

# **WESTFIR CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday, December 7, 2020**

**Audio/Video Teleconference, 5:30 p.m.**

## **MINUTES**

### **CALL TO ORDER:**

Mayor Matt Meske called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m. Councilors D'Lynn Williams, Edward Johnstone, and Thalia Lerin were present. Councilor Randy Stark was absent but in transit.

### **MAYOR'S MINUTE:**

Mayor Meske noted that Mayor-elect Melody Cornelius was present and that this meeting would likely be his last in an official capacity. He thanked the Council for their years of work together.

Councilor Stark joined the meeting at 5:34 p.m.

### **CITIZEN COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS:**

There were no citizen comments.

### **COUNCILOR COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS:**

There were no Councilor comments.

### **RESOLUTION 494 – NOTICE OF ELECTION RESULTS:**

Councilor Williams made a motion to approve Resolution 494 accepting the election results for two City Council positions and the Mayor's seat. Councilor Stark seconded, and the motion carried, 5–0.

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

### **APPROVE MINUTES:**

Councilor Stark made a motion to approve the minutes from November 2, 2020, and November 27, 2020. Mayor Meske seconded, and the motion carried, 5–0.

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

### **CHAMBER OF COMMERCE UPDATE:**

Chamber President Lynda Kamerrer presented the update. She reported that the Chamber is in the process of hiring a new Executive Assistant who will be responsible for marketing and reaching out to businesses. She said that Business Oregon sent a pallet of PPEs—including masks, gloves, and thermometers—that the Chamber has been distributing to local businesses. In addition, she reported that the Chamber was spending funds on their website for search engine optimization and the addition of winter photos. Lynda reminded the Council that the kiosk space at the Greenwaters rest area is still available if Westfir would like to exhibit in the space.

### **WATER / SEWER REPORT:**

Jackson Stone presented the water and sewer report. He stated that water usage was a little lower than last year at this time and wastewater somewhat higher. He said that the bridge and Portal had been decorated with lights, and he expressed his thanks to the volunteers who helped.

**POLICE REPORT:**

Councilor Williams pointed out four duplicate entries in the report for November 4. The Council decided it was not a serious enough error to ask that it be corrected.

**CITY RECORDER REPORT:**

Nicole Tritten presented the report and addressed these items:

- The runner-up candidate for the Relief City Recorder position had withdrawn for consideration for the job and that Nicole posted the position on the Westfir website and Craigslist.
- She communicated with lawyer Ross Williamson about issuing a Mayor's Order under the City's State of Emergency resolution. The Mayor's Order would provide a temporary reprieve from enforcement of City Ordinance 138, which prohibits RV camping on private property, in consideration of economic hardships caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. She asked the Council to outline the conditions of the Mayor's Order for her to draft. [Councilor Williams favored tying the time frame of the reprieve to the Governor's State of Emergency declaration, and the Council agreed with Councilor Williams. Mayor Meske stated that residents must report the names of people camping on their property to the City. After some discussion, the Council agreed with Mayor Meske. Councilor Stark thought the Mayor's Order should be sent to all residents. The Council agreed with Councilor Stark and decided that residents known to be in violation of the ordinance would, in any case, be notified of their violation by certified mail. Except for the temporary suspension of the enforcement of RV-camping time limits, all other conditions of the ordinance would remain in effect, such as vehicle registration being current and the RV being operable. In addition, the camping must not pose a safety hazard or be disruptive to neighbors.]
- She reported that the Governor's Executive Order 20-16 was rescinded in September since HB 4212 provides the authorization to hold meetings exclusively by audio/video teleconference during the COVID-19 pandemic. Unlike the Executive Order, HB 4212 requires that audio of public meetings be made available. Nicole said that she posted audio to the City website of the October and November meetings, with the help of IT volunteer Ken Grimsby.
- She explained that Ken Grimsby had performed a long past due upgrade to the website software, which she could not have done on her own due to technical difficulties. In addition, she reported that Ken made the following changes to the website: improved organization of menus; added landing pages; created a nicely formatted business directory page; and, with her approval, changed the background color to green. She stated that a complete list of his changes would be placed in the website file.
- She noted that the major problem with the website remained—that it is not a responsive design, so it does not display correctly on mobile devices. The site would need a new theme or a redesign to be mobile-friendly. [Councilor Johnstone asked Nicole to send him the name of vendors of municipal websites so he could research them.]

**CITY FINANCIAL REVIEW:**

Nicole submitted the bank statement, cash deposits, and expenditure sheet. She stated that she needed a paycheck for \$87.30 for a premature PERS deduction in February 2020. She thought the payment had been directly deposited after the payroll service made an adjustment for the error. However, she misunderstood, and the City needed to issue a check. She noted that volunteer Viki Burns was not included in the group of volunteers sent a gift card and asked if Viki could be sent a gift card. The Council agreed that Viki Burns could be sent a \$25 gift card. Finally, she reported on the City's use of its Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) for a rent and utility relief program through Lane County Human Services. She said that the County had signed the IGA, and the program had its first applicant. She clarified that CRFs could *not* be used to reimburse legal fees for consulting on the use of funds, and the City had incurred \$280 in legal fees to set up the program. Moreover, she said that, to date, she had used 75.8% of the funds budgeted for legal expenses in the General Fund.

**COUNCILOR CONCERN NOT ON AGENDA:**

Councilor Johnstone asked when the boat launch gate would be closed for the winter to prevent camping. Mayor Meske stated that he needed to weld the locking mechanism on the gate. Councilor Stark said he would like to close the gate nevertheless and the welding could be done later. The Council discussed the need for local recreation businesses to access the river, but it was determined not to be an issue in winter.

**CITY FINANCIAL REVIEW (cont.):**

Councilor Williams asked how the Council was going to handle the Banner Bank loan for fiberoptic installation to premises. She said the Council needed to decide soon if the project could go forward or if the money needed to be repaid. Mayor Meske said that the Council should have a conversation with Raymond of Emerald Broadband.

Mayor Meske made a motion to approve expenditures for December 2020 in the amount of \$87,292.96. Councilor Williams seconded, and the motion carried, 5–0.

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

**CITIZENS CONCERNS NOT ON AGENDA:**

There were no citizen comments.

**COUNCILOR CONCERNS NOT ON AGENDA:**

There were no additional councilor concerns.

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

At 6:43 p.m. Mayor Matt Meske called for an executive session to consider the employment of a public officer, employee, staff member, or individual agent.

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

Mayor Matt Meske adjourned the Executive Session at 6:52 p.m. and reconvened the Council meeting.

Nicole did not notice a virtual raised hand from a member of the public before the Council went into Executive Session, so Mayor Meske kept the meeting open for a few minutes to allow the person to rejoin the meeting. The person did not rejoin. Nicole stated that she had difficulty moderating and giving her attention to the meeting at the same time, and asked if one of the Council members could assist her as a moderator. Councilor Stark offered to act as co-host during online meetings.

**ADJOURN MEETING:**

Councilor Stark moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilor Williams seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:57 p.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

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Melody Cornelius, Mayor

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ATTEST:  
Nicole Tritten, City Recorder

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE