

**City of Rainier  
Regular City Council Meeting  
March 1, 2021  
6 p.m.  
Rainier City Hall**

Mayor Jerry Cole called the Regular Council Meeting to order at 6 p.m.

**Council Present:** Connie Budge, Robert duPlessis, Mike Kreger, Levi Richardson, Richard Sanders, Brenda Tschida

**Council Absent:** Jenna Weaver

**City Attorney Present:** No

**City Staff Present:** Gregg Griffith, Police Chief; W. Scott Jorgensen, City Administrator; Sue Lawrence, Public Works Director

**Flag Salute**

**Additions/Deletions from the Agenda:** Councilor Richard Sanders wanted to take a minute to recognize City Administrator W. Scott Jorgensen's wedding anniversary. Public Works Director Sue Lawrence said she wanted to add Change Order #18 for the A Street Project to the agenda. Council President Mike Kreger moved to add it to the agenda. That motion was seconded by Councilor Robert duPlessis and adopted unanimously.

**Mayor's Address:** There was no mayor's address at this time.

**Visitor Comments:** Linda Turley said she's unhappy about the stop sign in front of her house on West C Street. Mayor Jerry Cole said the city received several complaints about motorists speeding in the area and pedestrians almost getting hit by vehicles. City staff considered options that included adding speed bumps but didn't feel that would be appropriate. The stop sign does slow people down. Councilor Brenda Tschida said she had received several complaints about speeding in the area. Turley said the stop and go traffic causes noise. She wasn't bothered by the speeding and thinks speed bumps would have been better. Cole said the city wanted to make it safe there and push through traffic to B Street, which has curb, gutters and sidewalks. Turley asked about citations written for speeders in that area. Police Chief Greg Griffin said police vehicles are very visible when they patrol around there, but people speed when they're not around. Kreger said people walk on the street and there's no sidewalk. He's almost been hit there a couple of times. People have had close calls while walking their dogs and kids ride bikes

and skateboards down that street. Sanders said the stop sign was put where it was because of citizen input. Neighbors are safer because of it. Councilor Connie Budge said she grew up on that street and walks it. There's fast traffic before and after working hours. One side has a walking area and the other is a gutter. Her mother fell there once. Children play with a basketball hoop. It's supposed to be a neighborhood street. Cole said he would do a site visit to gather perspective on the noise levels and urged councilors to do the same. Council can revisit the stop sign at its June meeting.

### **Consider Approval of the Consent Agenda:**

Consider Approval of the February 1, 2021 Regular Council Meeting Minutes and December 16, 2020 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes—Kreger moved to approve the consent agenda. That motion was seconded by Tschida and adopted unanimously.

### **Unfinished Business**

- a. Riverfront Trail Update—Cole said the slope wasn't as bad as was initially thought, so there won't have to be a switchback. Jorgensen said city staff was informed that the trail will not interfere with the deck at the Eagles Lodge. Lawrence said the trail will narrow to five feet wide through that portion. Jorgensen said he obtained the easement from El Tapatio.
- b. Fox Creek Update—There was no update at this time.
- c. Senior Housing—Budge said the letter Jorgensen wrote expressing the city's support for the Area Aging Plan was well-received by the Community Action Team and is being submitted. The senior advocate recently met with the police department. Cole said he was appointing Budge as the senior population liaison.
- d. Second Reading of Ordinance 1078—Establishing Business License Regulations for Food Carts—There was a discussion about the sanitary facilities requirements under the ordinance. Cole said some people were concerned about food carts taking business from established restaurants in town. Before this ordinance, it was a free-for-all. Someone could obtain a transient merchant license and set up anywhere. He wanted to put everyone on the same footing and give opportunity. The city is being proactive by creating the ordinance. The transient merchant ordinance gave no protection to existing businesses. He doubts the city could have legally banned food carts anyway. Kreger moved to adopt Ordinance 1078. That motion was seconded by Tschida and adopted unanimously.

### **New Business**

- a. Presentation by Barry Verrill from KLTV on Televising Council Meetings—Verrill gave an overview of the services provided by KLTV, a non-profit based in Longview. KLTV covers live meetings and streams

then on its website. It covers around 28 council meetings per month. Those recordings are saved on a cloud for two years, with hard copies retained for seven. Meetings could be streamed from the council chambers for around \$3500 per year. Budge said if it works out, it could be a line item in the budget. Cole said the city can meet with Comcast to ensure that the meetings are also televised on local public access. Verrill said Rainier council meetings wouldn't conflict with any of the other ones KLTV broadcasts. Cole said that around 50 to 200 people would watch council meetings when they were done via Zoom and streamed to his Facebook page. They would then be shared and get up to 1,000 views. Cole and Jorgensen planned to visit the KLTV studios before the next council meeting. Verrill said he would pass on contact information for Comcast. Jorgensen said he could also try to reach out to their lobbyists to arrange for the meetings to be broadcast on public access.

- b. Resolution 21-03-01—Establishing Food Cart Pod Permit and Renewal Fees—Kreger moved to approve the resolution. That motion was seconded by Councilor Levi Richardson and adopted unanimously.
- c. City Committee Recruitment Update—Jorgensen reported that 12 people have applied for positions on the city's various committees. Nine applicants are in city limits and three are outside. Many applicants applied to be on multiple committees. There were three applicants for one vacancy on the Planning Commission and the deadline to apply has closed. There were three applicants for the five vacancies on the Budget Committee and the application deadline is March 20. There were eight applicants for the Parks Committee. The application deadline has closed. Six were residents and two are from outside of city limits. Council will make its appointments to those positions at its April meeting.
- d. Selection of Budget Officer—Cole said the finance officer has typically served in that role. He proposed appointing Finance Officer Debbie Dudley as the Budget Officer with Jorgensen as the Co-Budget Officer. Kreger said it would give Jorgensen the opportunity to learn the city's budget and give Dudley the chance to retire. Jorgensen said he was willing to take it on. Kreger moved to appoint Dudley as the Budget Officer and Jorgensen as the Co-Budget Officer. That motion was seconded by Budge and adopted unanimously.
- e. Potential Budget Requests—Jorgensen said he's keeping a list of items that have come up that may be included in the 2021-22 fiscal year budget. They include possible line items for televising council meetings and \$5,000 for a tree maintenance program. Griffin said he would like to replace one of the police department's vehicles. He tries to rotate those replacements every two years. Lawrence said a vehicle replacement fund could help the city plan ahead. Public works has vehicles from 2010 and 2016. The truck that was used with the snow plow is from 2001, broke down and will cost \$8,000 to repair. The water

- plant filter needs to be rehabilitated, the SCADA system and its computers need to be upgraded and new equipment is needed at the wastewater plant to deal with flow issues. New windows and a roof replacement for city hall would also be nice. Cole said he would like a dais and some new chairs for the council chambers. Budge suggested a five-year plan for the budget.
- f. Street Light Requests—Lawrence said she checked with the PUD about lights on Washington Way. She’s seeking direction from council about the lights on Neer Way. Four lights were put in at the time the area was developed. Cole said the city didn’t put them up and would like to see what the costs are to replace them. Lawrence said she received one bid of \$17,000. One of the poles fell over and was removed by the PUD. Some of the others have the potential to short out, so they were disconnected. Kreger and Sanders both said they didn’t think replacing them was the city’s responsibility. Sanders asked if it would be possible for the city to partner with the PUD to make the replacement more cost effective. Cole said the city can put in an application and pay \$100 for the engineering study. He wants to see options and would consider having the city take the poles over if they were up to code. The city should set up a meeting with Clatskanie PUD to discuss all of this. Richardson asked how the residents of Neer Way felt about the matter. Lawrence said she’s received multiple requests from them. Cole directed Lawrence to set up a meeting with the PUD and have Sanders present.
- g. Water Meter Replacement—Lawrence said she’s looked at different scenarios for replacing the city’s existing water meters and the costs of each. There are software and hardware problems. The computer system at city all is on its last legs. It would cost \$20,000 to upgrade the old system and just get by. Replacing the old meters with newer ones would cost around \$120,000. If the computer at city hall fails, staff would have to hand read 660 meters or do estimates, which would result in re-reading and having to back charge customers. She recommends replacing the meters over the next couple of months. Cole asked where the money for that would come from in the budget. Lawrence said it could come out of the capital funds for water and sewer. The D Street loop water line replacement may have to be deferred, as she wouldn’t have enough staff time to do both projects simultaneously. The water meters could be replaced by the next round of reads, but the D Street loop project would be deferred to after the 2021-22 fiscal year starts in July. She could contract out for the work on the D Street loop water line. Cole asked about the possibility of replacing some of the water meters. Lawrence said it will have to be done in batches. Cole directed Lawrence to send out a notice to the D Street loop residents with an updated timeline of that project. Kreger moved to approve the expenditure of \$120,000 split between the water and sewer capital funds, with the project referred back to council if the cost exceeds

\$140,000. That motion was seconded by Sanders and adopted unanimously.

- h. Change Order #18 for the A Street Project—Lawrence said this should be the last change order for the project. It includes the cost for stormwater design and inlet installation and da credit from the contractor for \$31,000 for a DEQ fine. The total change order is \$4859.10. Kreger moved to approve the change order. That motion was seconded by Tschida and adopted unanimously.

**Staff Report-**Lawrence said there has been some land slippage on West First Street. Public works has repaired two sinkholes, but there are two more. The portion of the road with the sinkholes has been closed down, with local access only. Jorgensen said the city received \$30,000 in COVID relief funds from the state Department of Administrative services to reimburse the cost of the door replacements at city hall. He’s been coordinating with the museum volunteers about the building’s 100-year anniversary. They will be meeting the following Thursday. Along with Lawrence, he held a meeting in the council chambers with the condo owners by the riverfront trail to address any concerns they may have about the project. He attended the February Chamber of Commerce meeting, is preparing to represent the city on the Col-Pac board and did an appearance on KOHI radio with Cole. The city’s municipal code has been updated to reflect the passage of the last few ordinances.

**Council Reports-**There were no council reports at this time.

### **City Calendar/Announcements**

Cole adjourned the meeting at 9:02 p.m.

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Mayor Jerry Cole

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W. Scott Jorgensen, City Administrator