

**City of Rainier**  
**Regular City Council Meeting**  
**January 9, 2023**  
**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, Robert duPlessis, Jeremy Howell, Mike Kreger and Denise Watson

**Council Absent:** Levi Richardson

**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**

City Administrator W. Scott Jorgensen swore in Mayor Jerry Cole. Cole thanked his family for its support for his last 20 years of being mayor. He also thanked the citizens of Rainier, councilors both past and present, the members of the city's various boards and commissions and staff. Cole swore in councilors Connie Budge, Scott Cooper, Robert duPlessis and Jeremy Howell.

**Additions/Deletions from the Agenda:** Public Works Director Sue Lawrence said she would like to add the Small City Allotment grant to the agenda. It's for \$120,000 to improve Fox Street and needs to be approved for signatures. She would also like the purchase of a Ford Maverick to be added under unfinished business. Council President Mike Kreger moved to add those items to the agenda. That motion was seconded by duPlessis and adopted unanimously.

**Mayor's Address:** Cole observed a moment of silence for late former police chief Ralph Painter. The anniversary of his end of watch had been a few days prior.

**Visitor Comments:** Columbia County Commissioner Kellie Jo Smith introduced herself to the council.

**Consider Approval of the Consent Agenda**

Consider Approval of the December 5, 2022 Regular Council Meeting Minutes—Jorgensen said he made a couple of slight corrections to the minutes that were included in the packet. Budge moved to approve the minutes as corrected. That motion was seconded by Cooper and adopted unanimously.

**New Business**

- b. Selection of Council President—Kreger said he was willing to continue serving in that role. Cooper moved to nominate Kreger as council president. That motion was seconded by Howell and adopted unanimously.

- c. Appointments to REDCO Board—Kreger moved to appoint the members of the city council to the REDCO board. That motion was seconded by Councilor Denise Watson and adopted unanimously.
- d. Appointment of Budget Officer—Budge moved to appoint Jorgensen as budget officer. That motion was seconded by Cooper and adopted unanimously.
- e. Resolution 23-01-01—Setting Regular Meeting Days and Times—Budge moved to approve the resolution. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously.
- f. Resolution 23-01-02—Designating the *Clatskanie Chief* as Newspaper of Notice—Budge moved to approve the resolution. That motion was seconded by Watson and adopted unanimously.
- g. Resolution 23-01-03—Establishing a Fee Schedule for the Storage of Vehicles, Recreational Vehicles and Vessels on City Property—Jorgensen explained that he added a sentence based on input from Lawrence that storage on city property will be on an as-needed basis and vehicles stored by others will be at the rates accrued. Following a discussion, it was decided by consensus that staff would develop a policy regarding access to property that has been towed and stored and bring it to the February meeting. Kreger moved to adopt the resolution. That motion was seconded by Cooper and adopted unanimously.
- h. Senior Center Update—Director Jan Rich said the building is in good condition. Recent renters of the facility have used it for birthday and Christmas parties and bridal showers. Those rentals brought around \$700 in revenue to the center. Over the past six months, the center has served 7,593 meals, including congregate and those delivered through the Meals on Wheels program. The Thanksgiving dinner raised \$950 and the Christmas dinner raised \$1180. The center will be offering help with tax preparation in March and a St. Patrick’s Day luncheon. A walk-in freezer has been approved and will be delivered in the next few weeks. The center is requesting that the toilets be higher and is willing to purchase them if the city installs them. Rich is also requesting that the patio be enclosed. It isn’t being used very much right now. Maybe meals can be served in an enclosed patio area and exercise equipment could be moved there. A grant is available to fund it. She received a \$50,000 estimate for the work. Cole suggested that the city look into expanding the building.
- i. Planning Commission and Housing Committee Update—Jorgensen said that the commission will be making some code updates this year. A group of consultants analyzed the city’s code and has made recommendations aimed at encouraging more housing development. Those will be considered by the Housing Committee and those recommendations will then go to the Planning Commission before being considered by council. He showed those recommendations to a developer, who said they would be helpful. One planning commissioner has expressed concerns about the recommendations resulting in too much density. Planning Commission Chair Erin O’Connell said most of the land in the urban growth boundary on the west side of town is zoned light industrial. But a lack of services is a barrier for development. Some of the units at the mobile home park can’t be occupied due to lack of services. A company was considering putting a business in the area but a lack of services to the site hampered those efforts. It’s a prime area to look at but can’t be discussed any further without incurring costs. There are many wells in that area and the soils are marginal. Cooper said the water quality there isn’t very good. He asked if there was some existing research from when this was discussed ten years ago. Cole said rate of return was a big issue. O’Connell said the expectation ten years ago was that the property owner would pay for the design, engineering and improvements. Budge suggested that the city collaborate with the county on this. Council agreed by consensus and Kreger said he would like to be involved in those efforts.

- j. Fee Schedule—Cole said he is in agreement that some of the fees need to be updated. The utility deposit should probably be raised from \$50 to \$100, but with customers being allowed to make that in two payments. duPlessis suggested comparing and aligning the fees with those in other cities. Jorgensen agreed to bring the matter back to the February meeting with more information.
- k. Smoke Test Report—Lawrence said the testing has concluded. Inflow and infiltration was discovered at 102 locations, including five catch basins, seven manholes, 29 cleanouts, 19 houses with roof drains and 42 lines and/or laterals. She has notified the school district that there is some inflow and infiltration coming from its property. The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has a grant for cities of 10,000 population or less to help with stormwater treatment. She will be meeting with DEQ representatives soon to find out more about that grant and how the city can apply.

### **Unfinished Business**

- a. Second Reading of Ordinance 1088—Approving the Annexation of Susan and Larry Knaub Who Own the Herein Described Real Property to the City of Rainier, Columbia County, Oregon—Kreger moved to approve the ordinance. That motion was seconded by Watson and adopted unanimously.
- b. Fox Creek Update—Jorgensen said he and Lawrence met with the city’s engineers to discuss the next steps. The engineers are going to reach out to officials with the Oregon Department of Transportation about that agency’s involvement and obligations with the project. A meeting with stakeholders will then be scheduled to get buy-in, at which point grant funding for the design and the project itself can be pursued.
- c. Mutual Agreement and Order with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality—Budge moved to approve the MAO. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously.
- d. Updated City Administrator Job Description—Cole said he had some suggestions. Jorgensen said he would incorporate those and bring it back to the February meeting.
- e. Vehicle Purchase—Cole said council already approved the purchase of a 2022 Ford Maverick for administrative staff to use. There were no 2022 models left, so staff began looking at 2023 models. Lawrence said a 2023 model is available and could be delivered in February. However, the cost is \$2700 higher than council approved. Cooper moved to approve the purchase. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously.

**Staff Report**—Library Director Allen Snider said around 200 children participated in the Halloween trunk or treat event at the Eagles Lodge. The Santa reading event had around 30 participants. A Mardi Gras mystery event is being planned for February. He placed an order for 130 new books. Jorgensen said a young adult section is being planned and efforts are being made to organize the library books by genre the same way that is done in most bookstores. Police Chief Gregg Griffith said that the recent donut fundraiser for HOPE raised over \$2,000. Jorgensen said the downtown banners are finished and in his office and their locations have been picked out. Public works is scheduled to hang them around town in early March. He’s working with the Rainier Oregon Historical Museum on creating an historical reenactment event in April centered around the banners. An event was held to honor the retirement of former Columbia County Commissioner Henry Heimuller, and he attended. He registered himself, Cole and Kreger for City Day at the Oregon State Capitol January 25.

**Council Reports**—Howell thanked the public works department for its efforts in clearing the streets during the recent ice storm.

**City Calendar/Announcements**—Budge said she would like there to be a REDCO meeting in February. She has been reviewing past REDCO documents and has proposed that a small group get together to go over them before the REDCO meeting. That group will consist of her, Watson, Cooper, Jorgensen, Cole, Mike Avent and Sloan Nelson, if he's available. It can then make recommendations to the REDCO board. The next council meeting will be February 6 and the council goal setting session will be March 13, at a location to be determined.

Cole adjourned the meeting at 8 p.m. Council went into executive session at 8:05 p.m. under ORS 192.660 (2)(h) to consult with counsel concerning the legal rights and duties of a public body with regard to current litigation or litigation likely to be filed and 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 9:47 p.m.

Cole called the council meeting back into session at 9:48 p.m. Kreger moved to award a 2 percent merit increase to Lawrence, retroactive to her hire date, and allow her to take a city vehicle to commute to and from work. That motion was seconded by Howell and adopted unanimously.

Cole adjourned the meeting at 9:49 p.m.

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Mayor Jerry Cole

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W. Scott Jorgensen, City Administrator