

**City of Rainier
Regular City Council Meeting
October 3, 2022
6 p.m.
Rainier City Hall**

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

Council Present: Connie Budge, Robert duPlessis, Mike Kreger, Levi Richardson and Denise Watson

Council Absent: Scott Cooper 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: Councilor Connie Budge moved to add Donation Agreement to the agenda. That motion was seconded by Council President Mike Kreger and adopted unanimously. Budge moved to add Administrator Contract to the agenda. That motion was seconded by Councilor Denise Watson and adopted unanimously. Budge said she would like to see rights of way added to a future meeting agenda. Mayor Jerry Cole suggested having that discussion during the November meeting. Budge said the city's insurance agent, Chad Womack, would be willing to participate. City Administrator W. Scott Jorgensen said he wanted to add Housing Committee appointment to the agenda. Kreger moved to do so. That motion was seconded by Budge and adopted unanimously.

Mayor's Address: Cole said he had written the U.S.S. Oregon to request a flag to purchase and hang in the council chambers. It was sent to him free of charge. Staff will have it framed and put on display.

Visitor Comments: There were no visitor comments at this time. Jorgensen said that Don Puckett is present and had an issue he wanted to see addressed. That item goes with an agenda item. Cole told Puckett he could speak during that portion of the meeting if he would like.

Consider Approval of the Consent Agenda

Consider Approval of the September 12, 2022 Regular Council Meeting Minutes—Kreger moved to approve the consent agenda as amended. That motion was seconded by Watson and adopted unanimously, with Budge dissenting.

New Business

- a. Appointment to Planning Commission Position #5—Jorgensen said that Nina Pogue had previously served on the commission but had to step down because she had moved out of town. She is back in Rainier now and has expressed interest in returning to the commission. There was some discussion about incomplete information on her application. Jorgensen was directed to follow up with her and bring the matter back for

- the November council meeting under unfinished business.
- b. Planning Commission Update—Jorgensen said that the group met for the first time in months. He was directed by Cole to have the commission develop language regulating sandwich board signs at the request of local business owners. The commission realized this could be accomplished by adding it to the definitions in the sign code and the list of exempted signs. The definition of “garage” can also be changed to increase the required square footage from 120 to 240. Both of those can be done through the same text amendment and ordinance. Cole said he would like to see some changes made to regulate feather banners. Jorgensen said the issues of shipping containers and tiny homes have also come up at the staff level and will be discussed by the commission.
 - c. Mitigation Project Update—Lawrence said that the original proposed project location was next to Fox Creek. But that would be too close to the site of the possible work to fix the creek’s flooding issues. Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership suggested using an alternate location at the main city park. It would treat street runoff and any from that parking lot. Cole said he was fine with it. Lawrence verified that it wouldn’t take any away from the sidewalk and would simplify maintenance in the area. Kreger moved to approve the change to the project location. That motion was seconded by Councilor Robert duPlessis and adopted unanimously.
 - d. Public Works Vehicle Replacement—Lawrence said the department’s 1997 Ford Ranger has much wear and tear. She would like to replace it with a small Chevy Colorado pickup. There are funds available in the vehicle replacement budget. That line item had \$120,000 and she spent \$30,000 on the previous vehicle replacement. Budge moved to approve the vehicle replacement request. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously.
 - e. Donation Agreement—Budge said she was contacted by one of the persons who made a donation for the new gazebo. The agreement said the project would be completed by September 30 and the donor wondered why he had not been contacted. Jorgensen said concrete was scheduled to be poured for the gazebo the following morning. Nobody anticipated that it would take months for the gazebo materials to be delivered when the agreement was drafted. Lawrence said the donor was going to be at the park for the pouring of the concrete.
 - f. Administrator Contract—Cole said council conducted Jorgensen’s evaluation in executive session after the last council meeting. There were some consensus items and research was required for follow up. The evaluation was positive and Cole was able to determine that the follow-up item was doable. Under Jorgensen’s contract, he can receive a merit pay increase following a positive evaluation. The consensus of the council was for a raise of \$300 per month and a two-year contract extension. Budge moved to approve. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously. Budge moved to direct Jorgensen to develop an updated job description. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously. Cole said he and Jorgensen would come up with a draft and bring it to the next meeting.
 - g. Housing Committee Appointment—Budge moved to approve Terry Deaton’s appointment to the Housing Committee. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously.

Unfinished Business

- a. Fox Creek Update—Lawrence said the feasibility study should be completed soon. It could be presented at the council’s December meeting or at a separate event. Cole suggested having that done at a work session prior to a council meeting. Jorgensen said that he and Lawrence met with officials from the Oregon Department of Transportation

(ODOT). That agency wants to do the improvements to Highway 30 as a separate project. ODOT has a list of culverts to replace statewide, and many are disintegrating. The one under Highway 30 is still in good shape. But if improvements are made to Fox Creek upstream, ODOT will be able to make it more of a priority. Jorgensen suggested to ODOT that if that agency wants to do that as a separate project, perhaps it can also make improvements to Veterans Way. ODOT said that would have to be a standalone project, but that it will prioritize updating the city's transportation system plan. Lawrence said ODOT is also planning to make its Americans with Disabilities Act improvements around town within the next couple of years.

- b. City Hall Priorities—Lawrence said she wanted direction from council on priorities for improvements to city hall. She said there is no emergency exit from the main offices and said the bathrooms can be updated to add one for staff, along with a break room. The computer server should be moved to its original, more secure location in the police department, and the gutters need to be fixed. Cole said his top priorities for the building are to move the server and do the gutters. Budge said she would like to see another door put somewhere in Jorgensen's office. Cole said he would like to identify a scope of work for improvements. If the gutters need to be fixed, have it done. Budge moved to direct staff to obtain estimates for fixing the gutters. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously. Budge moved to direct staff to obtain an estimate for moving the server room and bring it back for the next meeting. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously. Cole said that Councilor Scott Cooper will be working with Lawrence on the server room project. Lawrence said the process has started. Cole said he wanted to see a scope of work for bathroom improvements on the second floor, an exit off of Jorgensen's office and a staff break room. Lawrence said she can have the design done and the projects can be bid out individually if the costs get too high. Budge moved to direct staff to obtain estimates for the additional bathroom and exit and break room. That motion was seconded by Watson and adopted unanimously.
- c. Street Improvement Priorities—Jorgensen said staff received a petition signed by a dozen or so residents asking that repairs be done to West 2nd Street from C Street. He handed it out to councilors before the meeting. Lawrence said she applied for a Small Cities Allotment grant in July for work on Fox Street. Staff is also looking to update the municipal code to add an ordinance to recuperate the city's costs if streets are cut into. She is asking that council identify streets to prioritize. Cole said C Street and 2nd should be fixed. Most of the damage there was from the equipment that was used to fix the culvert and it's a trip hazard. Lawrence said public works could take out the asphalt, do a patch and level it out. That entire street needs to be fixed, but that should be done after the Fox Creek project is completed. Cole said he and staff have been looking at the street cut ordinance being passed by the City of Longview. The permits charged to cut into newer streets costs more and the money goes into that city's street fund. Jorgensen said he should have an ordinance for the next council meeting, he just needed to make some slight changes to his draft. Lawrence said she's also looking to make improvements at First to Third streets on C and the portion of East E Street between Second and Fourth. Council agreed by consensus.

8. Staff Report—Police Chief Gregg Griffith said that Officer Phillip George will be going to the academy soon and is set to graduate in February. He will be back in town to help out during the holiday season. Lawrence said that most of the new security cameras have been installed. Jorgensen said he met with the Office of Emergency Management about grant funding opportunities for the Fox Creek project, did the exit interview with the city's contract auditing firm, attended the Columbia Economic Team board meeting and an ice cream social

at the senior center. He spoke with Oregon Senator Rachel Armitage about the city's legislative priorities and, along with Lawrence, met with ODOT officials about the Fox Creek and Veterans Way projects. Jorgensen did submit the pre-application for a grant to fund the Fox Creek project.

9. Council Reports—Budge said she attended the most recent Library Board meeting. There is increased activity at the library. Councilor Levi Richardson said the Parks Committee heard a presentation about the master plan update.

10. City Calendar/Announcements—Cole said the next council meeting will be November 7. But if the Fox Creek feasibility study is ready to be presented, council can meet beforehand for that.

Cole adjourned the meeting at 7:34 p.m.

Mayor Jerry Cole

W. Scott Jorgensen, City Administrator