



CITY COUNCIL February 13, 2017
WORKSESSION 6:30 PM
City Hall, 1001 Bridge St. Vernonia, OR 97064

Mission Statement

The City of Vernonia pledges to be an ethical and responsive government using community collaboration to foster leadership and a vision for civic improvement while providing a safe, peaceful, economically viable community.

MINUTES

In Attendance: Mayor Leonetti, Councilor Wagner, Councilor Seager, Councilor McNair, Councilor Hult

Staff in Attendance: City Administrator Mitchell and City Recorder Borst

Call to Order -- Mayor Leonetti

Mayor Leonetti called the meeting to order at 6:40PM

Additions or Removal of Agenda Items

Councilor Wagner made a motion to approve the Agenda as written. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hult, motion carried.

New Business

- City Projects and Goals Discussion

Consensus of Council is to discuss the following projects:

- Downtown Trees
- City Street Maintenance/Repair
- Storm Drains
- Bear Creek Issues
- Ordinance 880 – City Committees
- Water Leak forgiveness policy
- Building Maintenance
- Economic Development/ Chamber
- Senior Center Project
- Off Street Parking in City Lots
- Food Vendors

- Downtown Trees

Mayor Leonetti stated that he has had several people come give their opinion on the downtown trees. Most of the people are glad the trees are gone and think the downtown corridor looks better. Councilors McNair and Seager stated that they would like to wait to look at replacement options and focus on other projects at this time. Councilor Hult is in favor of waiting in order to see what it looks like after repairs are completed. Council consensus is to review the sidewalk ordinance for any updates that may be needed.

City Administrator Mitchell explained the plan to replace the pavers in downtown. City staff will be doing a replacement test patch. If it takes a substantial amount of time, they will explore contracting out for the project.

- City Street Maintenance/Repair & Storm Water Drainage

City Administrator Mitchell explained that staff is preparing to inventory city streets and right of ways. Once they have completed inventory and mapping, it will be brought to Council. Staff is also exploring any available grants. Councilor Wagner suggests looking into CDBG funds that may be available for storm water or streets. City Administrator Mitchell stated that staff would like to get everything inventoried and a plan developed before asking for funds.

City Administrator Mitchell added that staff is looking into testing the storm water and sewer systems to verify that storm water is being handled correctly. The goal is to reduce stress on the sewer system and potentially reduce the cost of sewer treatment. Council then discussed the potential of charging for storm water but there was concern about over taxing the community.

- Bear Creek Issues

City Administrator Mitchell reviewed Bear Creek issues with Council. She has been trying to contact the Nehalem Water Shed and ODFW to see what can be done. Staff would like to make sure that what gets done will not negatively affect those downstream.

City Administrator Mitchell added that the city is also concerned about Nickerson Creek. Staff is looking at ways to relieve the overflow of the creek which may include increasing the size of the culvert going under the highway.

- Ordinance 880 – City Committees

Council discussed potential changes to the committee ordinance which include term limits for the committee chair, prohibiting spouses from serving on the same committee, and prohibiting staff from being voting members. Consensus of Council is for the ordinance to be brought back for amendment.

- Water Leak forgiveness policy

Councilor McNair stated that he would like to know what the actual cost to produce water is. He added that although we need to be empathetic, property owners have a responsibility to do due diligence after a freeze by looking for leaks. Council would like to develop a list of criteria for reviewing leak forgiveness requests.

- Library Antenna

Councilor Seager stated that he noticed an old internet antenna on the Library Building and suggests it be removed. City Administrator Mitchell will have the antenna removed.

- Building Maintenance

City Administrator Mitchell explained that staff has been developing a list of building maintenance projects that need to be completed. She added that inventory of Library projects is nearly complete. City Hall is next on the list then the VCLC. Staff has nearly completed a maintenance project in the Police Department which included ceiling/wall repairs, garage upgrades, paint, etc.

Mayor Leonetti expressed concern that the windows in the Police Department and would like to know what can be done to increase safety. City Administrator Mitchell explained that she is in the process of discussing options with Chief Conner.



ORIGINAL

- Economic Development / Chamber

Councilor Hult would like to know if there is any support the City can offer the Chamber. City Administrator Mitchell explained that if Council would like to help support businesses perhaps they could offer a sort of scholarship towards maintaining store fronts. After some discussion, council consensus is for staff to poll other cities and see what they do. City Administrator Mitchell will also check on the status of the Columbia County Economic Development Team.

- Senior Center Project

City Administrator Mitchell stated that the kitchen appliances are being stored off site and she would like to rent a storage unit for easier access by the contractor. Councilor McNair inquired as to where the funds for this would come from. City Administrator Mitchell stated that they could potentially come from the Attorney Fees line item in the General Fund. The cost of the storage until is expected to be around \$150/month. Staff will be meeting with the Seniors on Thursday, February 16th to review the site plan. Once that is complete, it will be brought to Council for review.

Councilor McNair would like to explore requiring a Council member to have a seat on the Senior Center Board if we continue to give them funding. Council consensus is to bring this discussion to a Council meeting for greater discussion.

- Off Street Parking in City Lots

City Administrator Mitchell explained to Council that she is working with Police Chief Conner on a parking ordinance. Once complete they will bring to Council to review. At this time, City staff is not prohibiting people from parking there. Council is in favor of looking into potential ways to generate revenue from the lots to help pay for maintenance. One suggestion is to make them "pay to park" lots.

- Vendors

Council would like to discuss how to regulate food vendors. They would like to make a plan for where they will be located and how to charge them.

Adjournment

Mayor Leonetti adjourned the meeting at 9:08 PM

These minutes were approved at the March 6th, 2017 City Council Meeting.



Stephanie Borst, City Recorder



Mario Leonetti, Mayor