

# WESTFIR CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Monday, January 4, 2021

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

## MINUTES

### **CALL TO ORDER:**

Mayor Melody Cornelius called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. Councilors D'Lynn Williams, Edward Johnstone, and Randy Stark were present. Councilor Thalia Lerin was absent.

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

Mayor Cornelius thanked outgoing Mayor Matt Meske for all his years of service, saying that he did a great job. She said that she looked forward to the next few years as Mayor and would work her hardest in the position.

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

There were no citizen comments.

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

There were no Councilor comments.

### **OATHS OF OFFICE:**

Mayor Cornelius stated that she and Councilors Johnstone and Stark were sworn in before the meeting by the City Recorder and that the notarized oaths could be viewed at City Hall.

### **ELECT COUNCIL PRESIDENT:**

Councilor Stark made a motion to elect Councilor D'Lynn Williams as Council President. Councilor Johnstone seconded, and the motion carried, 4–0.

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

### **ADD TO BANK SIGNATURE CARD:**

Mayor Cornelius made a motion to remove Matt Meske from the Banner Bank signature card and to add herself to the signature card. Councilor Stark seconded, and the motion carried, 4–0.

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

### **VARIANCE APPLICATION:**

Jeannette Parker called City Hall during the Council meeting. Nicole asked to recess the meeting while she spoke to Ms. Parker, and the Mayor agreed. Nicole relayed to the Council that Ms. Parker was unable to attend the meeting and that she would be added to the agenda for the February meeting.

In the meantime, Nicole explained Ms. Parker's request to the Council: Ms. Parker has four dogs—two service dogs and two puppies—and would like a variance to keep them. Nicole reported that one neighbor called the City and was concerned because Ms. Parker had installed kennels on her property. Mayor Cornelius said she was disinclined to allow four dogs, and Councilor Stark agreed, noting that many properties in Westfir were too small to accommodate four large dogs. Mayor Cornelius suggested to Nicole that she ask Ms. Parker to write a statement as to why the Council should allow four dogs within City limits and, in addition, encourage her to attend the meeting to answer questions from the Council.

**GRANT PROPOSAL:**

Devin VansCoy presented his planned trail race events for 2021. He stated that the 5th Annual Oakridge Triple Summit Challenge (OTSC) was scheduled for September 24–26, 2021, with the first day of the race starting in Westfir. He introduced a new one-day race called the “Westfir 50K/25K,” scheduled for October 24, 2021. He said the new race would attract more regional participation than the OTSC, but that he still anticipated overnight stays by attendees.

Devin proposed a grant of \$2,000 total. He said the grant money would be used for advertising, promotional items, and to buy a digital clock for the races. Mayor Cornelius asked about the cost of the clock, and Devin replied it was about \$1,000. The clock would show start and finish times, allowing spectators and runners to keep track of the race. Councilor Stark asked about the number of OTSC participants in 2019. Devin said there were around 60 runners, but that he had higher registration in 2020 and thinks he would have had closer to 100 participants if COVID-19 had not limited travel. He projected 100 participants for 2021 and perhaps as many for the Westfir 50K/25K race. Devin added that he would be offering a \$1,000 prize purse this year for the OTSC, which he believed would bring more out-of-state runners. Mayor Cornelius asked Devin if he could provide the City with tracking of his expenses, in particular the digital clock, and Devin confirmed that he could provide receipts.

Councilor Williams made a motion to give a grant to the Oakridge Triple Summit Challenge and Westfir 50K/25K in the total of \$2,000 out of FY20–21 RTMP funds. Councilor Stark seconded, and the motion carried, 4–0.

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

**APPROVE MINUTES:**

Councilor Williams made a motion to approve the minutes from December 7, 2020. Councilor Stark 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. Lynda reported that she spoke with Mayor Cornelius, who will be joining the board to represent Westfir. They discussed promoting the Portal for outdoor meetings. In addition, Lynda said that she would talk to Travel Oregon about the promotion of outdoor meetings in Oakridge and Westfir, and how outdoor meeting might promote other local activities like biking or skiing.

**WATER / SEWER REPORT:**

Jackson Stone presented the water and sewer report. He stated that there had been vandalism at the water plant, and a security camera was stolen. He said that he didn't file a police report because it was a minor incident, and that he would like to improve security at the water plant. Councilor Williams said that she would like Jackson to file a report with the police, and he agreed to make a report. Councilor Williams asked the Council to add \$200 to the expenditure sheet for replacement of the camera and security enhancements for the water plant. Jackson reported that the City truck needed repair, probably a head gasket. Mayor Cornelius determined that there was money in the budget for the repair and asked the Council to add \$2,000 to the January expenditure sheet for the truck repair.

**POLICE REPORT:**

The police report was not available until after packets were delivered to the Council. Nicole e-mailed the report to the Council to review on their own. She said the report was routine except for report of a sex offense against a juvenile victim on December 15 on Westfir Road.

**SCHEDULE WORK SESSION:**

The Council scheduled a work session for Friday, January 22 from 5–7 p.m.

**ANNUAL TMDL REPORT:**

Nicole presented the 2020 report on the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Implementation Plan. The plan, developed under Oregon DEQ requirements, serves as a guide for the City's efforts to improve water quality for the five-year period from 2018–2022. She reported that the City continued the efforts already implemented, and in addition had updated the City website with septic system resources. She noted two areas of difficulty: riparian tree planting projects and septic system maintenance assistance to community members. Mayor Cornelius suggested that Nicole contact the Middle Fork Watershed Council and ask their representatives to speak about potential projects at a Council meeting. The Council decided to discuss the feasibility of a program to assist residents with septic system maintenance at the next work session. The Council affirmed their support for the TMDL Implementation Plan.

**CITY RECORDER REPORT:**

Nicole Tritten presented the report and addressed these items:

- The Council needed to sign a new signature card for Banner Bank in order to add Mayor Cornelius as a signer and remove former Mayor Meske.
- The Pandemic RV Regulation Order was included with December water bills. Dog license applications normally included with the December bills were sent separately. [The Council determined that warning letters would not be sent to individuals suspected of having RV camping on their property unless a complaint was filed.]
- With the help of IT volunteer Ken Grimsby, she researched acquiring a .gov address for the City website, but learned it was cost prohibitive at \$400 a year. She asked if the Council would be interested in acquiring the domain name *ci.westfir.or.us* instead. [The Council expressed interest in acquiring a .us domain name for the City. Mayor Cornelius emphasized the importance of having official City e-mail addresses for Councilors, so that proper archiving could be done.]
- Ken Grimsby installed a 30-day free trial of the backup software Macrium Reflect on the City Recorder computer and was testing it. Nicole requested \$150 to purchase a copy of the software for each of the two computers. [The Council agreed to the purchase.]
- The City had received only one application for Relief City Recorder. Nicole reported that she had listed the job opening in the January newsletter and on Craigslist, and that Oakridge included it on their Facebook page.

**CITY FINANCIAL REVIEW:**

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

- The Banner Bank statement for December was not yet available, and she would provide the Council with a copy of the bank statement and account reconciliation as soon as possible.
- The second quarter profit and loss reports were included in the Council packets.
- The City's auditor was granted an extension by the Secretary of State's office until February 28, 2021. Nicole reported that she notified the City's insurance agent of the delay because the City's crime coverage will be dropped if the audit is not completed on time. She stated that the audit was also late last year, and their insurance company accepted the audit extension deadline and

did not drop crime coverage. [Mayor Cornelius noted that during her time as City Recorder, the auditor had repeatedly filed for extensions.]

- Employee raises were not considered for 2020 because in-person evaluations by the Council were cancelled due to the COVID-19 lockdown in March but prior to having an online meeting platform. Nicole reported that former Mayor Matt Meske offered to participate in employee evaluations. [Mayor Cornelius said that if Matt were willing, his input would be best, and that not being a current Mayor should not be an issue since he was Mayor during the time period under consideration.]
- Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF): Nicole reported that the County spent \$10,970 of Westfir's allocation of \$25,000 for the Westfir CRF Rent Relief and Utility Assistance program by the December 30, 2020, deadline. She stated that she hoped to continue the program since Federal legislation allowed an extension for the use of CARE funds. She said that she would also like to get some amount of the funds back from the County to use for the purchase of COVID-related emergency supplies for residents or equipment for remote meetings.
- Nicole received a cancellation notice of her City Recorder bond because she had not received either of the two renewal notices. She said that she paid for renewal by phone, and the cancellation was rescinded. She stated that she believed the City would cover the cost of the bond after the first year, and she had included her reimbursement on the expenditure sheet. [The Council confirmed that the City covers the cost of the bond after the first year.]

Mayor Cornelius made a motion to approve expenditures for January 2021 in the amount of \$42,517.75. Councilor Stark seconded, and the motion carried, 4-0.

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

**CITIZEN CONCERNS NOT ON AGENDA:**

Resident Charles Carpenter spoke to Nicole at City Hall the day of the meeting and asked her to inform the Council that he planned to convert an outbuilding to a residence. He wanted to be sure that it was acceptable to the City since there was an issue when he converted the building to a residence in the past without permits. Mayor Cornelius stated that Mr. Carpenter would have to file applications with both the City and the County, contrary to what Nicole told him. Councilor Stark asked if City code allowed for two residences on a single lot. Mayor Cornelius stated that she believed City code did not allow it. Mayor Cornelius said that she would look up the relevant code and provide copies to Nicole to give to Mr. Carpenter.

A note from a resident complaining about an overage charge on her water bill was discussed by the Council. Nicole said she would send a letter to the resident to let her know that water usage allowances would be discussed at a work session in January.

**COUNCILOR CONCERNS NOT ON AGENDA:**

There were no Councilor concerns.

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

At 7:47 p.m. Mayor Melody Cornelius 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 Melody Cornelius adjourned the Executive Session at 8:15 p.m. and reconvened the Council meeting.

Councilor Johnstone made a motion to hire Tony Schlauch for the Portal maintenance position at a salary of \$825 per month. Councilor Stark seconded, and the motion carried, 3–0.

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

**ADJOURN MEETING:**

Councilor Stark moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilor Johnstone seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

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Melody Cornelius, Mayor

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ATTEST:  
Nicole Tritten, City Recorder

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DATE