

WESTFIR CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, November 14, 2019

Westfir City Hall, 5:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Matt Meske called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Councilors D'Lynn Williams, Thalia Lerin, Edward Johnstone, and Randy Stark were present. All stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

MAYOR'S MINUTE:

The Mayor reported that everything seems to be going well for the month and noted the time change and upcoming holidays.

CITIZEN COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS:

There were no citizen comments.

COUNCILOR COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS:

There were no Councilor comments.

APPROVE MINUTES:

City Recorder Nicole Tritten stated that, contrary to the agenda, there were no minutes from November 4, 2019 since the meeting was not called to order in the absence of a quorum. A statement that the meeting was not held and was postponed will be entered into the record. Councilor Randy Stark made a motion to approve the minutes from October 7, 2019. Mayor Matt Meske seconded, and the motion carried, 5-0.

AYES: Meske, Stark, Williams, Johnstone, Lerin NAYS: 0 ABSTENTIONS: 0

WATER/SEWER REPORT:

Jackson Stone presented the water and sewer report. He reported continued high water usage compared with the previous year, reflecting the accuracy of the new meter. He reported that he received his two CEUs from the Seaside conference and will receive, upon payment of fees by the City, his two-year certification from Oregon Health Authority. He reported that the sewer plant is running well, and that the new trailer has arrived and been well secured against theft. He stated that a big month of drinking water testing is coming up in December, which is done every three years. Mayor Matt Meske and Jackson discussed the purchase of a fuel barrel, fuel stabilizer and an extra supply of diesel fuel. Jackson also requested a large purchase of chlorine to last until Spring.

HEMLOCK PARK EQUIPMENT:

Jackson Stone reported that he removed the swing seats for safety after one broke during a child's use. Nicole Tritten reported that new seats were included on the November expenditure sheet and would be ordered as soon as expenditures are approved. Mayor Matt Meske stated that he performed welding on the swing set.

POLICE / FIRE REPORT:

The police reports for October were reviewed, and there was no comment. There was no fire report, but Mayor Matt Meske reported that Oakridge has increased the number of volunteers to eight and that staffing is improving.

ORDINANCE 140 SHIPPING CONTAINERS:

The Council discussed the addition to Section 2 of allowance for one storage container per property with at least a 50-foot setback from all lot lines. In addition, the container must be obscured from view of neighboring properties and the road by a fence or other visual screening. Council agreed that the changes to the ordinance were an improvement and that the ordinance still allows the use of a storage container to a limited extent. Moreover, the Council acknowledged that residents can always apply for a variance. Councilor D'Lynn Williams made a motion to accept Ordinance 140 with the revision discussed. Mayor Matt Meske seconded, and the motion carried 5-0.

AYES: Meske, Williams, Johnstone, Lerin, Stark NAYS: 0 ABSTENTIONS: 0

TOYS FOR TOTS:

Mayor Matt Meske requested a \$300.00 donation from the City to Toys for Tots, which is run by the Oakridge Volunteer Fire and EMS, with all toys staying in the Oakridge/Westfir community. Councilor Thalia Lerin moved to donate \$300.00 to the Toys for Tots program on the behalf of Westfir. Councilor Randy Stark seconded, and the motion carried 5-0.

AYES: Meske, Williams, Lerin, Stark, Johnstone NAYS: 0 ABSTENTIONS: 0

NUISANCE VEHICLES:

Mayor Matt Meske discussed the ongoing problem of junk vehicles present in Westfir counter to Ordinance 138 for the abatement of nuisances. Council discussed the option of third-party towing of vehicles because notices of abatement, citations, and court fines have failed to resolve the problem in several cases. The Council discussed the jurisdiction for non-compliant vehicles that are moved into County rights of way to avoid the City ordinance. The Council did not reach a conclusion about the viability of towing as an enforcement tool, and the matter was tabled pending further research into disposal of towed vehicles. Mayor Matt Meske stated that as a courtesy he would talk to one non-compliant resident personally to let him know that the Council is serious about towing.

LAW ENFORCEMENT MEETING/CAMPING ORDINANCE:

Oakridge will hold a law enforcement meeting for the public on Wednesday, November 20, which provides an opportunity for councilors to ask legal questions of relevance to the City. Councilor D'Lynn Williams encouraged any councilors attending the meeting to ask about whether camping ordinances are not enforceable due to a recent ruling by the 9th Circuit Court.

Councilor Thalia Lerin reported that she contacted County Commissioner Heather Buck's office to ask whether the court ruling regarding camping applied only to cities with population over a certain number. She stated that she has not received a response.

CITY RECORDER REPORT:

Nicole Tritten presented the report and summarized the items. She reported that the two office computers and two printers are plugged in to an ungrounded outlet. She requested that the Council authorize the expense for an electrician to install a grounded outlet, and the Council allowed \$150 for the work.

Nicole reported that, per Mayor Matt Meske's request, she contacted Warner Creek Company for a bid to remove a dead cedar tree near the sewer plant.

Nicole reported that she has completed notary training and received her certificate but has not yet purchased supplies. She noted that the City does not have a notary journal agreement that would allow the City to keep the journal upon separation from the employee. She asked if the Council wanted to consider having an agreement. Both the Council and Nicole stated that their preference is for the City to retain custody of the journal. The Council asked her to research language for a resolution to adopt a notary journal agreement.

Nicole updated the Council on IT issues in the office, including installation of a password manager and her concern about the reliability of the Microsoft image backups she has been performing weekly.

On behalf of Relief Recorder Sharon Elrod, Nicole asked about whether the Council is ready to move forward with plans for a new City Hall. Mayor Matt Meske stated that an addition, extensive remodel, or rebuild to the current structure are the only options available at this time. Council D'Lynn suggested the City consider a modular building.

Nicole asked the Council to decide when holiday pay begins for benefits-eligible employees because it is not stated in the Employee Handbook. The Council decided that eligible employees will receive holiday pay after the probationary period of 90 days. Councilor D'Lynn Williams made a motion to amend the Employee Handbook to include language that holiday pay will begin at the end of the probationary period. Councilor Thalia Lerin seconded, and the motion carried 5-0.

AYES: Meske, Williams, Lerin, Johnstone, Stark NAYS: 0 ABSTENTIONS: 0

CITY FINANCIAL REVIEW:

Nicole Tritten submitted the bank statements, cash deposits, and updated expenditure sheet. She reported that the City received an e-mail from CIS Insurance with a final accounting of the payment for the break-in at City Hall, a total of \$10,616.58 after deductible and depreciation, of which \$5,000.00 has been paid. She stated that Relief Recorder Sharon Elrod reviewed the itemized list of stolen items and found one tool missing, which Sharon reported to the insurance company. Jackson Stone reviewed the list during the meeting and crossed out items that were recovered from the theft that should not be paid by the insurance company.

Nicole reported that she finished entering the FY2019-2020 budget in QuickBooks and had provided a profit and loss statement for the Highway Fund in the councilor packets. She stated that she could provide profit and loss reports for all the funds to Council. Council decided to receive the reports on a quarterly basis.

Nicole asked whether the Council wanted the City to solicit donations from businesses for the Bridge Lighting Festival, as was done the past two years. The Council decided against soliciting donations in the absence of a specific purpose for the funds and because there is a budget for the festival.

Councilor Thalia Lerin made a motion to approve expenditures for November 2019 in the amount of \$32,961.60. Councilor Randy Stark seconded, and the motion carried, 5-0.

AYES: Meske, Williams, Lerin, Stark, Johnstone NAYS: 0 ABSTENTIONS: 0

COUNCILOR CONCERNS NOT ON AGENDA:

Councilor Thalia Lerin described a violent incident that happened in the City in which an 18-year old man attacked his girlfriend with a hatchet. The woman was badly injured but survived. Councilor Thalia Lerin stated that she is very concerned about the safety of the neighborhood. She expressed that she strongly believes the City needs to start thinking about better protection for Westfir. Councilor D'Lynn suggested implementing a neighborhood watch again.

Mayor Matt Meske reported that he recently started using Banner Bank's online services. He was concerned to discover that he has complete access to the City's checking account at Banner Bank because he is listed as an administrator. He stated that he hid the City's account so he can't see it, but he believes that level of access could be a potential security issue for the City in the future.

CITIZENS CONCERNS NOT ON AGENDA:

There were no concerns.

RECESS REGULAR MEETING FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION PURSUANT TO ORS 192.660(2)(f):

At 7:50 p.m. Mayor Matt Meske called for an Executive Session for consideration of information or records that are exempt by law from public inspection.

ADJOURN EXECUTIVE SESSION, RECONVENE AND CALL COUNCIL MEETING TO ORDER:

Mayor Matt Meske adjourned the Executive Session at 8:12 p.m. and reconvened the regular Council Meeting.

ADJOURN MEETING:

Councilor Randy Stark moved to adjourn the meeting, Mayor Matt Meske seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

AYES: Meske, Williams, Stark, Johnstone, Lerin NAYS: 0 ABSTENTIONS: 0

Respectfully submitted,



Matt Meske, Mayor



ATTEST:

Nicole Tritten, City Recorder

12-2-19

DATE: