

City of Rainier
City Council Goal Setting Workshop
March 13, 2023
6 p.m.
Rainier Senior Center

Mayor Jerry Cole called the workshop to order at 6:18 p.m.

Council Present: Connie Budge, Scott Cooper, Robert duPlessis, Jeremy Howell, Levi Richardson and Denise Watson

Council Absent: Mike Kreger

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

Review of 2022 Council Goals—City Administrator W. Scott Jorgensen went over goals that council set the previous year and the progress that has been made on them.

Collaborative Projects Status Update—Jorgensen said that the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) has agreed to take the lead on pursuing federal grant funding for the project. It will also involve the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. The city’s Housing Committee made recommendations about a potential Urban Growth Boundary land swap and that will go before the Planning Commission. Columbia County will have to be involved in the process and he recently briefed the board of commissioners on the matter. Staff is set to meet the following day with Business Oregon about solutions to the challenges involving the expansion of infrastructure on the west end of town.

Committee Goals—Jorgensen said that the Housing Committee has largely wrapped up its business and its recommendations are being passed on to the Planning Commission. The Parks Committee has recommended approval of the park master plan update, and it was adopted by council. The Library Board discussed its goals at its most recent meeting. The Planning Commission has a series of code update recommendations from the Housing Committee and staff. If the Department of Land Conservation and Development produces a model rural code, the commission can work on that in 2024.

Planning Commission

Parks Committee

Library Board

Budget Committee

REDCO Budget Committee

2023 Council Goals--Mayor Cole said that getting in compliance with the Department of Environmental Quality remains his top goal. Councilor Connie Budge still wants to see safety improvements made to Veterans Way, a two-year budget that’s comprehensive and easy to understand, updated job descriptions and a master plan for the city’s watershed. There was a discussion about Rainier becoming a port of call and what that would involve. Public Works Director Sue Lawrence said the city’s dock is not designed for it. Cole suggested having a port master plan be a goal. Planning Commissioner Nic Gratzner asked about paving projects.

Lawrence said they are based on priority. Jorgensen said ODOT has a Small City Allotment grant program that is non-competitive and the amounts awarded have been increased. The City was ineligible to apply for a few years because its allotment was used for the A Street project. Councilor Scott Cooper said he would like to see more festivals and events in town and the senior center expanded. Gratzner would like to see the emergency preparedness plan be made more available to the public. Cole still wants Fox Creek to be online as a backup water supply. Cooper wants to examine emergency access across the railroad tracks. Budge wants to update the city's comprehensive plan. Jorgensen said that ODOT will likely update the city's transportation system plan soon. Cole said he would like the riverfront trail to expand further west. Councilor Levi Richardson said he would like to see lighting on the trail. REDCO Budget Committee member Candis Forrest asked that the area of the trail by the condos be prioritized for lighting. Parks Committee member Gary Rice said he would like the Fox Creek trail to be upgraded. Cole suggested that part of the tennis courts be converted for pickleball use. Library Board Chair Marcia Roberts said that body plans to work on a library master plan, more events, a memorial section for benefactors and a tutoring program. Budge wants a nonprofit group formed to support the library. Cole wants a mid-year evaluation of the two-year budget. Councilor Robert duPlessis would like to see the park restrooms replaced and AEDs made available in city buildings and an events calendar added to its website. Budge wants the City to explore having free wi-fi available to residents. Library Board member Tonya Higgins wants improved access to warming and cooling centers.

Cole adjourned the meeting at 7:53 p.m.

Mayor Jerry Cole

W. Scott Jorgensen, City Administrator