

# **WESTFIR CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday, May 2, 2022**

**In-person meeting at City Hall and via audio/video teleconference**

**5:30 p.m.**

## **MINUTES**

### **CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

Mayor Melody Cornelius called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Councilors D'Lynn Williams, Katherine Bishop, and Kelly Packard were present. Councilor Edward Johnstone was absent. All stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Mayor Cornelius commented on the abundant rainfall and snowpack as being a good sign for the fire season. She stated that the Tree Planting Festival was coming up on the weekend and that Westfir would be represented in the parade, thanks to Councilor Packard.

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

There were no Citizen comments.

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

There were no Councilor comments.

### **RTMP GRANT REQUEST:**

The Mayor stated that Heather Wolfgang of the National Interscholastic Cycling Association was not able to attend the meeting, but Ms. Wolfgang had sent a grant request in writing. Councilor Williams noted that the letter did not request a grant amount. The Council decided to table the item and revisit at the next meeting when Ms. Wolfgang could attend.

### **CITY BEAUTIFICATION BUDGET:**

Mayor Cornelius recognized Elizabeth Stark. Ms. Stark commented on the proposed reduction of the City beautification budget in the 2022–2023 budget to \$500 and had requested that it be increased to \$1500 in a letter to the Council. She expressed that she was insulted and angry that the City did not seem willing to support all the good work that local volunteers had done to make the City attractive. She reported that the volunteers' work was shown in a photo for a real estate listing, and she believed this was an indication that their work was increasing property values across the City. Councilor Williams stated that she was the one who questioned the expense out of a concern for the rising costs and not having a good handle on the beautification expenditures. Councilor Williams apologized to Ms. Stark that her feelings were hurt; agreed that enough funds were available in the Highway Fund; and said that she recognized how hard the volunteers work. Mayor Cornelius stated that she felt Ms. Stark's request was justified. She suggested that the Council recommend to the Budget Committee that \$500 be moved from the Landscaping line item and \$500 from Repairs and Maintenance (Roads) in the Highway Fund to make up the \$1500 City beautification budget. Mayor Cornelius apologized on the City's behalf that Ms. Stark felt that she wasn't being recognized for all the hours she dedicates, and affirmed that the City does appreciate the volunteers' work.

### **OFFICE BRIDGE DISC GOLF COURSE PROGRESS:**

The Mayor recognized Jason Nehmer of the Oakridge Disc Golf Club. He reported that the Office Bridge course was progressing quickly; that a kiosk and two disc golf holes were installed at the Portal Park; that an alternative hole had been added at the Portal for when the pump track is in use; and all the signage was installed. He reported that there had been a little vandalism in the mill site section of the

course. He said the Club was trying to get a small league going on Saturday mornings. Mayor Cornelius suggested that users of the course could park at City Hall if Portal parking was congested. She stated that the course looked great, and the Council was in full support of the project.

**TRANS CASCADIA EXCURSIONS CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT:**

Mayor Cornelius recognized Blair Banker with Trans Cascadia Excursions (TCE), which was granted a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) by the City to develop a campground on mixed-use land. Mr. Banker reported that they were 4–5 weeks away from having all materials ready to submit for permitting. He stated that the DEQ 1200C form for grading near the river would be submitted within the current week. Mayor Cornelius noted that the City had received a complaint that TCE was advertising camping spots for rent and that the Council wanted to be sure that TCE was aware that certain conditions had to be met under the CUP before TCE could run the camping business. Nick Gibson of TCE confirmed that they understood that the terms of the CUP did not allow camping on the unimproved site, and that their website had just not been updated to reflect the change. Nick Gibson then asked the Council whether it was acceptable for friends and family to stay in several vans for two nights on the TCE site for his birthday celebration. Mayor Cornelius replied that it was acceptable if all City ordinances were observed. Councilor Bishop was opposed based on the conditions of the CUP, which indicated that the property had to be fully developed before any business could take place. Mr. Gibson asked if the Council was implying that he couldn't run his existing shuttle business or the Log Scale Café. Mayor Cornelius stated that there were conditions that had to be met before business could occur on the property. The Mayor said that the City should consult with LCOG, the organization that assisted the City with development planning, to clarify which conditions had to be met in order for certain types of business to operate. The Council set a Special Meeting for May 13 to meet with the TCE and LCOG representatives. Mayor Cornelius stated that the birthday van camping was an allowed use, although Councilors Bishop and Packard expressed concern.

**POLICE REPORT:**

There were no comments on the police report.

**WATER / SEWER REPORT:**

Robert Archer presented the water and sewer report. There were no problems at either plant. He gave an update of his education checklist, stating that he received 88% and 100% on his two most recent tests. He reported that he plans to attend several in-person classes and to get additional hands-on training from Jackson Stone before the final certification test. Robert asked the Council where they wanted to install the newly purchased park ordinance signs and City Hall sign.

**GAME NIGHT PROPOSAL:**

With the Council's approval the Mayor recognized Amber Meske, who was not scheduled on the agenda. Ms. Meske introduced herself as a one-year resident of Westfir. As an extension of playing games with her kids in her backyard, she thought to offer a game night at Hemlock Park. She stated that she is a PE teacher at Oakridge Junior/Senior High School and many of the neighborhood children are her students. She said the game night is meant to have a wholesome, welcoming atmosphere; and that it could be joined on a drop-in basis. The Council was very supportive of the idea, and the Mayor attested that her kids often played at Ms. Meske's house.

**APPROVE MINUTES:**

Councilor Williams made a motion to approve the Council meeting minutes of April 4, 2022. Councilor Bishop seconded, and the motion carried, 4–0.

**AYES:** Cornelius, Williams, Bishop, Packard    **NAYS:** 0    **ABSTENTIONS:** 0

**ALPINE EPIC PORTAL APPLICATION:**

The Council considered the application of the Alpine Epic bicycle race scheduled for July 18. Nicole stated that the bridge closure permit had not been included in the submission, but that the permit had been granted.

Mayor Cornelius made a motion to approve the Portal rental application of the Alpine Epic pending receipt of the bridge closure permit. Councilor Williams seconded, and the motion carried, 4–0.

**AYES:** Cornelius, Williams, Bishop, Packard   **NAYS:** 0   **ABSTENTIONS:** 0

**POLICE AND FIRE IGAS FOR 2022–2023:**

Mayor Cornelius reported that she had updated the Fire IGA from Oakridge to reflect the same language and formatting as the Police IGA and that she sent her version to the Oakridge interim City Administrator. However, Oakridge did not use her version, probably since the interim CA was fired. In addition, she noted that the IGAs included a schedule of future increases. She stated that although the Oakridge Police Chief and interim CA had discussed future increases with the Council, she didn’t want to agree to terms for future years in an IGA, which should be negotiated annually. The Mayor proposed that the Council table the matter and add it to the May 13 Special Meeting agenda. Before the Special Meeting, she and Nicole would make the discussed changes to the contracts.

**RESOLUTION 510: UNATTENDED PERSONAL PROPERTY:**

The Council reviewed an email from the City attorney suggesting changes to the resolution. Mayor Cornelius said that she would edit the resolution; Nicole would email a copy of the revision to the Council; and the item would be added to the May 13 Special Meeting agenda for a vote.

**RESOLUTION 511: SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET:**

Nicole stated that she was still not clear whether land development fees collected by the City, and expenses paid to LCOG for development services for the City, should be recorded in a separate development fund. However, at this stage, the Council needed to act to avoid exceeding appropriations, since development and planning were not included as a requirement in the current year budget and only \$200 was included under resources.

Mayor Cornelius made a motion to approve Resolution 511. Councilor Williams seconded, and the motion carried, 4–0.

**AYES:** Cornelius, Williams, Bishop, Packard   **NAYS:** 0   **ABSTENTIONS:** 0

**CITY RECORDER REPORT:**

Nicole Tritten presented the report and addressed these items:

- Nicole reported that instead of sending the updated water and sewer policy to ratepayers with the April water bills, as the Council requested, she included a letter explaining the rate increases and listing the new rates on the reverse side. She provided a copy of the letter to the Council with their information packets. She said that she based the letter on one that had been sent to residents in the past. She stated that she had the Mayor’s approval to make the change and that the policy could be sent in the future if the Council wished it. [Councilor Williams agreed that it wasn’t necessary to send the whole policy, which was available at City Hall and on the City website.]
- She stated that the City was having difficulty getting residents to renew dog licenses and update rabies vaccine certificates this year. She questioned whether a late fee might be necessary to

cover the cost of repeatedly contacting residents. In addition, she asked whether a household that already had a variance for three dogs needed a variance for a fourth dog that was licensed in Oakridge and lived part time in Westfir. [Councilor Williams and Mayor Cornelius answered that the fourth dog did require a variance. Mayor Cornelius noted that the City makes it inexpensive to license dogs and offers the low-cost vaccine clinic. For that reason, there was little excuse for late filing and that late fees would be appropriate. The Mayor suggested that the resolution setting dog license fees be reviewed at the next work session.]

- Nicole reported that she mailed the letter containing the Council’s request and citizen petition to reduce traffic speed on Westfir Road to County Commissioner Heather Buch on April 16 and cc’d Lane County Public Works. She reminded the Council that Gary Darnielle of LCOG had recommended that a member of the Council also call Commissioner Buch to follow up. [Councilor Packard offered to contact the Commissioner.]
- She stated that the Report of Coronavirus State & Local Recovery Funds by non-entitlement units of local government (cities under 50,000 pop.) had been due on April 30 for projects planned and expenditures made during the period March 3, 2021–March 31, 2022. She noted that the City had yet not spent any of the funds, but filing was required regardless. She stated that she submitted the report on April 27.
- Nicole reported that artist Louisa Hamachek had offered to give Westfir two Christmas scenes she had painted on 4-by-8 plywood, which had been commissioned by former Westfir resident Viki Burns for a community Christmas dinner on the covered bridge some time ago. [The Council accepted the offer.]

**CITY FINANCIAL REVIEW:**

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

- She gave an update on the 2021 audit, reporting that she sent her changes to and questions about the draft documents to the auditor on April 14, but hadn’t heard back yet. In addition, she reported that the auditor asked that some documents for the 2022 audit be submitted by April 30. Nicole reported that she missed the deadline but was planning to send the documents by May 15.
- Nicole reported that she had been corresponding with Gary Darnielle about the City’s land use development application fees, and he recommended updating the fee schedule to make more of the permit fees a base fee and to increase the Planned Unit Development fee. [The Council requested that Nicole write a resolution updating the fee schedule for a vote at the next regular meeting.]
- She gave an update on estimates the City received for installing gutters on structures in Portal Park.

Mayor Cornelius made a motion to approve expenditures for May 2022 in the amount of \$52,529.79. Councilor Williams seconded, and the motion carried, 4–0.

**AYES:** Cornelius, Williams, Bishop, Packard   **NAYS:** 0   **ABSTENTIONS:** 0

**CITIZEN CONCERNS NOT ON AGENDA:**

The Mayor recognized Jonathan Lundbom of 46842 Sunset Avenue. He reported seeing dogs off leash

at Hemlock Park and asked whether they had to be leashed at the park. Councilor Williams replied that the dogs did have to be leashed in the park because the ordinance applies to the entire City. Mr. Lundbom explained to the Council that he was trying to follow the rules. He planned to submit his dog license applications soon, and a variance application for more than two dogs for consideration at the next Council meeting.

The Mayor recognized Helaine Truthstone. Ms. Truthstone requested that the City's speed sign be moved from its current location to the next telephone pole closer to the railroad crossing because drivers don't see the sign before speeding past her house. The Mayor said that the City would check with the City Operator. In addition, Ms. Truthstone complained about the noise of train horns and asked if the City could re-open the process for a quiet zone designation. Councilor Williams said that she didn't think the City could get the quiet zone designation because of an accident some years back when a car parked on the tracks was struck by a train, which almost derailed. Mayor Cornelius said that she had been working for the City at the time of the accident and spoke with a Union Pacific representative who said the quiet zone designation would be lost because of the incident, and there was no action the City could take to have it restored.

**COUNCILOR CONCERNS NOT ON AGENDA:**

Mayor Cornelius reported attending a workshop hosted by South Willamette Solutions about issues along the North Fork corridor. The purpose of the workshop was to identify problems along the North Fork and narrow down which problems could be resolved in the short term and which might require long-term solutions. She listed the short-term issues as non-recreational camping, parking, and dumping.

The Mayor reported attending a Recreation Committee meeting that was specifically for guides, outfitters, and tour groups. She stated that all of the shuttle companies were present as well as the Forest Service. She reported that about half an hour was spent discussing parking problems in Westfir. She said that shuttle company Cog Wild agreed not to use Portal Park as the drop-off and pick-up points for their services. She stated that did mean that Cog Wild would use City Hall for parking for the current season, but that she would meet with the Forest Service about establishing a parking area on Forest Service land. The Council discussed whether a portable toilet should be rented for City Hall to accommodate the shuttle company clientele and to prevent public urination, which was upsetting to the nearby residents. Councilor Bishop expressed that she felt that more consideration was being given to visitors than to residents who live and pay taxes in Westfir. The Mayor said that she didn't have an immediate resolution, given the limited parking at the Portal and the large number of visitors. Mayor Cornelius stated that the Recreation Committee meets monthly, and that she would continue to revisit the idea of a parking area on Forest Service land.

**ADJOURN MEETING:**

Mayor Cornelius moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilor Williams seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

**AYES:** Cornelius, Williams, Bishop, Packard    **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