

April 20, 2006
City Council Regular Session
Oakridge City Hall Council Chambers
7:00 p.m.



MINUTES



CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Sue Bond called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Council Present: Sue Bond, Mayor
Glenn Fortune
Carina Schorer
Don Hampton
Rayetta Clark
Dawn Shields
Leah Chapman

Staff Present: City Administrator Gordon Zimmerman
Community Services Director Kevin Urban
City Recorder Chantell Hayson
Police Chief Louis Gomez
Fire Chief Jerry Shorey

CITIZEN INPUT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None.

ADDITIONS, CORRECTIONS, OR ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

None.

PROCLAMATIONS

Red Hat Society Day April 26, 2006

Gordon Zimmerman read aloud the Red Hat Society Day Proclamation for the Council and citizens present.

Mayor Bond so proclaimed April 26, 2006 as Red Hat Day in order to celebrate and honor the chapters of The Red Hat Society in our glorious City of Oakridge who have a good time, enjoy each other's company and celebrate themselves.

Municipal Clerks Week April 30-May 6, 2006

Mayor Bond read aloud the Municipal Clerks Week Proclamation for the Council and citizens present. Mayor Bond so proclaimed the week of April 30 through May 6, 2006 as Municipal Clerks Week, and further extends appreciation to our Municipal Clerk, Chantell Hayson, and to all Municipal Clerks for the vital services they perform and their exemplary dedication to the communities they represent.

CONSENT AGENDA

1.1 Minutes of Regular Session of April 6, 2006

Motion by D. Hampton and seconded by R. Clark to approve the consent agenda. C. Schorer (Aye), Mayor Bond (Aye), D. Shields (Aye), D. Hampton (Aye), G. Fortune (Aye), R. Clark (Aye), and L. Chapman (Aye). Motion carried 7-0.

ADMINISTRATION

2.1 Tree Planting Festival Princesses

Tree Planting Festival Princesses Ashley Stalcup, Jerica LaDuke, Jeannette Freeman, Orié Gamez, and Lucretia Keller gave individual speeches about themselves, their volunteerism to the community, their future goals, and to invite all present to participate in the 53rd Annual Tree Planting Festival commencing on April 27th through April 30th. After each Princess gave her speech, each person present marked a ballot for his/her choice of who should be crowned Queen of the Court for the festivities.

2.2 Kiwanis Willamette Activity Center Kitchen Permit Fee Waiver

Gordon reported that the Oakridge Kiwanis Club, a non-profit entity, is requesting that the kitchen fee be waived for the Dinner Theatre productions on April 29, 30 and May 1.

Councilor Hampton distributed a handout of local service projects and fundraising projects that the Oakridge Kiwanis Club sponsors.

Motion by C. Schorer and seconded by R. Clark to approve the request to waive the fee for the use of the WAC Kitchen during the Dinner Theatre productions April 29, 30 and May 1 as requested by the Oakridge Kiwanis Club. D. Hampton (Aye), G. Fortune (Aye), R. Clark (Aye), Mayor Bond (Aye), D. Shields (Aye), L. Chapman (Aye), and C. Schorer (Aye). Motion carried 7-0.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

None.

PUBLIC SAFETY

4.1 FireMed Discussion

Gordon said he has some concerns with the misuse of the ambulance service by some FireMed members. A typical run to the hospital in Eugene costs \$1,500 and in the past the City has waived the entire cost for those that do not have insurance. This is a misconception and large cost to the Ambulance Service Budget. There needs to be clarification in the contract on the back of the FireMed form to explain the policy further. He wants the FireMed members to be aware that this service is not free but rather a 25% discount if they do not have insurance. For those that do have insurance it is normally covered up to 80% and the City can then afford to write off the 20% balance, but the City cannot continue to give "free rides" to folks that buy FireMed and no insurance.

Councilor Shields asked that if there is really only six or so runs a year then is it really a problem?

Gordon responded that it could be growing in numbers now.

Councilor Clark pointed out that if the City starts charging the bills to the individuals then they will not see it as a savings and will not even buy the FireMed membership, in turn hurting the membership dollars for the program.

Gordon responded that this is a risk that must be anticipated also.

Councilor Schorer clarified that the contract is between FireMed and the City. She continued to clarify that this contract begins on July 1, 2006.

Gordon said his intent tonight is to get the Council's direction on this matter. He said that the Council may choose to leave it as is, add restrictive language to the policy for insurance holders only or change the percentage of write-off.

Mayor Bond asked how restrictive other cities' FireMed policies are.

Chief Shorey said we are not nearly as tight on policy as other cities; for instance, some cities do not count the Oregon Health Plan as legitimate insurance--where Oakridge allows it. He said some cities such as Salem restrict the program to only individuals with insurance.

Councilor Schorer clarified that Gordon had said we are getting about six calls a year that is the "free ride" types of calls.

Chief Shorey responded that that is just an estimate and not based on actual figures; it could be more than that. He said he would need to review the reports to know how many people and how much money the City loses from these types of runs.

Councilor Schorer said that it seems that there could be some legal issues that would occur if we refused service to someone who was signed up.

Gordon said we will not refuse service to anyone that needs it, but we are looking for policy to help insure payment for services. He said if the client has no insurance, we are currently writing off the rest of the bill. He continued to say that car accidents are normally paid in full, but Medicare and Medicaid pay only between \$300 and \$500.

Chief Shorey read the current language on the form that was changed to give a 25% discount and then clarified that the problem is with certain individuals that are using the ambulance service as if it were a taxi service to the hospital, especially if they cannot afford to buy insurance. He continued to say that Springfield Billing charges the City \$35 for every customer billed, so the ambulance service has resorted to not even sending a bill to save the \$35 that they know they can't even get.

Mayor Bond said she would like to see some figures that show how many of these "free rides" are happening as well as the ones that are paying the membership fee and not using the service at all. She would also like to know how much money is being written off.

Councilor Chapman pointed out that some people may have never used the service, and she believes that there probably are some people abusing the system; but she feels that everyone should not be punished because of what a few may be doing.

Councilor Chapman and Clark agreed that the figures would have to be reviewed before a decision on how to proceed can be made.

Councilor Fortune referred to Councilor Chapman's comment about punishing someone for abusing the system. He said to him it's like punishing the burglar by sending him to prison. He would like to know how it becomes punishment to a person that is abusing the system by refusing to give him/her the service.

Councilor Chapman responded that that is not what she meant.

Mayor Bond said the City would not refuse service to anybody. What needs to be clarified is how much someone will pay for the service without insurance.

Councilor Fortune clarified then that what the City wants to portray is that the members will have to pay a portion of the service rather than get a free ride.

Gordon responded that is the intent here. He said he picked the 25% because that is about what doesn't get paid by insurance companies, but he does not know if this is the solution. There are many ways that the Council can change the policy.

Chief Shorey said that when FireMed was initially setup it was for people with insurance, and it is not seen that way anymore. He said people are buying FireMed

instead of insurance. He suggested that when people are signing up they need to be informed that this is only going to give a certain amount of a discount.

Councilor Hampton asked Gordon to bring several recommendations and figures to review at the next Council meeting.

Councilor Chapman also requested to know how many times the ambulances have run to Eugene/Springfield over the last few years.

REPORTS FROM BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

None.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mayor Bond asked the Council members if they are interested again in riding on the Fire Truck in the Tree Planting Parade.

Several members already have prior engagements and cannot attend. Those that can will meet at the Fire Department around 10:00 or by 10:30 at the High School on Saturday, April 29. Mayor Bond invited City staff to ride along to help toss out candy, since several Council members could not attend.

Kevin stated that he would be preparing the Horseshoe Competition at Salmon Creek Park at that time. He pointed out that all of the donations he asked for from local businesses as prizes for the contest were graciously given by all. He said the spirit of community is alive and well in Oakridge!

EXECUTIVE SESSION: (ORS 192.660 (2) (d) Labor Negotiations

The Council convened into executive session under ORS 192.660 (2) (d) Labor Negotiations at 7:50 p.m.

Executive session ended and Council reconvened in open session at 8:07 p.m.

ADJOURN

Mayor Bond adjourned the meeting at 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted before the City Council May 4, 2006.

Signed: _____
S. Sue Bond, Mayor Date

Attest: _____
Chantell R. Hayson, City Recorder Date