

**City of Rainier**  
**City Council Work Session**  
**May 6, 2024**  
**5 p.m.**  
**Rainier City Hall**

Mayor Jerry Cole called the council meeting to order at 5:17 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; Russ Reigel, Public Works Director

**Flag Salute**

**Visitor Comments:** Washington State Senator Jeff Wilson invited the members of the council to the Monticello Convention Ribbon Cutting ceremony in Longview scheduled for May 30.

**Public Works Department Review**

**a. Budget**—City Administrator W. Scott Jorgensen gave an overview of the budget memo that was included in the meeting packet. Revenues for the Sewer Fund of the public works department budget are below projections because the city has closed its septage receiving during heavy rains. This was done because it decreases the likelihood of the wastewater plant being out of compliance and because the centrifuge is in need of repair. But the City typically receives around \$30,000 per month in septage receiving fees. He recommends that the City increase the fees it charges for receiving septage and install a metering system and the septage receiver that is already at the wastewater plant. Projected sewer revenue in the Sewer Fund is in line with projections. The Sewer Capital Improvement Fund included a revenue line item for State Infrastructure Aid that the City will not be receiving. It also includes a line item for a loan to fund the Wastewater Master Plan. That loan has been approved. A resolution will be presented to council at its regular meeting later on in the evening that needs to be passed in order for the City to receive it. There's an expenditure line item of \$73,450 for a Supplemental Environmental Project involving the installation of bioswale facilities near Fernhill Road. Whenever the City is fined by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), it has the option of putting some of that dollar amount towards a project with environmental benefits. However, that project had an estimated cost of over \$150,000. The actual fines from DEQ total \$67,380. He recommends that the City just pay the fine instead of doing the project and can add that the agenda of the council meeting later on that evening. Projected revenue in the Sewer Fund is in line with projections. The Water Capital Improvement Fund has a line item under resources for State Infrastructure Aid. The City was not awarded those funds and cannot spend them. The Street Fund's resources include a transfer of \$238,200 from the General Fund. Staff transferred half of that amount in April and will transfer the other half after July 1. The Transportation Capital Improvement Fund includes a resource line for the Small City

Allotment Grant (SCA). It's a reimbursement grant, but the program allows for cities to request half of the funding in advance of the project's completion. Staff made that request and the funds have been received. The City can apply for up to \$250,000 in SCA funds in the next cycle if it completes the current project by August 1. The Transportation Capital Improvement Fund includes a resource line item of \$100,000 from a transfer from the Street Fund. In April, staff transferred half of that amount. The remainder will be transferred after July 1. The City is expecting \$200,000 from the Oregon Department of Transportation as part of a fund exchange program. Another resource line item is for a Transportation System Plan grant. Staff has completed the pre-application process. The Special Projects Fund includes resource line items for a series of grants. But the City will not likely receive any of those by the end of the 2023-25 biennium, so those funds cannot be spent. Most of the resources for the Special Projects Fund come from a General Fund transfer of \$400,000. Half of those funds were transferred in April. The other half will be transferred in July. The Special Projects Fund is being used for the ongoing improvements to City Hall. Jorgensen recommends that the City prioritize public works projects based on necessity and budgetary realities. Many projects have been started and not finished. Projects that are time sensitive or already underway should be finished first. Others can be planned for future budget cycles. He also recommends that the City revert back to a yearly budget. Many of the public works funds started the biennium with robust beginning fund balances, but that may not be the case for future budgets.

**b. City Facilities Condition Update**—Public Works Director Russ Reigel said that bids for the roof and windows at city hall will be on the agenda for the council meeting later on that evening. The wall of the administrative office has been painted and the ceiling tiles have arrived. The contractor who was going to do the work for Richards Road backed out. That project may involve a contractor and staff, but he may have to reevaluate it. For Fox Street, a contractor is lined up to run a camera through the sewer line. He's requested bids for the paving work and a water line will have to be installed as part of that project. The floors and partitions for the park bathrooms are done and the doors need to be installed. Mayor Jerry Cole suggested that the Fox Street project be pushed back a year and another, easier project be done instead. At the wastewater plant, the clarifier needs to be cleaned and sand and silt removed. Maintenance will be done while that is happening. The lighting at the wastewater plant has been repaired. The large filter at the water plant will be rebuilt this summer. The electrical work was finished at the pump station at Old Rainier Road. He wants to clean and paint it and replace the door. The watershed dam is also going to need some work.

**c. Projects and Priorities**

**d. Staff Certifications and Trainings**—Jorgensen said that he has hired a part-time operator to sign off on the wastewater system. He starts on May 17. Among the public works employees, a Utility II is a certified Level I in Wastewater Collections, Level I in Water Distribution and a certified cross connection specialist and is scheduled to take the water treatment test. The other Utility II has a Grade II in water treatment and distribution and a Grade II in wastewater collection and treatment. A Utility I is a certified cross connection specialist, is interested in becoming a back flow tester, is open to learning the water and wastewater plants and was recently promoted to operator in training. A Utility I has no certifications in water or wastewater but has three years of full-time experience as an operator in the wastewater plant and is currently a backup. He is interested in becoming a Utility II and obtaining certifications in collections, distribution and wastewater treatment and has signed up to take tests for distribution certification and will then take them for collections and Level I wastewater.

Cole adjourned the work session at 6:09 p.m.

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Mayor Jerry Cole

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W. Scott Jorgensen, City Administrator