

**City of Rainier
City Council Meeting
November 4, 2024
6 p.m.
Rainier City Hall**

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

Council Present: Connie Budge, Jeremy Howell, Mike Kreger, Paul Langner and Denise Watson

Council Absent: Scott Cooper and Robert duPlessis

City Attorney Present: No

City Staff Present: Sarah Blodgett, City Recorder; Gregg Griffith, Police Chief; W. Scott Jorgensen, City Administrator; Russ Reigel, Public Works Director

Flag Salute

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

Visitor Comments: Jan Rich said that the St. Helens Senior Center has sent a public notice out requesting volunteers. Its director has hired a consultant to form committees related to budgets, volunteers and grant writers. That center is not planning to dissolve its nutrition program. The Rainier Senior Center just received a donation from Betsy Johnson’s foundation.

Mayor’s Address: Mayor Jerry Cole encouraged everyone to vote in the following day’s election.

Visitor Comments: Columbia County Emergency Manager Corey Padron introduced new Emergency Management Coordinator Chip Dryden to the council.

Approval of the Consent Agenda

Consider Approval of the October 7, 2024 Regular Council Meeting Minutes—Council President Mike Kreger moved to approve the consent agenda. That motion was seconded by Councilor Paul Langner and adopted unanimously.

New Business

- a. Presentation by Port of Columbia County Executive Director Sean Clark—Clark said the Port owns 10 property sites totaling 2600 between Clatskanie and Scappoose but does not have any in Rainier. The Port has a staff of 19 and supports over 1400 local jobs. It does have aging infrastructure, but there is an opportunity for small scale projects in Rainier.
- b. Timber Sale Presentation—City Forester Pat McCoy said there is around 40 acres that could be harvested, but it wouldn’t be as profitable as the last timber harvest. Councilor Paul Langner suggested holding off for one more year. He predicts that interest rates will drop, which would result in more homes being built and higher demand for timber. Kreger

moved to hold off on a timber sale for now. That motion was seconded by Councilor Jeremy Howell and adopted unanimously.

c. First Reading of Ordinance 1099—Amending Chapters 13.05 and 13.15 of the Rainier Municipal Code

d. Library Board Appointment—Langner moved to appoint Janet Sedgley to the library board. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously.

Unfinished Business

a. Fox Creek Update—City Administrator W. Scott Jorgensen said he received a second bid for surveying work and it did come in lower than the first bid. But city staff found a listing of surveyors throughout Oregon, so he can reach out and obtain more bids. Council agreed by consensus.

b. Wastewater Plant MAO—Jorgensen said he, Public Works Director Russ Reigel and the City's engineer met with the Department of Environmental Quality regarding the MAO. All involved agree that the MAO needs to be modified to reflect more realistic timelines and deadlines. He met earlier in the day with the attorney who put together the MAO to discuss the modification.

c. Senior Center Expansion—Reigel said he has a bid from a contractor. The plan is to enclose the area as a sunroom with no air conditioning or additional flooring. Langner moved to approve the bid, with the condition that the Senior Center have adequate funds to pay for it. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously.

d. Website Content—There was a discussion about having the ability to file police reports online. Councilor Connie Budge had a list of content she would like to see on the website. Jorgensen suggested that he, Budge and Councilor Scott Cooper get together and determine which pages that content should go on. Council agreed by consensus.

e. Liaison Roles and Definitions—Councilor Denise Watson had some suggested additions to the material that was included in the council packet. She will provide those to Jorgensen and it will be brought back to the next meeting.

f. Unattended Person Policy—Budge moved to adopt the policy, with the additional citation of the applicable state statute. That motion was seconded by Watson and adopted unanimously.

Staff Report—Reigel said he had previously received a bid for \$11,000 for aeration basin work, but it came in closer to \$22,000. City Recorder Sarah Blodgett said administrative staff has been working with the auditors for the last three weeks. Police Chief Gregg Griffith said the officer who is at the academy will be back for the holidays to continue his training and his graduation is January 17. He'll be doing field training afterwards and should be able to patrol on his own next spring.

Council Reports—Kreger said the Winterfest tree lighting and parade event is coming up. Langner said he attended the most recent city/county dinner and the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments meeting. The City was awarded a \$32,000 grant at that meeting. Langner, Watson and Cole will be meeting with the county November 14 about planning and permitting issues. He also mentioned that the Federal Emergency Management Agency has a biological opinion coming out related to flood plain issues that will affect the City. Jorgensen said City Planner Skip Urling has been attending webinars about it and will present to council.

City Calendar/Announcements—Jorgensen said the Parks Committee is scheduled to meet November 25.

Cole adjourned the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Mayor Jerry Cole

W. Scott Jorgensen, City Administrator