

WESTFIR CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
Monday, October 3, 2022, 5:30 p.m.
In person at City Hall and via audio/video teleconference

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Mayor D'Lynn Williams called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Councilors Kelly Packard, Katherine Bishop and Deretta Huey were present in person. All stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Councilor Edward Johnstone joined the meeting via Zoom at 5:31 p.m.

MAYOR'S MINUTE:

Mayor Williams expressed thanks to the people fighting the Cedar Creek wildfire and the agencies coordinating the effort.

CITIZEN COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS:

There were no citizen comments.

COUNCILOR COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS:

There were no Councilor comments.

TRANS CASCADIA PROJECT UPDATE:

Mayor Williams recognized Blair Banker, who was present via Zoom, with the Trans Cascadia (TC) campground project. Nick Gibson of TC was also present remotely. Mr. Banker reported that they had been working on their civil design, including stormwater grating, electric and water, landscape plan and structural designs for buildings. He stated that, in working through the design process, they decided on some changes to the plans: to add amenities to the bathhouse, such as sauna and pools; to build cabins instead of the dome structures; and to reduce the number of van spaces in favor of open meadow. Mayor Williams asked if the changes were within the scope of what had been approved. Mr. Banker said he thought that was the case since the footprints of the buildings were not changing, but he stated that the revised plans would go through the Westfir planning process before being submitted to the County for permitting. Mayor Williams noted that there was a one-year time limit to start an approved project, after which the approval could be revoked. She questioned whether there was sufficient time to turn around a new plan. Mr. Banker said he was aware of the time constraint and expected to submit the revised plan in 30–60 days.

The meeting was suspended briefly to work on a technical problem with the TV display in the meeting room. The problem was not resolved, but the meeting continued with the remote attendees able to view the meeting.

REQUEST FOR WATER BILL REDUCTION:

Mayor Williams stated that resident Kaye Collins had submitted a written request for a reduction in her water bill due to a water line break on her property. The Mayor noted that it was customary to forgive half the overage. The Council decided to forgive \$200 of the bill.

POLICE REPORT:

Mayor Williams reviewed the police report for September, noting that it was far less active than the August report. The Mayor informed the Council that, although she had been told by the Oakridge Police Administrator that Westfir would not have to pay for the overage hours in June, the waiver had not

been agreed to by the Police Chief and City Administrator. Their interpretation was that Westfir could either reduce the number of patrol hours or pay for the extra staff time. The Mayor stated that she requested a bill for the additional June hours as a starting point to negotiate from.

WESTFIR VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT UPDATE:

Councilor Packard reported that he and proposed volunteer Fire Chief, Jim McKee, had worked up a list of goals and an initial budget of \$3,000 for research into a volunteer fire department. In addition, they had written up a volunteer Fire Chief contract. He stated that their goal was to determine if a volunteer fire department in Westfir could be operational within a year. He noted that much of Mr. McKee’s time, in the near term, would be to liaise with the other fire departments in the area; to see what resources are available; and to evaluate the state of Westfir’s fire truck, currently in use by the Oakridge Fire Department. Councilor Packard stated that he thought a fire department in Westfir was a necessity given the high fire danger in recent years and the response time from Oakridge. He reported that he had been researching funding opportunities through grants and loans. Councilor Johnstone expressed an interest in working on grant writing. In addition, Councilor Johnstone stated that he would contact the mill site owners to see if they would be willing to sell a two-acre parcel adjacent to the Hemlock neighborhood for a fire station.

Mayor Williams recognized Jim McKee, present in person, and asked if he had anything to add. Mr. McKee stated that although he felt confident that he could establish a volunteer fire department, if in the end it wasn’t feasible, it was still crucial for Westfir to have a Fire Chief to represent the City in decisions made about fire protection.

Mayor Williams discussed where funds might be found in the budget to cover the WFD’s initial budget.

Mayor Williams made a motion to approve the Volunteer Service Agreement for City of Westfir Fire Chief pending review by the City attorney. Councilor Johnston seconded, and the motion carried, 5–0.

AYES: Williams, Packard, Bishop, Huey, Johnstone **NAYS:** 0 **ABSTENTIONS:** 0

REQUEST FOR WATER BILL REDUCTION (return to item for vote):

Mayor Williams moved to forgive \$200 of the September water bill of Kaye Collins. Councilor Packard seconded, and the motion carried, 5–0.

AYES: Williams, Packard, Bishop, Huey, Johnstone **NAYS:** 0 **ABSTENTIONS:** 0

WATER/SEWER REPORT:

Bobby Archer presented the water and sewer report. He reported no problems at either plant. He noted that the City had received one application for the Relief Operator position, and he hoped to have three candidates to interview. City Recorder Nicole Tritten stated that they had received a second application.

APPROVE MINUTES:

Mayor Williams made a motion to approve the Council Meeting minutes from September 12, 2022, and September 19, 2022. Council Packard seconded, and the motion carried, 4–0.

AYES: Williams, Packard, Bishop, Huey **NAYS:** 0 **ABSTENTIONS:** 0 **ABSENT** (temporary): Johnstone

GRANT PROPOSAL UPDATE FOR CONFLUENCE PARK:

Mayor Williams explained that the City had partnered in applying for two grants last year for improvements to the confluence park; one with the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund

Committee (OCRF) and the other with the Oregon State Marine Board (OSMB); but that the City was not awarded either grant. She stated that the Middle Fork Willamette Watershed Council (MFWWC) was working on a new proposal for the OCRF grant, called the North Fork Confluence Restoration Project, with a funding request of about \$40,000. The grant proposal would address: river access; riparian repair and restoration; consolidation of fisher trails; development of a five-year park management plan; and equity, by having low-income students perform water monitoring and replanting. The Mayor stated that the City's commitment would be an in-kind match of time. The Mayor stated that the OSMB grant was for the upland piece of the park, to harden the ramp down to the gravel; to create a couple parking spots; and to install a restroom. She said that the City must be the lead on the OSMB grant but that Virginia Pritchard of MFWWC would assist, and the OSMB contact had some suggestions for the new grant application.

DISCUSS COLLECTION OF FINES:

Mayor Williams discussed the problem that, in recent years, Westfir was not being paid fines from Oakridge Municipal Court cases and had not been able to learn the status of those collections. She reported that she spoke to the new Oakridge City Administrator, James Cleavenger, about the problem. He told Mayor Williams that he was surprised that Westfir wasn't receiving payments, but he wasn't sure that Oakridge was pursuing fine collection. Mayor Williams reported that she made a public records request with the City of Oakridge for a list of fines from Westfir cases and that she copied the Police Chief and Police Administrator.

CITY RECORDER REPORT:

Nicole Tritten presented the report and addressed these items:

- Nicole reported that the Certification of Beneficial Use (COBU) had been submitted by Russ Dodge on September 28, with the deadline being October 1. Mr. Dodge told her that once he received confirmation of acceptance from the Oregon Water Resources Department, he would mail the City a hard copy and a binder containing all of the City's water rights documents. Nicole stated that she didn't know the cost for Mr. Dodge's service since he had originally quoted for a different service. She stated that she put \$2,500 on the October expenditure sheet. [Mayor Williams asked what fund the payment would come from.] Nicole stated that it would be paid from the water operating fund; and that there actually was not a line item for the COBU in the budget, but that contingency funds could be used.
- She stated that, with the Mayor's permission, she contacted Lane County Animal Services (LCAS) to exercise the IGA for a dog bite incident on September 15. She explained that the process was for one of the persons authorized in the IGA to submit the complainant's name and address to LCAS, and LCAS would contact the complainant and ask them to fill out an online complaint. Nicole said that LCAS would only pursue incidents that occurred within the past three weeks, so the other bite incidents by the same dog would not be pursued. [Mayor Williams noted that the incidents might be used in court.] Nicole reported that she emailed and left a phone message for the complainant explaining the process and the time limit.
- Nicole reported that she had not received any proposals for the Engineer of Record RFP that would close on October 12, but she had received a phone call from one firm that planned to submit a proposal.
- She stated that the Oakridge Disc Golf Middle Fork Open, scheduled for October 1–2 at the Portal Park and mill site, had been cancelled due to poor air quality. She said that she received a request from the organizer, Jason Nehmer, to reschedule for November 5–6. She asked the

Council if the new dates were acceptable [There being no conflicts with other events, the Council had no objection to the new dates.]

- Nicole discussed an email from Jennifer Paugh of Lane County Public Works that expressed the County's concern that the contractor painting the covered bridge found many staples, nails, hangers, screws, and other items used to hang decorations over the years. Nicole stated that Public Works would like to meet with someone from the City to determine how to accommodate decoration while still preserving the bridge. [Mayor Williams asked Councilor Huey to arrange to meet with the County, and to include resident Ric Watson who had helped hang lights in the past and had suggestions for how to improve the process. Mayor Williams stated that the bridge should be lighted by December 3.]
- She reported that one dumpster at City Hall for the Community Cleanup had been filled and would be swapped out for the second bin on Thursday, October 6. She stated that she wasn't able to coordinate a river cleanup with Michelle Emmons of Willamette Riverkeeper this year, which usually coincided with the Community Cleanup. However, she noted that she didn't think North Fork river cleanup made sense this year with the Aufderheide being closed due to the Cedar Creek Fire. [Councilor Packard asked what distance the river cleanup extended. Mayor Williams said it usually extended to road 1910 and the 1912 bridge, which wouldn't have been possible this year.]
- Nicole stated that employee evaluations should be done at the November meeting and raises voted on in December. She asked if the Council wanted to use a different approach to the evaluations than in past years. She noted that former Mayor Matt Meske had favored changing to a goal-oriented self-evaluation. [Councilor Packard said he had an example of a self-evaluation form he could share with the Council. Mayor Williams said that she preferred to use the same evaluation form for the current year and to adopt a new form for next year.]

CITY FINANCIAL REVIEW:

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

- Nicole stated that the Banner Bank statement for September was not yet available, so the bank statement and reconciliation report were not included in today's packet. She told the Council that she would submit the documents to them as soon as possible.
- She reiterated that an onsite visit from the auditor was scheduled for Tuesday, October 11.
- Nicole stated that the City needed a consultant contract for former Relief City Operator Jackson Stone or to change his job description. [Mayor Williams stated that he had resigned and was no longer an employee, so either they needed an IGA with Oakridge, where Jackson was still employed, or a consultant contract with Jackson.]

Mayor Williams made a motion to approve expenditures for October 2022 in the amount of \$44,659.90. Councilor Johnstone seconded, and the motion carried, 5-0.

AYES: Williams, Packard, Bishop, Huey, Johnstone **NAYS:** 0 **ABSTENTIONS:** 0

CITIZEN CONCERNS NOT ON AGENDA:

Resident Jonathon Lundbom told the Council that he was back in Westfir to stay and assured the Council that he would deal with the problem behaviors of his two dogs, and in particular, the continuous

barking. Mayor Williams stated that he needed to license the dogs as soon as possible. Mr. Lundbom said he would do so and asked about a variance for a third dog since his residence already had one licensed dog. Nicole stated that variances for a third dog were suspended for the time being because the City learned that two dogs per household was specified in the land development code, so the full variance process would have to be followed, which was a Type III: Quasi-Judicial planning process with an \$800 fee. Mayor Williams informed Mr. Lundbom that his dogs had been loose in the neighborhood a week ago Sunday. Mr. Lundbom said that he wasn't aware of the incident. Mayor Williams stated that Mr. Lundbom should license the dogs first, and then the City would consider how to handle the variance.

The Mayor recognized resident and volunteer Elizabeth Stark. Ms. Stark presented a budget for cleanup and beautification at City Hall and for refurbishing the model covered bridge. The Council authorized \$500 for cleanup and flower planters at City Hall, but decided to set aside rebuilding the bridge model since Ms. Stark said the work needed was too extensive for her and her husband, Randy Stark, to perform.

COUNCILOR CONCERNS NOT ON AGENDA:

Councilor Packard stated that he would like to set a date for the Town Hall. Mayor Williams suggested mid-November and said that she had arranged to use a room at Casey's RV Park that would accommodate more people than the Council chamber. The Town Hall was set for Tuesday, November 15, at 7:00 p.m. The Council reviewed topics for discussion at the Town Hall.

Councilor Bishop asked about the status of the new solar speed sign. Nicole confirmed that the City had received the solar speed sign and needed to apply to Lane County for a permit to install the sign.

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

At 7:35 p.m. Mayor Williams 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 Williams adjourned the Executive Session at 7:40 p.m. and reconvened the Council meeting.

Councilor Huey moved to hire Robert McClafin as Relief City Recorder at a wage of \$15 an hour. Councilor Packard seconded, and the motion carried, 5-0.

AYES: Williams, Packard, Bishop, Huey, Johnstone **NAYS:** 0 **ABSTENTIONS:** 0

ADJOURN MEETING:

Mayor Williams moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilor Packard seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

AYES: Williams, Packard, Bishop, Huey, Johnstone **NAYS:** 0 **ABSTENTIONS:** 0

Respectfully submitted,

D'Lynn Williams, Mayor

ATTEST:
Nicole Tritten, City Recorder

DATE