

City of Rainier
Regular City Council Meeting
September 11, 2023
6 p.m.
Rainier City Hall

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

Council Present: Connie Budge, Scott Cooper, Robert duPlessis, Jeremy Howell, Mike Kreger and Paul Langner

Council Absent: Denise Watson

City Attorney Present: No

City Staff Present: Sarah Blodgett, City Recorder; Gregg Griffith, Police Chief; W. Scott Jorgensen, City Administrator; Sue Lawrence, Public Works Consultant; Pat McCoy, Interim Public Works Director; Preston Van Meter, City Engineer

Flag Salute

Additions/Deletions from the Agenda: City Administrator W. Scott Jorgensen requested that letter of support for Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) Technical Assistance Grant be added to the agenda as item g under New Business. Councilor Scott Cooper moved to add that item to the agenda as requested. That motion was seconded by Council President Mike Kreger and adopted unanimously.

Mayor's Address: Mayor Jerry Cole asked for a moment of silence to honor the recent passing of Diane Dillard, who was known for her volunteerism, philanthropy and community involved. Cole also asked for a moment of silence in honor of the September 11, 2001 national tragedy.

Visitor Comments: Angela Wayman and Kathryn Kreger promoted their efforts to raise \$12,000 to \$13,000 for a 20-foot Christmas tree for the Rainier Winterfest. The Eagles Lodge has donated \$5,000 and a local business has donated \$1,000.

Consider Approval of the Consent Agenda

Consider Approval of the August 7, 2023 and August 17, 2023 Regular Council Meeting Minutes and Monthly Financial Statements—Kreger moved to approve the consent agenda. That motion was seconded by Cooper and adopted unanimously.

New Business

- a. Planning Update—Jorgensen announced that the City has been awarded DLCD's Housing Planning Assistance grant. DLCD will provide the City with a consultant to do the work for its potential Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) land swap. He has requested Winterbrook, which is the same firm that the City of Vernonia has been using to conduct the same process. A Planned Unit Development ordinance will be coming before council for a first reading at its next meeting. Planning Commission is recommending that cottage clusters be allowed as conditional uses in R-1 and R-2 zones. That body is also looking at the City of Longview's Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) ordinance. The commission is considering allowing

ADUs in SR and R-1 zones as long as they meet building and zoning codes. Tiny homes may also be defined as ADUs and be allowed in SR, R-1 and R-2 zones. The commission will also be making a decision on shipping containers at its next meeting. Jorgensen said the commission priorities for 2024 will include the UGB land swap, a Transportation System Plan and a Public Facilities Plan for the industrial area on the west side of the City if the grants he's applying for are awarded.

b. Centrifuge Repair—Public Works Consultant Sue Lawrence said the centrifuge separates water from solids at the wastewater plant and the City only has one. The estimate to rebuild it has come in at \$26,000 but she is getting another bid. It has been four years since it was last rebuilt. Councilor Paul Langner moved to approve the bid not to exceed \$26,850. That motion was seconded by Councilor Robert duPlessis and adopted unanimously.

c. Wastewater Treatment Plant Facility Plan—Lawrence said this plan is needed for the City to meet the terms of its Mutual Agreement and Order with the Department of Environmental Quality. The proposal is from West Yost, the City's engineering firm, and is for \$213,148. City Engineer Preston Van Meter said the plan consists of five tasks. Lawrence said it is budgeted for, and added that the City has been approved for a grant/loan from DEQ for the plan. Van Meter described the project deliverable as a 20-year plan that will help ensure DEQ compliance. Cole asked for a timeline. Van Meter said one year. Van Meter confirmed that the most recent study was done in 2004 or 2005. duPlessis moved to approve the plan. That motion was seconded by Cooper and adopted unanimously.

d. Emergency Aeration Basin Cleanup—Lawrence said there was an issue at the wastewater plant that required the basin to be cleaned. It was full of sediment, sand and debris. She does not yet have the total cost of the work but it could be over \$10,000. Cole confirmed that he and Jorgensen approved the work on an emergency basis. Lawrence will bring this item back to the next meeting once she has the cost.

e. Public Works Director Position Costs—Lawrence said \$250,000 was budgeted for the position over the next two years. The projected costs are \$229,000 and all the training, travel and membership dues expenses are budgeted for.

f. ODOT Easement Request—Jorgensen said that ODOT requested two easements for a property the city owns and will pay the City \$3000 for them. One is temporary and one is permanent. ODOT needs council approval and verification that he has signature authority. Kreger moved to grant Jorgensen signature authority for those easements. That motion was seconded by Cooper and adopted unanimously.

g. Letter of Support for DLCD Technical Assistance Grant—Jorgensen said that the grant could be used for a public facilities plan for the industrial area on the west side of town that does not have water or sewer infrastructure. He spoke with the City's DLCD regional representative, who informed him that the emphasis of the grants this year is on economic development. Jorgensen needs a letter of support from council in order to complete the grant application. Councilor Connie Budge moved to approve the letter of support. That motion was seconded by Cooper and adopted unanimously.

Unfinished Business

a. Public Hearing on Ordinance 1091—To Amend the Rainier Municipal Code Chapters 2.15, 17.10, 17.15, 17.20, 18.05, 18.15, 18.20, 18.25, 18.30 and 18.150—Cole opened the public hearing at 7:06 p.m. No testimony was given. He closed the hearing at 7:07 p.m.

b. Second Reading of Ordinance 1091—To Amend the Rainier Municipal Code Chapters 2.15, 17.10, 17.15, 17.20, 18.05, 18.15, 18.20, 18.25, 18.30 and 18.150—Kreger moved to approve the ordinance. That motion was seconded by Cooper and adopted unanimously.

c. City Website Revamp—Council heard a presentation by Christina Ishii and Cooper about upgrades that could be made to the City’s website. The website looks just fine on laptop and desktop computers, but comes across poorly on cell phones. It was last updated in 2010 and a lot has changed since then. Ishii can start making the improvements around mid-October and have them completed by the end of the year, with a total cost of between \$3,000 and \$4,000. Budge moved to direct the city administrator to research the costs. That motion was seconded by duPlessis. City Recorder Sarah Blodgett said there were several line items that could be used to fund the website upgrade. Budge withdrew her motion. Councilor Paul Langner moved to approve the expense, not to exceed \$5,000. That motion was seconded by Councilor Jeremy Howell and adopted unanimously.

d. Fox Creek Update—Jorgensen said he spoke with Bill Jablonski at ODOT. That agency is looking into some grant funding for the project. Jablonski asked for a copy of the feasibility study and Jorgensen provided it for him.

Staff Report—Police Chief Gregg Griffith said oral boards will be the following Thursday to do interviews for the vacant officer positions. Lawrence said she’s receiving bids for the repair work to Richards Road. Blodgett said the City’s annual audit will begin towards the end of the month. Jorgensen said he updated the City’s safety manual, helped in the recruitment process for the police department, met with representatives of the Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership and the Oregon Department of Transportation and is making arrangements for the City to host the quarterly city/county dinner scheduled for October 10. He was appointed to represent the City on the Columbia County Cultural Coalition board of directors and onboarded Interim Public Works Director Pat McCoy.

Council Reports—There were no council reports at this time.

City Calendar/Announcements—Jorgensen announced that there will be a ribbon cutting ceremony at the Windemere Realty office September 19th at 4 p.m.

Cole adjourned the meeting at 7:56 p.m.

Mayor Jerry Cole

W. Scott Jorgensen, City Administrator