautification

i. Columbia County 2023 Mural Trail Project—Sierra Trass with Keep it Local

Columbia County said that Vernonia did a project, has murals now and is blossoming as a result. She would like to do something similar countywide. The project is being developed. At this point, the idea is to apply for external funding and then invite applications. She envisions one mural in each city to promote local businesses. The Rainier Chamber of Commerce is interested in participating and so are local artists. Jorgensen said that Country Financial hired an artist to do a mural on its wall. There are about half a dozen businesses that are interested in having murals and some have reached out to the artist who did the mural for Country Financial. Other business owners have told him they would participate in a mural project if some assistance was offered.

ii. Banners—Cooper moved to approve the bid for the banners. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously.

iii. Mosaic Art—Jorgensen said there's a new mosaic business in town. Perhaps mosaic art could be incorporated into downtown beautification efforts, with businesses having it in their storefronts.

c. Contract Agreement for Land Use Consulting Services with Urling Planning Associates—

Jorgensen explained that the council recently renewed its contracted with the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments (CWCOG) for planning services. But he was informed that the CWCOG is having a hard time finding a planner to fulfill the terms of the contract. Skip Urling had previously worked for the CWCOG as the city's contract planner and is willing to provide those services. Councilor Connie Budge moved to approve the contract. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously.

d. Senior Center Agreement—Jorgensen explained that the current lease agreement is about to expire. The updated agreement was the product of much collaboration between himself, Senior Center Director Jan Rich, Cooper, Lawrence and the city's insurance agent and attorney. Kreger moved to approve the agreement. That motion was seconded by Councilor Jeremy Howell and adopted unanimously, with Cooper, Budge and Councilor Levi Richardson abstaining.

e. Appointments to Senior and Multigenerational Housing Committee—Kreger moved to appoint Mike Avent, Randall Johnstun, Paul Langner and Paul Rice to the committee. That motion was seconded by Cooper and adopted unanimously.

f. Library Board Appointment—Kreger moved to appoint Rosemary Scandale to the board. That motion was seconded by Watson and adopted unanimously.

g. RFP for Integrator of Record—Lawrence said the RFP was advertised and a bid was received from The Automation Group. She recommends approval. Kreger moved to approve the proposal. That motion was seconded by Budge and adopted unanimously.

h. SCADA System Computer Replacement—Lawrence said the current system broke down and she's trying to replace the hard drive. She received a quote from The Automation Group for \$3158. Budge asked what part of the budget this would come out of. Lawrence said it would be covered under the project site improvements line item

under the water capital fund. Budge moved to approve the replacement. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously.

- i. City Hall Assessment—Lawrence said she is putting together a plan to make some improvements to the building. She received a proposal from an architectural services firm. Council agreed by consensus to table the matter for now and have a discussion at its next meeting to prioritize the improvements.
- j. Vehicle Purchase—Lawrence said a public works vehicle is in need of immediate replacement. She recommends purchasing a Chevy Colorado for \$32,000. That dealership will take the city’s old vehicle as a trade in. The purchase will be covered through a vehicle replacement line item in the budget. Budge moved to approve the purchase. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously.

Unfinished Business

- a. Fox Creek Update
- b. League of Oregon Cities Legislative Priorities—Jorgensen reported that the LOC board of directors recently voted on the organization’s priorities for the 2023 legislative session. Council had previously voted for addressing Measure 110 shortcomings and full funding and alignment for state land use initiatives, and both of those were among the LOC’s top eight priorities.

8. Staff Report—Lawrence said the smoke tests that council previously approved are scheduled to take place between September 26 and October 7. Of the 23 security cameras that were ordered, 18 have been installed. Jorgensen said he spent much time working on the senior center agreement, attended a tour of the Oregon Manufacturing Innovation Center in Scappoose and a League of Oregon Small Cities meeting in Clatskanie, performed election duties, attended the recent library board meeting and tagged the abandoned vessel that had been on the beach as an imminent threat to public health and safety. Following a hearing, the city’s municipal court judge ruled that the city followed the proper procedures and applicable state statutes in conducting the seizure.

9. Council Reports—Cooper reported that the senior center needs volunteer drivers. Watson said she met with City Forester Patrick McCoy and toured the watershed. Trail cameras and new locks are needed. Budge said she’s been meeting with the library board. That group is working on a community needs survey and will then start on updating the library’s strategic plan and forming a friends of the library group to raise money for programs.

10. City Calendar/Announcements

Cole adjourned the regular council meeting at 7:49 p.m. Council entered into executive session at 7:57 p.m. pursuant to ORS 192.660 (2)(i) to review and evaluate the employment-related performance of the chief executive officer of any public body, a public officer, employee or staff member who does not request an open hearing. The executive session was adjourned at 8:22 p.m.