

**City of Rainier
City Council Meeting
February 5, 2024
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, Paul Langner and Denise Watson

Council Absent: None

City Attorney Present: No

City Staff Present: W. Scott Jorgensen, City Administrator; Sarah Blodgett, City Recorder; Pat McCoy, Public Works Director; Gregg Griffith, Police Chief; Skip Urling, City Planner

Flag Salute

Additions/Deletions from the Agenda: There were no additions or deletions at this time.

Mayor's Address: Police Officer Marc Nielson was sworn in to his position by Mayor Jerry Cole.

Visitor Comments: Crestview Lane resident Gary Landers said his neighborhood used to have four street lights but none of them work anymore. Staff will follow up on the matter.

Approval of the Consent Agenda

Consider Approval of the January 8, 2024 Regular Council Meeting Minutes and Financial Statements—Council President Mike Kreger moved to approve the consent agenda. That motion was seconded by Councilor Scott Cooper and adopted unanimously.

New Business

- a. Swearing in of Officer Marc Nielson
- b. Public Hearing on Ordinance 1095--Adding a New Chapter to Rainier Municipal Code (RMC) Title 18, Division V Regarding Accessory Dwelling Units, Amending RMC Section 18.05.100, Chapters 18.15, 18.20 and 18.25 and Repealing RMC Section 18.25.100—City Planner Skip Urling presented his staff report. He said that under current city code, Accessory Dwelling Units are only allowed in R-2 zones. The city wants to make it easier to provide housing. This ordinance would allow them in all residential zones except for those with the highest density. It also addresses the review process. He recommends passage.
- c. First Reading of Ordinance 1095--Adding a New Chapter to Rainier Municipal Code (RMC) Title 18, Division V Regarding Accessory Dwelling Units, Amending RMC Section 18.05.100, Chapters 18.15, 18.20 and 18.25 and Repealing RMC Section 18.25.100—Cole opened the public hearing at 6:6 p.m. No public testimony was received. Cole closed the public hearing at 6:17 p.m.
- d. Public Hearing on Proposed Street Vacation for a Portion of Hickory Street Between

View Street and Old Rainier Road—Cole opened the public hearing at 6:17 p.m. Petitioner Jan Spika-Kenna said that she intends to have natural plants in the area. Cole closed the hearing at 6:20 p.m.

- e. First Reading of Ordinance 1096--Street Vacation for a Portion of Hickory Street Between View Street and Old Rainier Road
- f. Public Hearing on Proposed Street Vacation for the 20-Foot Alley Lying Within Block 39, Plat of Unit “C” in West Rainier—Cole opened the public hearing at 6:22 p.m. Michael Self asked about the location and was informed that it’s the property by the large sign that’s visible from Highway 30. Cole closed the hearing at 6:25 p.m.
- g. First Reading of Ordinance 1097--Street Vacation for the 20-Foot Alley Lying Within Block 39, Plat of Unit “C” in West Rainier
- h. Public Works Director Employment Agreement—Councilor Connie Budge proposed that the council have a meeting to look at the state of city facilities, public works projects and priorities, wastewater and water certification trainings. She also proposes that City Administrator W. Scott Jorgensen, as the city’s budget officer, prepare a review of the public works budget, outstanding invoices and the city’s contract with SL Environmental and that this be done before the next regular council meeting and goal setting session. Councilor Paul Langner asked Public Works Director Pat McCoy if he would support that proposal. McCoy said he wants to share his concerns with council and get input on direction to align his thought process with that of the council. Cole suggested February 26 at 6 p.m. Council agreed by consensus. Cole said he wants to table the employment agreement to add language that certifications would be obtained by a date certain. Cooper moved to table this agenda item until the February 26 meeting. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously.
- i. Wastewater Treatment Plant Pump Replacement—McCoy said he had the backup pump inspected and it needs repair. The pumps are all nearly 20 years old and he wants to have backups ready in case one of them stops working. Cooper moved to approve the bid for \$23,992.72 for the pump replacement. That motion was seconded by Budge and adopted unanimously.
- j. Police Department Camera System Replacement—Police Chief Gregg Griffith said the system needs to be upgraded and that the police department has the funds needed for the purchase. He recommends the V700 system for \$45,125. Kreger moved to approve the purchase of the V700 system. That motion was seconded by Cooper and adopted unanimously.
- k. Council 2024 Goal Setting Session—Jorgensen asked if council wants to do a goal setting session, the preferred date and time, location and whether or not it should be catered. Council agreed by consensus that it should be held at the Senior Center March 18 at 5 p.m., with catering.

Unfinished Business

- a. Fox Creek Update—Jorgensen said the vacant lot property has been surveyed and he’s awaiting the legal description. Once he has that, the city can move forward with an appraisal and a lot partition. He’s been talking with Senator Ron Wyden’s office about applying for \$3 million in federal grant funding for the design work and environmental permitting needed to make the project shovel ready. If the city is successful in obtaining that grant and getting that work done, the Oregon Department of Transportation can then seek federal funding for the remainder of the project.

Staff Report—McCoy said there was a water line leak at the wastewater treatment plant that caused several problems and public works is getting it fixed. Griffith said that Officer Nielsen is scheduled to go to the police academy in March and that recruitment efforts to fill the vacant position are still underway. Jorgensen said that he and Cole testified at a Columbia County

Board of Commissioners hearing in support of the NEXT Renewables project. They also attended a ribbon cutting ceremony the following day for 2nd Mouse Studio. He met with the new executive director of Col-Pac and spoke with Oregon Senator Suzanne Weber about the city's funding request for the Debast water line project.

Council Reports—Langner said he attended the city/county dinner and discussed sharing public works functions with other cities. He also attended the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments board meeting. Budge said the library's murder mystery is coming up and a writer's group will be meeting February 29. The library board plans on doing goal setting prior to the council's goal setting session. Councilor Denise Watson said she recently visited the city's website to see the live feed at the marina, but noticed that users must enable "cookies" to access it. Her concern is that the company that provides that service has been hacked in the past. Staff was asked to follow up. Cooper said the city's new website would be going live the following week and the first movie night at the senior center was a success. Councilor Robert duPlessis said he also attended the city/county dinner. He met with officials from ODOT and the Oregon State Police about highway 30 safety. Kreger said he spoke with Ree Armitage from Senator Wyden's office about federal infrastructure money for small cities.

City Calendar/Announcements

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

Mayor Jerry Cole

W. Scott Jorgensen, City Administrator