

**City of Rainier  
Regular City Council Meeting  
November 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, Jeremy Howell and Mike Kreger

**Council Absent:** Scott Cooper, Levi Richardson and 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 wanted to add UV Lights for the Wastewater Plant to the agenda. Council President Mike Kreger moved to add that item. That motion was seconded by Councilor Robert duPlessis and adopted unanimously.

Lawrence said she also wanted to add Water Plant Fire Costs to the agenda. Kreger moved to add the item. That motion was seconded by duPlessis and adopted unanimously.

**Mayor's Address:** Mayor Cole applauded the Rainier High School football team's successful season.

**Visitor Comments:** Cody Nelson said his grandfather owns a house on Fernhill Road. Nelson has been renovating that house and plans to purchase it. But the neighbor's house is an eyesore and has garbage and hazardous material piled up in the backyard. Cole said that house has been a source of constant issues for the police department. He suggested that Nelson meet with Police Chief Gregg Griffith to find out what has been done there. Jorgensen asked council if it would like him to move forward with the process of declaring the house a nuisance at its next meeting. Council agreed by consensus.

Noah Kloppman presented a proposal for an Eagle Scout project to construct a new dugout for the tee ball field. It will be a two-day project and he is already raising funds for the materials. Councilor Connie Budge moved to approve

the project, contingent upon approval by Lawrence. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously.

Nic Gratzner said he looked through the council packet and saw the proposed updated language for the moorage agreement. He said it should be stronger about prohibiting sleeping and camping on boats.

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

Consider Approval of the October 4, 2021 Regular Council Meeting Minutes-Kreger moved to approve the consent agenda. That motion was seconded by Budge and adopted unanimously.

### **Unfinished Business**

- a. Riverfront Trail Update—Jorgensen said he and Lawrence met with representatives of the Oregon Department of Transportation and the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments to ensure that the city would receive the grant it was awarded for the project's third phase. He has finalized and submitted that paperwork.
- b. Fox Creek Update—Jorgensen said he submitted paperwork to the Department of Administrative Services for the \$100,000 grant the city was awarded for the feasibility study.
- c. Senior and Multigenerational Housing—There were no updates at this time.
- d. D Street Loop Update—Lawrence said construction has started on the project. The pavement was ground earlier in the day and the storm line will be installed the following day. She is expecting it to be completed by November 18.
- e. Moorage Agreement Update—Griffith said he incorporated policies and procedures from the Marine Board into the draft. Cole said he wasn't opposed to including the language that Gratzner suggested about prohibiting camping and sleeping on boats. Budge agreed. Jorgensen said he could amend that and bring it back to the next council meeting. Griffith explained that the rate remains the same for users who sign six month or one-year leases and raise to \$100 per month otherwise.
- f. Code Enforcement Position—Cole said he asked the police department for statistics on code enforcement and abatement actions. He wanted to know if the department is handling too many of them or if ordinances are unenforceable or the processes take too long. The city has been dealing with the house on Fernhill that Nelson talked about for years. The department does handle nuisance complaints. He is not opposed to having more code enforcement, but the money for that could go to other things. The city is already having a difficult time filling its vacant police officer position. He would rather have another officer or public works employee. Adding a code enforcement position would have to come out of the general fund and could be better served elsewhere. Ordinances can be fixed, if need be. Budge said she wanted to know how citizens feel about it. The city should see what

standard they want. There was a good response for the recent parks survey. The city could do a similar survey for code enforcement, then maybe council can do a work session on fixes to ordinances early next year. Cole said enforcement is not strictly complaint driven. Griffith confirmed that the department does look for violations. Cole said that Councilor Scott Cooper emailed him suggesting that the citizen survey be done. Public input is always appreciated. Griffith said the main hang up is that the city has to spend money to clean up nuisance properties like the one on Fernhill and then do a lien to recover those costs. Jorgensen said he spoke with Clatskanie City Manager Greg Hinkelman. That city would be interested in possibly partnering with the city to split the costs of a part-time code enforcement position. He and City Recorder Sarah Blodgett attended a Columbia County Board of Commissioners meeting to discuss having an intergovernmental agreement for planning enforcement. The county will work on a draft and Jorgensen will present it to the council when it's ready.

### **New Business**

- a. Budget Committee Appointments—Jorgensen said there are three openings on the budget committee and three persons interested in serving on that body. Kreger moved to appoint the applicants, Denise Watson, Gratzner and Carey Burgess, to the committee. That motion was seconded by Councilor Jeremy Howell and adopted unanimously.
- b. Resolution 12-11-01—To Include Merchant Service Fees in Charges Made by the City to Commercial Septage Haulers—Cole said it will be a pass-through for the commercial haulers. When they use credit cards, the city is charged the fees for that and loses money. The haulers can still pay with cash or check if they don't want to pay the fee. Kreger moved to approve the resolution. That motion was seconded by duPlessis and adopted unanimously.
- c. Contract Agreement for Planning Assistance with CWCOG—Budge moved to approve the agreement. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously.
- d. MOU for Rainier Oregon Historical Society—Cole said the ROHS has been using the community room in city hall, but there hasn't been a formal agreement up until now. Jorgensen said Lawrence asked him if there should be some language about the key cards and agreements. Kreger moved to approve the MOU with the addition of language about the key card and agreements. That motion was seconded by Howell and adopted unanimously.
- e. Certified Public Accountant Professional Services Agreement—Cole said council terminated the finance officer position because many of those duties were assumed by other staff members. But the city still needs an accountant's professional services for checks and balances. Clatskanie uses that model and provided the template that was included in the council packet. Jorgensen said there are some requirements the city should add to the template. They include grant

compliance administration, monthly meeting with department heads, helping the city to achieve regulatory compliance and presenting to council as needed. He asked if council would like a half-hour response time included in the qualifications. Blodgett said experience with public bodies would be important to have. Budge said that since the city has REDCO, experience with an economic development or urban renewal agency should also be required. Cole directed staff to put together an RFQ for the next meeting.

- f. Bid Award for First Street Landslide Repair—Lawrence said she received one bid for \$123,000. The scope of work is replacing a culvert and maintaining the sewer line. It can be paid for through the sewer capital and transportation capital funds and is not a complete replacement of the street. This consists of the interim repairs that were recommended by the Geotech. It needs to get done as soon as possible because of the potential damage to the sewer line. Cole said the bid is consistent with his priorities of keeping the sewer line operational and stopping the slide. Budge asked if the neighbors have been notified. Jorgensen said he provided Dan Graham with a copy of the Geotech report. Kreger moved to award the bid to AES. That motion was seconded by duPlessis and adopted unanimously.
- g. Bid Award for Dredging Water Intake—Cole said divers looked at the intake for water system and found blockage. That causes wear and tear on the pumps. Lawrence said it was causing problems with the control valve at the water plant. Kreger moved to approve the bids. That motion was seconded by duPlessis and adopted unanimously.
- h. UV Lights for the Wastewater Plant—Lawrence said equipment that burned out needs to be replaced. Her request is for \$7898 from the sewer capital fund. Budge moved to approve the expense. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously.
- i. Water Plant Fire Costs—Lawrence said there was a fire at the old water plant. She’s been working with insurance and received a bid for \$30,000 to clean up the site. There will also be lead and asbestos testing, replacing water monitoring equipment and electrical work. It’s all been approved for reimbursement by the insurance company. There will have to be an RFP to design a new roof, then another to build it. The rest of the facility is sound. Kreger moved to authorize the repair and replacement work at the water plant with future reimbursement from insurance. That motion was seconded by Howell and adopted unanimously.

**Staff Report**— Griffith said the department is still working to fill its vacant position. It will be open until filled. He’s also dealing with boats on the beach area owned by the Department of State Lands. A meeting is scheduled with that agency and the county marine patrol to address the issue. Lawrence said three of the marina cameras went out and have been replaced. They didn’t work with the old system, so that was also replaced. There are now six new cameras and the police department can monitor them. Does council want full video from all of the cameras on the city’s website, or just some of them? Still

images are more difficult to do. Cole said he wants full video. Council agreed by consensus. Jorgensen said he's been working on an annexation ordinance. He and Cole drove around one day to look at code violations. He set up the Library Board's first meeting, which is scheduled for November 6. Jorgensen drafted the MOU with the historical society and represented the city in a municipal court case. He and Lawrence met with representatives of the drainage district. Jorgensen met with the county's new emergency management director, has spent much time arranging the demolition of the nuisance house at 516 East E Street and attended a special Col-Pac meeting October 21. He met with the city attorney earlier in the day to discuss the process for vacating city rights of way for roads that will never be built and will be presenting that to council at its next meeting.

**Council Reports**—Kreger asked if city hall could host its traditional tree lighting ceremony, complete with an appearance by Santa Claus, December 5 from 5 to 5:30 p.m. Council agreed by consensus.

**City Calendar/Announcements**—Cole said the next council meeting is scheduled for December 6.

Cole adjourned the meeting at 7:37 p.m.

---

Mayor Jerry Cole

---

W. Scott Jorgensen, City Administrator