



 ORIGINAL

CITY COUNCIL November 28, 2016
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 Parrow, Councilor Hult, Councilor Seager, Councilor McNair, and Councilor Tierney

Staff in Attendance: City Administrator Mitchell and City Recorder Borst

Call to Order -- Mayor Parrow

Mayor Parrow called the meeting to order at 6:36 PM.

Additions or Removal of Agenda Items

Mayor Parrow added to the packet an article from the Arbor Day Foundation.

Councilor McNair made a motion to approve the meeting agenda with the addition. The motion was seconded by Councilor Tierney, motion carried.

New Business

- Downtown Tree Decision

Council reviewed the meeting packet addition. City Administrator Mitchell explained that the three proposed tree varieties were chosen because they were the only ones that fit our application. She stated that unfortunately there is limited space in the tree wells and the report states that they need a 5' buffer, which we don't have. There is only 6' between the curb and the buildings. Councilor Tierney stated that due to the underground infrastructure on the south side of the street, we may have to do something different than the north side.

Mayor Parrow inquired as to what the objective is for tonight's meeting. Councilor Tierney and Hult stated that at the last meeting Council decided to remove the trees but not a firm timeline. Council had also not decided on what they would be replaced with. City Administrator Mitchell stated that the trees are scheduled to be removed early next year (2017).

Councilor Seager expressed his frustrations as owners are responsible for maintaining the sidewalks so should also have some responsibility for whatever replaces the trees. Councilor McNair is unsure the survey is an accurate reflection what the property owners want. Councilor Seager stated that he thinks the survey is accurate, but wonders what the business owners would want if they were responsible for maintaining the trees. City Administrator Mitchell noted that with the placement of bike racks and garbage cans it can make it difficult to find parking. She explained that if council decides not to replace the trees the stumps will be killed and removed with a stump grinder in order to install pavers over the tree wells. Mayor Parrow inquired as to what would be don't with the watering and electrical systems in the wells. Mrs. Mitchell explained that she would have to talk to the Public Works Foreman. She added that there are drip lines in the light posts as they use to hang hanging baskets there.

Councilor McNair asked how much is currently in the budget for the tree project. City Administrator Mitchell stated that there is \$3,000 in the fund. Councilor Seager requested an update on the timeline for removal of the trees. Mrs. Mitchell stated that Council hadn't set a firm deadline, just that they would be removed in 2017. Councilor Tierney is concerned that removing the trees and not replacing them could have economic impacts on the city. Councilor Seager is in favor of not replacing them as he believes the store fronts are appealing by themselves. Scott Laird, Vernonia Voice, proposed removing the trees and waiting a year or two to see what the citizens think. Councilor Tierney is not against the idea but would like money set aside in case of future replacement.

City Administrator Mitchell stated that most cities with small footprints remove and replace the trees every 5 years to avoid issues like we are having. Council consensus is to request City Recorder Borst to find out what role the adjacent property owners play in other cities. Council would also like to discuss an ordinance regulating replacement standards at a future date.

Council then discussed options for removing the remaining trees. Councilor McNair stated that the earlier we remove the trees, the sooner we may hear reviews from adjacent property owners. Councilor Tierney would like citizen input to be considered as well. Councilor Seager stated that while citizen input is valid, the adjacent property owners are the ones that are responsible for the damage the trees are doing to the sidewalks.

Action Item Summary

Staff will bring the discussion back to Council at the next regularly scheduled meeting for a decision on what the deadline for removal will be. Council will also decide when/if any sort of replacement will happen.

City Recorder Borst will find out what role the adjacent property owners play in other cities. Staff will ask Parks Superintendent McMahon how long it will take to kill the stumps.

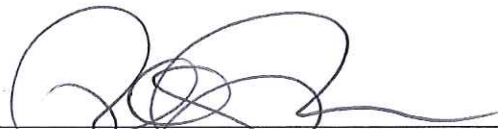
Adjournment

Mayor Parrow adjourned the meeting at 7:57 PM

These minutes were approved at the December 5, 2016 City Council Meeting.



Stephanie Borst, City Recorder



Randall J. Parrow, Mayor