

WESTFIR CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Monday, February 1, 2021

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

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER:

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

MAYOR'S MINUTE:

Mayor Cornelius reported that she was working on a grant for a bike repair and wash station at the Westfir Portal and at Greenwaters Park in Oakridge. The Mayor acknowledged the donation and planting of a sequoia at the Portal park by Dick and Amy Shearer.

CITIZEN COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS:

There were no citizen comments.

COUNCILOR COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS:

There were no Councilor comments.

ACCEPT RESIGNATION/DECLARE A COUNCIL VACANCY/REMOVE FROM BANK SIGNATURE CARD:

Mayor Cornelius made a motion to accept the resignation of Councilor Thalia Lerin; declare a City Council vacancy; and remove Councilor Lerin from the bank signature card. Councilor Stark seconded, and the motion carried, 4-0.

AYES: Cornelius, Williams, Johnstone, Stark **NAYS:** 0 **ABSTENTIONS:** 0

VARIANCE APPLICATION (dogs):

Westfir resident Jeannette Parker explained to the Council that she has two dogs as pets and two service dogs. She asked if she needed a variance, asserting that service dogs are not considered pets or dogs by the Federal government. Mayor Cornelius asked about the age and type of dogs, and Jeannette replied that all the dogs are Rottweilers, two four-month-old females and two male service dogs, aged two and nine years. Councilor Stark inquired about whether any of the dogs were unspayed females. Ms. Parker said yes, and that she plans to breed the female dogs in a couple years but understands that the breeding cannot be done within City limits. She said that the female dogs will be kept in the kennels on her property when they are in heat. Mayor Cornelius expressed concern that there might be other violations of City Ordinance 120 and said that the City would get a copy of the ordinance to Ms. Parker to review. Mayor Cornelius stated that a decision on the variance request would be tabled until the next meeting, pending a review of the ordinance by Ms. Parker and her submission of a signed variance application.

CASCADES OUTDOOR CENTER UPDATE:

Noah and Tracey Sunflower, owners of the Westfir Lodge and Cascades Outdoor Center, proposed improvements to the "boat launch" city park. They started with a PowerPoint presentation to the Council. Tracey described the recreational tours they offer in Westfir and Oakridge: scenic bike way shuttles, white-water rafting, guided hiking, and snowshoeing on Willamette Pass in the winter. They plan to offer guided kayak tours starting in 2021. Tracey described the community work they do through their Forest Service permits, such as trash removal, river safety, trail work, and trail development. Tracy added that she is a community outreach member with the Willamette Middle Fork Watershed Council.

Noah discussed the increased use they were seeing at the park and noted that guided visitors spend a lot of money in the area. Noah stated that the biggest issue with the park is sand, loose gravel, and potholes in the parking area causing cars to get stuck. He mentioned invasive blackberry growth as limiting the use of the park. Finally, he said that unconsolidated social trails are a problem because they cause damage to the riparian area and riverbank erosion. Their proposal was to stabilize the road by moving gravel from another area of the park; to fill in the pothole that develops over the winter; to improve trails that avoid riparian foliage; and to add trail signage. Noah stated that they would like authorization from the City to put together an RFP for the dirt work and trail work.

Councilor Williams noted that there is a permit required for removing fill within wetlands that they should look into. Councilor Williams also advised against adding outside gravel because of the introduction of weeds. City Operator Jackson Stone and Councilor Stark expressed concern that improvements to the park would be washed away by winter floods. Noah stated that the park was above ordinary high water mark, although not above flood level. He said that if they could establish larger gravel to stabilize the road, it might mitigate the problem of repeated flood damage to the road. Councilor Williams suggested that they contact Lisa Kurian, the hydrologist for the Forest Service, to determine what type of gravel to use and where to place it. The Council expressed strong support for the project and committed the City to provide funding of up to \$2000. The timeline established for completion of the project was before the summer season in 2021. There was discussion about when to lock the park gate in the off season. Tracey and Noah agreed that locking the gate from November 1 through mid-April was appropriate.

LGIP ACCOUNT ADD/REMOVE PERMISSIONS:

Mayor Cornelius clarified that the City's LGIP bank account needed to be updated with the current Council members. She made a motion to update the LGIP account by removing Matt Meske, City Recorder Melody Cornelius, and Thalia Lerin; and adding Melody Cornelius as Mayor, Randy Stark, Edward Johnston and City Recorder Nicole Tritten. Councilor Williams seconded, and the motion carried, 4-0.

AYES: Cornelius, Williams, Johnstone, Stark **NAYS:** 0 **ABSTENTIONS:** 0

APPROVE MINUTES:

Mayor Cornelius pointed out errors in the minutes: three votes listed the former Mayor, Matt Meske. Councilor Williams made a motion to approve the minutes from January 4, 2021, with corrections, and for January 13, 2021. Councilor Johnstone seconded, and the motion carried, 4-0.

AYES: Cornelius, Williams, Johnstone, Stark **NAYS:** 0 **ABSTENTIONS:** 0

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE UPDATE:

Chamber President Lynda Kamerrer presented the update. She reported that she had worked with Grace Kaplowitz, the Resource Assistance for Rural Environments student from the UO, to promote outdoor meeting spaces in Westfir and Oakridge, and that the details had been provided to Travel Lane County. She said that the Chamber reinstated after-hours gatherings for businesses, but they are held over Zoom now.

WATER / SEWER REPORT:

Jackson Stone presented the water and sewer report. He noted that water consumption had increased by about a half million gallons for January compared with the prior year. He reported that the City truck repair would be completed soon at a mechanic in Eugene, and that the problem was a head gasket. He said that he talked to the locksmith about getting parts for improving locks at the water plant. He

reported that he replaced the stolen security camera at the water plant, and the system was working again. Jackson stated that he would like to look into repairing the overhead lights at the Portal, which flash on and off randomly. The Council agreed that he should get cost estimates for the job.

Nicole reminded the Council of questions for Jackson that came up at the last work session: the state of the access road to the water tank and the progress of Relief City Operator Robert Archer's academic learning. Jackson reported that the only problem with the access road was that it needed to be cleared of brush every 2–3 years, and he didn't get to it last year. Jackson said that he had avoided sending Robert to in-person training because of COVID-19. He stated that Robert is committed to taking over the job Monday–Friday as of December 1, 2021. At that time, Jackson said that he would work weekends and keep up his certification, so the City would still have a certified water operator. Mayor Cornelius asked about Robert's online learning. Jackson said CEUs won't count towards Robert's initial certification until he has worked enough hours to qualify for certification, so he suggested that Robert study closer to the time he will take the exams. Jackson stated that he will not leave the City until there is another certified operator to take his place.

POLICE REPORT:

Councilor Williams remarked that she knew of a theft that she didn't see listed in the report. Mayor Cornelius said that the theft may have been listed under the wrong street since a theft was shown on the report for that day, January 18. Mayor Cornelius said that Westfir residents should be aware that there have been thefts of mail and thefts of packages from porches.

CITY RECORDER REPORT:

Nicole Tritten presented the report and addressed these items:

- She attended the first module of local budget law training over Zoom on January 26 and would attend the next module on February 18.
- The City now owns the domain name *ci.westfir.or.us*, and Ken Grimsby is working to have the old domain name *westfir-oregon.com* point to the new domain name.
- She purchased two licenses for backup software Macrium Reflect as approved by the Council. Ken Grimsby created two backup schedules for the City Recorder computer. One schedule runs every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, backing up to an external hard drive that is stored in the office. The other schedule runs every Friday, backing up to an external drive that is stored off site. She said that a backup schedule had not been created for the Relief Recorder computer.
- She submitted the annual TMDL implementation report to the DEQ today, the deadline date.
- She asked if the Council would consider hiring a temporary office assistant until the Relief City Recorder position could be filled. [Mayor Cornelius stated that she would not be comfortable with a person in a temporary position unless they were only in the office at the same time as the City Recorder. Nicole stated that is what she had in mind. Mayor Cornelius asked about getting a student volunteer from the High School. Councilor Williams said that she didn't think the schools were running programs like that due to COVID. The Council decided to discuss the parameters of a temporary position and possible candidates in Executive Session.]

CITY FINANCIAL REVIEW:

Nicole submitted the cash deposits and expenditure sheet and addressed these items:

- Whether a Westfir business newly applying for a business license should pay retroactively for the years when she was not aware that she needed a license. [The Council said retroactive payment is not required.]
- Devin VansCoy submitted payment and cleaning deposits for his two 2021 events at the Portal, but the cleaning deposit checks would be stale dated by the time of the event and could not be

cash. [Mayor Cornelius suggested that Devin date the checks for the day of the events since the cleaning deposit is collected only if the City must clean up after the event.]

- The County refunded \$1500 of Coronavirus Relief Funds per the IGA amendment. The City will use the funds to purchase cleaning supplies and PPEs for community support.

Mayor Cornelius reported that she had a discussion with volunteer Nicole Davis about the annual Easter event, and they decided against an in-person event this year.

Mayor Cornelius made a motion to approve expenditures for February 2021 in the amount of \$27,220.85. Councilor Williams seconded, and the motion carried, 4-0.

AYES: Cornelius, Williams, Johnstone, Stark **NAYS:** 0 **ABSTENTIONS:** 0

CITIZEN CONCERNS NOT ON AGENDA:

There were no citizen concerns.

COUNCILOR CONCERNS NOT ON AGENDA:

Councilor Stark expressed concern about seeing new fences taller than the three feet allowed by the Development Code. The Council determined that the fences were allowed since they were not sight-obscuring fences.

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

At 7:53 p.m. Mayor Cornelius called for an Executive Session to review and evaluate the job performance of a chief executive officer, other officers, employees, and staff AND 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 Cornelius adjourned the Executive Session at 8:17 p.m. and reconvened the Council meeting.

Councilor Johnstone made a motion to give a retroactive pay increase of 6% to City Operator Jackson Stone beginning January 1, 2019. Mayor Cornelius seconded, and the motion carried, 4-0.

AYES: Cornelius, Williams, Johnstone, Stark **NAYS:** 0 **ABSTENTIONS:** 0

ADJOURN MEETING:

Mayor Cornelius moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilor Stark seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

AYES: Cornelius, Williams, Johnstone, Stark **NAYS:** 0 **ABSTENTIONS:** 0

Respectfully submitted,

Melody Cornelius, Mayor

ATTEST:
Nicole Tritten, City Recorder

DATE