

**City of Rainier
Regular City Council Meeting
April 5, 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

Council Absent: Richard Sanders, Brenda Tschida, Jenna Weaver

City Attorney Present: No

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

Flag Salute

Additions/Deletions from the Agenda: Public Works Director Sue Lawrence said she would like to add a Geotech study to the agenda. Mayor Jerry Cole said that could be item 7i under new business. Council President Mike Kreger moved to add Geotech study to the agenda. That motion was seconded by Budge and adopted unanimously.

Mayor's Address: Cole and Rainier Junior/Senior High School Teacher Andrew Demko presented awards to Rho Kappa National Social Studies Honor Society Seniors Chloe Buck, Reese Schimmel, Alexis Crape, Kylie Cook and Jenna Kamppi. Sylvia Nation was honored as the History Club Student of the Year. History Club Officers of the Year Brandon Hayward, Haillie Schafner and Hunter Gutenberger were also honored. Cole read a proclamation of April as HOPE month.

Visitor Comments: Dan Kloppman from the Rainier Community Church of God thanked the city for allowing services in the park last summer. He said the congregation would be willing to volunteer to paint the bathrooms to give back to the community. Cole asked Kloppman to coordinate that with Lawrence and asked if there were any plans to do services in the park this summer. Kloppman said there might be, and Cole said the congregation would be welcome to use the park facilities.

Consider Approval of the Consent Agenda:

Consider Approval of the March 1, 2021 Regular Council Meeting and March 9, 2021 Council Goal Setting Work Session Minutes and January 13, 2021 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes—Kreger moved to approve the consent agenda. That motion was seconded by Councilor Connie Budge and adopted unanimously.

New Business

- e. Forestry Contract Discussion—Cole said that City Forester Byron Rickert moved to Central Oregon. Rickert notified Cole of his pending move six months ago. Cole asked him to try and find a replacement. Rickert is suggesting that Patrick McCoy take over as the city’s forester. His family lives in town and owns McCoy Logging. McCoy has a degree in forestry. Cole wanted to introduce him to the council tonight, but McCoy is out of town. He will be able to make it to the council’s May meeting. Cole is looking for approval for staff to draw up a contract with McCoy. Rickert will help in the transition. He and McCoy have a similar mindset regarding the city’s watershed—they want to manage what can be harvested. Rickert said he’s managed the watershed for 15 years and lived in town for 45 years. He’s moved to Redmond to be closer to his grandchildren and spent the last two years looking for a replacement. Rickert wants the watershed to have a sustainable forest that can provide income to the city. McCoy and his father both did millwork at Longview Fiber and his philosophy matches what the city wants. McCoy wants to give back to the community. The watershed is 1500 acres and no more than two percent of it is harvested each year for a 50-year rotation. That’s between 22 and 26 acres per year, which raises about \$200,000 per year for the city’s timber fund. Harvests are usually done in August and September. A planting was done four weeks ago for the area that was harvested last year. If council agrees to contract with McCoy, Rickert can spend a day with him going over the areas planned for harvest over the next few years. Timber prices are high right now and that’s a good opportunity for the city to generate revenue. Anything harvested this year will be ready to be re-planted. Kreger moved to direct staff to generate a contract with McCoy. That motion was seconded by Councilor Levi Richardson and adopted unanimously.

Unfinished Business

- a. Riverfront Trail Update—Lawrence said the project is almost completed. The next phase will involve asphaltting, once the weather improves. She and the contractor are looking at bank stabilization. The city will save around \$6,000 by not doing electrical work along the trail. Cole said the city should go with solar lighting instead because it’s one-third of the cost. The city is wrapping up obtaining an easement from the Eagles Lodge. They didn’t want their deck altered and the new design avoids doing that. The city gave the Eagles a letter saying as much.

- b. Fox Creek Update—City Administrator W. Scott Jorgensen said he spoke with Rep. Brad Witt about obtaining state funds to pay for the feasibility study and sent his office much documentation and information about it.
- c. Senior Housing—Cole said there will be a committee for ideas for the property past the Senior Center that could include senior housing. He took a field trip to the site, along with Budge, Jorgensen and Mike Avent. The committee can be formed in May or June. Jorgensen said he put together a crude drawing of a basic concept on a map after the site visit. Budge said the idea started with an RV park concept. Councilor Robert duPlessis said he would like to be on the committee. Jorgensen suggested Planning Commissioner Paul Langner as a possible member. Cole said Randy Johnston wanted to be involved.

New Business

- a. Reimbursement Request for Maple Drive Tree Removal—Cole suggested that this item be moved to Unfinished Business for the council's May meeting. A property owner had requested reimbursement for removal of a tree in the city's right of way and Cole told her she could make her case to the council.
- b. Estuary Partnership Presentation—Samantha DuMont described the organization as an environmental non-profit that does work in Washington and Oregon, from the Bonneville Dam to the mouth of the Columbia. Estuary Partnership engages communities and does large-scale restoration projects with schools and volunteers. The organization did some work on Fox Creek in 2019. It involved planting 3600 trees and shrubs and reducing the number of invasive species. Around 91 percent of those new plants have survived. Estuary Partnership would like to enhance habitat and the riparian buffer along Fox Creek. The organization uses funds through the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board to fund its projects in Oregon, and the focus is on restoration. Kreger moved to authorize Estuary Partnership to do work in the proposed area on the other side of Fox Creek. That motion was seconded by Richardson and adopted unanimously.
- c. Planning Commission, Budget Committee and Parks Committee Appointments—Cole said he and Jorgensen discussed the best way to go about making the appointments. He directed Jorgensen to draft a memo with recommendations, which was presented to council. Budge moved to appoint Mike Avent, Scott Cooper, Dena Nordstrom, Jeremy Howell and Ethan Pearson to the Budget Committee. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously. Cole said the city received more applications than there were spots originally set up for the committee. But there's no ordinance governing how many Parks Committee members there have to be. He also suggested that the committee could be the Parks, Recreation and Education Committee.

Budge moved to expand the committee to include recreation and Education. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously. Budge move to appoint Randall Johnston, Jason Nulph, Sharon Jump, Tiffany Hatley, Kristi Cole, Gary Bice, Terry Deaton, Scott Cooper, Denise Watson and Laura Trethaway to the committee. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously. Cole said there were four applicants for the vacant Planning Commission position. Jorgensen summarized his recommendation. Kreger moved to appoint Trethaway to the Planning Commission. That motion was seconded by duPlessis and adopted unanimously. Budge moved to appoint Deaton to the REDCO Budget Committee. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously. Jorgensen said that the Budget Committee meetings need to be scheduled. Cole suggested having REDCO Budget Committee meet from 5 to 5:30 and Budget Committee meet from 5:30 to 7 p.m. on May 10 and 17th at the Masonic Lodge. Council agreed by consensus.

- d. Oregon Government Ethics Commission Statements of Economic Interest—Cole reminded councilors that the statements are due by April 15.
- f. Potential West A Street Housing Development Committee—This was already discussed under the Senior Housing section of Unfinished Business.
- g. 526 East E Street—duPlessis said the actual address of the property is 516 East E Street; he went by there earlier in the day. Cole provided background on the house and the fire that took place there last year. Jorgensen said he received a complaint. He called the restoration company whose number is listed on the sign in front. They didn't have any additional work scheduled for the site. He called the county and they indicated some permits had been pulled for work on the house. The county gave him the contact information for the owner and he tried to call but it always goes straight to voicemail. Cole said the city has the ability to declare a house to be dangerous and derelict if the owner does not take care of it. The city can eventually put a lien on the property if nothing is done to clean it up. Kreger moved to direct staff to move forward with declaring the house a dangerous property. That motion was seconded by Budge and adopted unanimously.
- h. Vac Trailer Lease—Lawrence said public works has been using a vac trailer that was loaned to the city. It costs \$93,000 to purchase, but there is also an option to lease it. Leasing it would cost around \$1800 per month. Cole asked if it is within the city's budget. Lawrence said she can budget it in over the next five years. Cole asked if there's money for it in the budget, is Lawrence confident she can budget for future years without using the general fund. Lawrence confirmed that she wouldn't have to take it out of the general fund. She added that it costs more to lease than purchase the vac trailer and would prefer to

purchase it. Cole said the city could loan itself money from the timber fund and then pay it back. duPlessis moved to authorize the purchase of the vac trailer using the timber fund, with a repayment over five years with two percent interest. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously.

- i. Geotech Study—Lawrence said a portion of First Street is sliding and getting worse. She had engineers come and look at it and recommends doing a Geotech study. It will cost around \$34,000. The city has a water line, sewer line and culvert under that part of the street and they are all threatened by the sliding. The Geotech study was not budgeted for. The city is still awaiting final costs of the A Street project from the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). Staff met with ODOT the other day to discuss that. The sliding on First Street is an emergency. Cole said that doing nothing is not an option. Jorgensen was asked for his recommendation. He said the city does have some contingency funds that could be used to fund the Geotech study. Lawrence confirmed that there is \$39,000 in the street contingency fund. Budge moved to authorize the expenditure of \$34,000 from the street contingency fund to conduct the Geotech study. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously.

Staff Report-Jorgensen said he submitted a grant application for funding a water master plan update to Business Oregon. He and Lawrence met with representatives of the museum to coordinate the April 10 event commemorating city hall's 100-year anniversary. A news release has been sent out to promote it and he invited county, state and federal officials to it. Along with Cole, he toured the KLTV studios in Longview. The two of them appeared on that station's Local Matters program. He and City Attorney Steve Petersen negotiated the cell tower lease agreement. On March 11, he was appointed to represent the city on the Col-Pac board of directors and attended the Rainier Chamber of Commerce meeting. He's been working with Petersen and Rickert on transitioning the contract for the city's forestry services. On March 18, he and Lawrence met with officials from the railroad and ODOT about how to present cars from crossing portions of A Street only intended for pedestrians. He's attended a couple of meetings about a grant that the county received to install bike hubs at various locations, including the city's main park. Jorgensen, Budge, Cole and Avent toured the nine-acre property at the end of A Street to visualize potential future residential and mixed use development there. He purchased the rest of the microphones for the council chambers, attended a League of Oregon Cities meeting for local leaders and has been talking with Rep. Witt's office about state funding for the Fox Creek feasibility study. Lawrence said that ODOT has offered to install bollards at some of the A Street intersections to discourage drivers from crossing where they shouldn't. ODOT also did some noise monitoring near the intersection of C and 11th, where the new stop sign was installed. There

was a difference of one decibel. Public works staff has thus far installed 450 of the new water meters around town.

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

City Calendar/Announcements

Cole adjourned the meeting at 8:22 p.m.

Mayor Jerry Cole

W. Scott Jorgensen, City Administrator