

WESTFIR CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Monday, September 13, 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 and Nicole Davis were present. Councilor Edward Johnstone was absent.

MAYOR'S MINUTE:

Mayor Cornelius expressed her sincere appreciation to the firefighters working on the Middle Fork Complex fires. She reported that the Kwis fire was handed back to the Forest Service and only the Gales fire was still active in the complex. She stated that the first Fall system was forecast to move through on the weekend, bringing significant rain.

CITIZEN COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS:

There were no citizen comments.

COUNCILOR COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS:

There were no Councilor comments.

Councilor Johnstone joined the meeting at 5:35 p.m.

LETTER OF INTEREST FOR COUNCIL POSITION:

Mayor Cornelius recognized Kelly Packard, asking him to introduce himself and explain his interest in the Council position. Mr. Packard said that he had lived in Westfir for six years and owned property here for 20 years. He explained that he had long planned to move to the area from Portland. He expressed his appreciation for and love of the community and the surrounding area. He stated that he was mostly retired, enjoyed volunteering twice a week at the Oakridge food bank, and was looking to give back to the community.

Mayor Cornelius thanked Mr. Packard for the introduction. She opened the field to questions from the Council, but they had no questions for Mr. Packard.

Councilor Williams made a motion to appoint Kelly Packard to City Council Position 1 and to add him to the bank signature card. Mayor Cornelius seconded, and the motion carried, 4-0.

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

Mayor Cornelius invited Mr. Packard to be included in the meeting discussions but stated that he could not make motions or vote until he had gone to City Hall to be sworn in by the City Recorder. The Mayor congratulated Mr. Packard and stated that the City had a full Council again.

CLAIM OF BENEFICIAL USE CERTIFICATION:

Mayor Cornelius called on Russ Dodge, a Certified Water Right Examiner, but he was not present. City Recorder Nicole Tritten stated that she sent a Zoom invitation to Mr. Dodge, but he did not respond. The Mayor said they would table the item in case he joined the meeting later.

REQUEST FOR WATER SERVICE PAYMENT PLAN:

Mayor Cornelius asked if applicant Dane Houston was present, but he was not present. The Mayor stated that a payment plan had been worked out by the Council at the last work session. She asked if the Council had any questions or comments about the payment plan document. The agreement required a 50% payment of the total amount due by September 20 and six monthly payments of \$53.15, to be paid in addition to the full monthly water bill.

Mayor Cornelius made a motion to adopt the payment agreement between Westfir and Dane Houston for water and sewer utility bill and clarified that failure on the part of Mr. Houston to make the 50% payment would result in termination of service per the water and sewer policy. Councilor Johnstone seconded, and the motion carried, 4–0.

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

Mayor Cornelius said that since it was difficult to communicate with Mr. Houston, the agreement should be sent to Mr. Houston by certified mail, regular mail, and a copy posted at his residence. Nicole said that she would also email a copy to him because it was generally not possible to reach him by phone. The Mayor stated that it was important to get the document to him to sign, so he wouldn't lose service.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE REPORT:

Mayor Cornelius noted that Chamber President Lynda Kammerer was not present. Nicole reported that Ms. Kammerer had a scheduling conflict but might be able to join the meeting later. Mayor Cornelius set aside the item in the event Lynda appeared, or for the Council to review later.

APPROVE MINUTES:

Councilor Williams made a motion to approve the minutes from August 2, 2021. Councilor Johnstone seconded, and the motion carried, 4–0.

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

WATER / SEWER REPORT:

Jackson Stone presented the water and sewer report. He said that the water plant was running well. He reported that the No. 2 sand filter was back online; No. 1 was draining; and he would be cleaning No. 1 at the end of the week. He had no problems to report for the wastewater plant. Mayor Cornelius asked about progress installing the gate at the water plant. Jackson reported that he had installed the post and would complete the installation as the weather permitted. Mayor Cornelius inquired whether it was necessary to clean the sand filters due to the wildfire smoke. Jackson replied that cleaning the sand filters was annual maintenance performed before winter.

POLICE REPORT:

Nicole stated that the report was not final because OPD was waiting on reports from a couple of calls. The Mayor noted that the call volume was higher than usual. She stated that Westfir would be renegotiating the terms of the police IGA with Oakridge in October. Mr. Packard asked about the nature of the calls being received from Westfir. Mayor Cornelius replied that generally health-related calls did not appear in the police reports, which are separate from ambulance services. The Mayor read off some of the reported incidents in the August report, including vehicle complaints; phone harassment; theft from a shed; a cat being shot; domestic disputes; and menacing. The Mayor asked Nicole to email a copy of the police report to Mr. Packard.

ORDINANCE 141: CAMPING/PARKING/LITTERING:

The Council and City Recorder spent approximately an hour and twenty minutes reading through and discussing the comments made by the attorney, who had performed a preliminary review of the ordinance. The Council made some edits and deletions based on the attorney’s comments. Councilor Davis noted that the Hemlock Park parking signs were missing. Mayor Cornelius stated that if the ordinance was passed, new signage referencing the ordinance would be purchased. There was extensive discussion of the terms *public place* and *public property*, with *public place* including some private property. There being no further comments or questions by the Council, Mayor Cornelius stated that the Council would revisit the revised ordinance at the next work session.

CITY RECORDER REPORT:

Nicole Tritten presented the report and addressed these items:

- She reported that she received an email from Devin VansCoy, the organizer of the Oakridge Triple Summit Challenge foot race. Mr. VansCoy told her that the Westfir Portal day of the race on September 24 had to be moved to a different location because of Forest Service closures. He did say that the Westfir 50K on October 24 would proceed at the Portal as scheduled. [Mayor Cornelius said that since Westfir gave the TSC race \$1,000 of RTMP funds, the Council should ask Mr. VansCoy to roll the funds over to next year’s event. Councilor Williams stated that Mr. VansCoy had said that he would purchase equipment with the funds, so he may have already spent the funds investing in future events. Mayor Cornelius then proposed that the Council ask to see receipts showing how the RTMP funds were spent. Nicole stated that Mr. VansCoy did email a receipt for over \$2,000 of promotional t-shirts. Mayor Cornelius asked Nicole to bring additional receipts to review at the next work session.]
- Nicole said that she closed the safe deposit box at Banner Bank because the Oakridge branch was closing. The safe deposit box held a weekly offsite backup. She stated that she spoke to IT volunteer Ken Grimsby about cloud backup options with prices ranging from \$8–\$20 a month.

Mayor Cornelius made a motion to spend up to \$20 per month on cloud storage for City of Westfir digital data. Councilor Williams seconded and the motion carried, 4–0.

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

- She reported that Spectrum broadband, including phone service, was installed on August 26. [The Mayor reported that both she and Nicole were broadcasting from City Hall on the same network for the first time, with no connection issues. The Mayor said that a vote was not necessary for the small additional expense since no line item was being added to the budget.]
- Nicole stated that the router in the office did not support more recent Wi-Fi protocols, and so some office equipment could not make full use of Spectrum connection speeds. She said that Ken Grimsby did research and recommended a \$200 router that would work well with current equipment. He also recommended a \$300 router that would allow devices that use the latest Wi-Fi protocols to connect at faster speeds. In addition, Nicole noted that a Wi-Fi extender might be necessary to connect the outdoor security cameras to the network. She said the cost of a Wi-Fi extender would be around \$100, making a total cost of \$300–\$400 for Wi-Fi upgrades. [The Council was in favor of the more expensive router as being a relatively small expense for improvement to the office Wi-Fi network.]
- She reported that she had been unable to get any bids for repairs to the City Hall building, money for which was included in the budget. She did get bids for painting and gutter

replacement, but repair to the siding and fascia boards would have to be done first. [Mr. Packard suggested Jeff Smith of Alpine Ridge, a builder out of Eugene who did work in the Oakridge area. Mr. Packard said he would be willing to contact Mr. Smith. Nicole said that would be very helpful.]

CITY FINANCIAL REVIEW:

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

- She reported that the auditor submitted Westfir’s audit for 2019–2020 to the Secretary of State’s office on July 24. She said that she provided a hard copy of the audit to Mayor Cornelius. Nicole stated that she received confirmation from CIS that the City’s crime coverage had been restored. Crime coverage had been suspended because the audit was not filed on time. [The Mayor stated that she read through the audit, that nothing was outstanding, and it looked fine. Mr. Packard said that he would like to see a copy of the audit.]
- Nicole said that Rustie Ackland, an organizer of Oakridge Concerts in the Park, had asked if Westfir wanted a refund of its \$500 RTMP grant since the event was cancelled. [The Council was fine with rolling the grant over to next year’s event.]
- She reported that she had been contacted by Lane County about a temporary water billing assistance program being funded by the Federal Government. She stated that she responded with the information requested by the County that was required to participate in the program.
- Nicole stated that she hadn’t done any further research on the allowable uses of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. [Mayor Cornelius asked if the funds had been received, and Nicole replied that the first of two payments had been received by the City. Nicole said that she would ask Relief Recorder Arron Cobb to do some research on the use of ARPA funds for the next work session.]

Mayor Cornelius noted that the \$60 allocated for tech support each month had not been used in a long time because Ken Grimsby was doing tech support on a volunteer basis. She asked whether it was possible to hire him as a contractor. Nicole said that she didn’t think so because he didn’t have a registered business and multiple clients. The Mayor asked whether he could be paid a stipend as a volunteer. She pointed out that the funds had already been allocated, and it would be good to spend them for the intended purpose. The Mayor asked that Arron investigate options. She stated that she would like to retain Mr. Grimsby because he had made great improvements to the technology in the office.

The Mayor stated that more of the grant funds for the bike hub wash and repair station would be spent in the next month or so. She reported that she found a contractor to perform the installation.

Mayor Cornelius made a motion to approve expenditures for September 2021 in the amount of \$25,634.01. Councilor Williams seconded, and the motion carried, 4–0.

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

CITIZEN CONCERNS NOT ON AGENDA:

There were no citizen concerns.

COUNCILOR CONCERNS NOT ON AGENDA:

There were no Councilor concerns.

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

At 7:56 p.m. Mayor Cornelius called for an Executive Session to consider the employment of a public officer, employee, staff member, or individual agent.

Mayor Cornelius asked *Highway 58 Herald*, which displayed as present in the Zoom meeting, to identify as a member of the media. When she didn't receive a response, she asked that the *Highway 58 Herald* attendee be moved to the waiting room.

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

Mayor Cornelius adjourned the Executive Session at 8:10 p.m. and reconvened the Council meeting.

ADJOURN MEETING:

Mayor Cornelius moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilor Williams seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Melody Cornelius, Mayor

ATTEST:
Nicole Tritten, City Recorder

DATE