

WESTFIR CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Monday, April 5, 2021

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

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Melody Cornelius called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Councilors D'Lynn Williams, Edward Johnstone, and Randy Stark were present.

MAYOR'S MINUTE:

Mayor Cornelius read the Mayoral Proclamation declaring April 2021 Child Abuse Prevention month in Westfir, urging all citizens to engage in activities that strengthen families and communities to provide the optimal environment to learn, grow and thrive, so that all children have the benefit of happy, healthy and safe childhoods.

CITIZEN COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS:

There were no citizen comments.

COUNCILOR COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS:

There were no Councilor comments.

IGAs WITH OAKRIDGE FOR FY2021–22:

Mayor Cornelius recognized Bryan Cutchen, the City Administrator for the City of Oakridge. He stated that the fire protection and shared employee health insurance IGAs would have minimal increases, but that the terms of the law enforcement IGA with Oakridge Police was uncertain due to significant fiscal challenges in Oakridge. He reported that Oakridge might have to reduce the size of their police force, which would impact Oakridge's ability to successfully support the IGA, in particular to provide 24/7 emergency response to 911 calls. Councilor Stark asked about the distinction between EMS and police in responding to 911 calls. Mr. Cutchen stated that EMS calls would continue to receive immediate response, but that police calls to 911 would only receive immediate response for critical matters. Noncritical calls would be followed up as time allows. Councilor Williams asked how many police officers Oakridge was currently funding. Mr. Cutchen stated that they are funding four patrol officers, a police chief, and a sergeant. Mayor Cornelius expressed a desire to work with Oakridge to find a solution to preserve police services at their current level for both cities.

MOUNTAIN BIKE OREGON:

Mayor Cornelius recognized Daniella Crowder of Mountain Bike Oregon, who applied to rent the Portal for MBO's annual event. Ms. Crowder stated that MBO hoped to hold one event with up to 300 people, but had applied for a second set of back-to-back dates in case COVID-19 restrictions required a reduction in the number of participants allowed by the State. She said that MBO is focused on the first set of dates from July 13–July 19, 2021. She reported that MBO had attained a bridge closure permit for July 15–July 18. The Mayor expressed approval of the event and its benefits for the community and said that the Council looked forward to seeing the rest of the application materials.

Mayor Cornelius moved that the Council approve the application for Mountain Bike Oregon for their July event with the provision that all application materials are submitted to the City by June 1, 2021. Councilor Stark seconded, and the motion carried, 4–0.

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

DISC GOLF TOURNAMENT:

Mayor Cornelius recognized Jason Nehmer of the Oakridge Disc Golf Club, which applied to rent the Westfir Portal for their Middle Fork Open Disc Golf Tournament on July 31, 2021, and August 1, 2021. He explained that the event would be an “old mill to old mill” event starting at the old mill site in Oakridge and moving to the old mill site in Westfir the next day. On the Westfir mill site temporary equipment would be installed for the event. Mr. Nehmer explained that the design of the tournament would allow social distancing.

Mayor Cornelius asked the Council to consider a grant to the Oakridge Disc Golf Club from the Rural Tourism and Marketing Program (RTMP) Fund to offset their Portal rental fees and to support a new, unique recreational event in the community.

Mayor Cornelius made a motion that the City of Westfir donate \$400 to the Oakridge Disc Golf Club out of the RTMP Fund, taken from the line item for the Bridge Lighting. Councilor Johnstone seconded, and the motion carried, 4–0.

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

Councilor Williams made a motion to provisionally approve the application for the Middle Fork Open Disc Golf Tournament for their 2021 event pending submission of all application materials. Councilor Stark seconded, and the motion carried, 4–0.

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

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE REPORT:

Mayor Cornelius recognized Lynda Kamerrer, President of the Oakridge Westfir Area Chamber of Commerce. She stated that the Chamber had been working on a business directory for their website where all businesses in the area would be listed and member businesses would have an enhanced listing. She reported that the Chamber had applied for a \$100,000 grant for signage and wayfinding that included Westfir.

Mayor Cornelius asked the Council whether Westfir could make an additional donation to the Chamber from the RTMP fund in the current fiscal year since Westfir did not spend money on events due to COVID-19, while the Chamber had continued to support businesses and events in the area. Councilor Williams stated that she would prefer to discuss the matter further in a work session.

BOAT LAUNCH (TURTLE ISLAND) PROJECT:

Noah Sunflower of Westfir Lodge appeared at the meeting to provide an update on the project to improve the road and parking area at the boat launch park. He said that Don Henderson had completed a few hours of work with the excavator, but that he and Don agreed to halt further work pending discussion by the Council. After some members of the Council met with the Marine Board, they determined that no further work should be done below the gate. The remaining work above the gate was blackberry mitigation, which the Council authorized.

Mayor Cornelius called for a recess at 6:41 p.m. Mayor Cornelius reconvened and called the meeting to order at 6:52 p.m.

RESOLUTIONS 498, 499, 500 AND 501 REGARDING PAY RAISES:

Mayor Cornelius made a motion to approve Resolutions 498, 499, 500 and 501 regarding pay raises for City Operator, Relief City Operator and City Recorder. Councilor Stark seconded, and the motion carried, 4–0.

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

RESOLUTION 497 TRAVEL OREGON GRANT:

The Council requested clarification of the Oakridge Greenwaters Park special payment that the resolution added to the budget. It needed to be clear in the resolution that the full amount of Oakridge's portion of the grant was not being paid solely to Oakridge but to other vendors as well. Councilor Williams suggested attaching the project budget to the resolution, and Mayor Cornelius added that the attachment should be referred to in the resolution. The Council agreed with that solution.

Mayor Cornelius made a motion to adopt Resolution 497 to accept the Travel Oregon Destination grant for improvements to Westfir Portal Park and Oakridge's Greenwaters Park. Councilor Johnstone 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 February 11, 2021 (date corrected), and March 1, 2021. Councilor Johnstone seconded, and the motion carried, 4-0.

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

WATER / SEWER REPORT:

Jackson Stone presented the water and sewer report. He stated that the water and sewer departments were functioning well. He reported that the overhead lights at the Portal had been replaced and no longer turned on and off intermittently. Councilor Johnstone asked about the City truck, and Jackson reported that the repair, although costly, had made the truck like new.

POLICE REPORT:

Mayor Cornelius asked City Recorder Nicole Tritten whether the person in the police report advised to contact City Hall had contacted her about an animal complaint. Nicole reported that the person had contacted City Hall and filed a formal complaint, and that she had sent a letter to the dog's owner.

CITY RECORDER REPORT:

Nicole Tritten presented the report and addressed these items:

- She reminded the Council that their Statement of Economic Interest (SEI) filings were due by April 15 and asked them to inform her that they had filed.
- She asked the Council if they wanted notice of the first Budget Committee meeting published twice in the Register Guard. She stated that she had met budget law by publishing once in the Register Guard (5-30 days before the meeting) and prominently on the City website (10 days before the meeting). [The Council agreed that publishing notice in the Register Guard once was sufficient.]

[Councilor Stark asked about publishing notice of the meeting in the new online newspaper, Highway58Herald.org.] Nicole reported that publication in an online newspaper would not meet budget law but might be a good way to reach residents and support a local business. [The Council agreed with publishing notice once in the Highway58Herald.]

- She stated that she thought that the Notice of Budget Hearing should be mailed out to all City residents to comply with budget law. In the past, the information was published in the Dead Mountain Echo, but now with the Register Guard serving as the paper of record, it would be

both very costly to publish the notice there and not likely to reach residents. [The Council agreed that the Notice of Budget Hearing should be mailed to all City residents.]

CITY FINANCIAL REVIEW:

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

- She reported that the cost for Emerald Broadband to install Wi-Fi at the Portal was \$500. The monthly fee is \$35 for 25 Mbps or \$50 for 50 Mbps with higher speeds available at \$1 per Mbps. [The Council agreed to installation of Wi-Fi at the Portal and to the monthly fee for 50 Mbps.]
- She presented estimates from Pave Northwest for several paving jobs in the City: Overlay basketball court in Hemlock Park; Fill failed area at entrance to City Hall; create an asphalt path to the water plant; and repair parking area at the Portal. [The Council decided to drop the path to the water plant per Jackson’s recommendation and to proceed with the other jobs from the Highway Fund.]
- She reported that the City’s audit had still not been completed. The auditor was granted an extension by the Secretary of State’s office to February 28, but to date she had not received a status update from the auditor.

Mayor Cornelius made a motion to approve expenditures for April 2021 in the amount of \$82,890.13. Councilor Williams seconded, and the motion carried, 4–0.

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

CITIZEN CONCERNS NOT ON AGENDA:

Mike Butler introduced himself and talked about his plan to create an Oakridge/Westfir team of the National Interscholastic Cycling Association (NICA), a youth mountain bike organization. He asked to be added to the May 3 agenda to discuss further what NICA is about and plans for the local team.

The Council addressed the following concerns submitted by citizens before the meeting:

- Jeannette Parker submitted a complaint about feral cats. The Council stated that there is nothing the City can do about feral cats. Councilor Johnstone said that he would try to connect Ms. Parker with a contact in Oakridge who places adoptable cats and handles an unadoptable population.
- Jeannette Parker requested a written statement that the Council did not require a variance for her four dogs since two are service dogs. Mayor Cornelius stated that the City, not having taken any action, would not provide a written statement. She suggested that Ms. Parker could have copies of any documents the City has on file, such as the dog licenses.
- Jeannette Parker asked whether she could install an electrical barrier in her yard to keep her dogs from jumping the fence. Mayor Cornelius stated that electrical fences are not allowed under the City’s fence ordinance. Nicole explained that Ms. Parker said that the electrical barrier would be inside the fence. Mayor Cornelius asked Nicole to give Ms. Parker a copy of section 5.7.0 of the land development code that addresses fences.
- A resident asked about the permitting process for removing a trailer from his property and replacing it with a modular home. The Council tabled the matter to discuss at a work session.

- Neil Friedman complained that his neighbor used gasoline to start a backyard burn; that the burn generated so much smoke that it created hazardous levels of pollution in his yard and house; and that the fire was left unattended. Mayor Cornelius stated that the City doesn't have the authority to inspect fires, which is done by the fire department or LRAPA. Councilor Johnstone said that Mr. Friedman told him that the fire department would not come out.
- A prospective property buyer inquired whether tiny homes are permitted in Westfir. The Council tabled discussion until the next work session.

COUNCILOR CONCERNS NOT ON AGENDA:

Mayor Cornelius reported that Westfir is now officially a Firewise Community. She asked if it was acceptable to the Council to hang the designation sign on the way in to Westfir, near the population sign. The Council agreed.

Councilor Johnstone reported that he emailed Priscilla Woolverton at DEQ about whether there are funds available to help repair residents' septic systems, as recommended in Westfir's TMDL Implementation Plan. Councilor Johnstone reported that Ms. Woolverton offered to research the matter.

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

At 8:28 p.m. Mayor Cornelius 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 Cornelius adjourned the Executive Session at 8:47 p.m. and reconvened the Council meeting.

Mayor Cornelius made a motion to pay off in full the Banner Bank loan for the fiberoptic project. Councilor Williams seconded, and the motion carried, 3-1.

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

ADJOURN MEETING:

Mayor Cornelius moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilor Stark seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Melody Cornelius, Mayor

ATTEST:
Nicole Tritten, City Recorder

DATE