

May 17, 2007
City Council Regular Session
City Council Room
48318 E. First Street, Oakridge OR 97463
7:00 p.m.



MINUTES



1.0 CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Council Present: Donald Hampton, Mayor
Rayetta Clark, Council President
Carina Schorer
Dan Rehwalt
Randy Dreiling
Amy Kordosky
Glenn Fortune

Staff Present: City Administrator Gordon Zimmerman
Community Services Director Kevin Urban
City Recorder Chantell Steiner
Police Chief Louis Gomez

2.0 PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

3.0 ADDITIONS, CORRECTIONS, OR ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

Gordon Zimmerman noted an Addendum for the Fire Department Negotiation.

4.0 CONSENT AGENDA

- 4.1 Minutes of Regular Session of April 19, 2007
- 4.2 Firefighter Arbitration Agreement
- 4.3 OSGP Loan Program

Motion by C. Schorer and seconded by R. Dreiling to approve the consent agenda. C. Schorer (Aye), Mayor Hampton (Aye), D. Rehwalt (Aye), R. Dreiling (Aye), G. Fortune (Aye), R. Clark (Aye), and A. Kordosky (Aye). Motion carried 7-0.

5.0 ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

5.1 Oakridge/Westfir Thinning and Fuel Reduction Project, Chip Weber, USFS

Chip Weber, District Ranger for the Middle Fork Ranger Station, Oakridge: Mr. Weber has come to talk about the Oakridge/Westfir fuel reduction project. Currently, the project is in the planning stages and will address ways of reducing wildfires in the area. He said there could be

funds available for treatment on private lands and probably more funds available through the State. The forests around Oakridge/Westfir have been growing denser every decade and are now at a point that it could be extremely dangerous with some stands of trees being up to 140 years old. One type of issue that could spread fires includes the strong east winds. Part of the plan is to thin and reduce trees that could spread fire across the tops, also known as "crown fires." This will not eliminate all risk, but will reduce the risk of damage. Right now they are accepting public comment and will work directly with anyone in the community that has concerns. This is a joint effort with the State Department of Forestry, who is leading the project. A brochure that was in the recent Dead Mountain Echo and explains the project in detail was passed around the room. He said there is no expectation to build any new roads, however, several current roads could be blocked and closed. He said this is primarily a fuels management project but it will also produce timber jobs that could help the local economy. They are very open and welcome to any comments and they hope to have wide spread community support for the project. If anyone wants more details, they should contact the Ranger Station. He noted that there would be some field trips in the future to see other treatment and thinning projects around the state.

Councilor Dreiling asked if this is similar to a project that was done in Mapleton?

Mr. Weber is not familiar with that project but a lot like the project that was done at Christy Flats. Thinning was done on the crowns and the area will look a lot more open, but not everything is removed.

Councilor Fortune asked when the project would begin.

Mr. Weber said the project would begin around the fall of 2008.

5.2 Update of Property Clean Up

Gordon said the staff attempted to notify the doctors and were told that they could be scheduled a few weeks from now. He then received a letter in writing from the doctor stating that even if the test is done, it will not give any information except for pre-existing conditions. The city attorney suggested letting SAIF be involved in the management of the case. Gordon will contact SAIF.

Mayor Hampton asked if the council prefers to postpone action on this matter until after SAIF has released its investigation. Council was agreeable to wait on further action at this time.

5.3 Asset Management Plan Approval

Gordon said we have collected three quotes for the completion of the GASB (Government Accounting Standards Board) 34 requirement to record certain infrastructure assets to the City's financial statements. He said the staff is required to recommend the lowest responsible bidder.

Chantell Steiner noted that each company would likely be able to do the job effectively. She stated that American Appraisal Associates has made the most effort to review the requirements by the City's auditor, has made a personal visit, and has researched the City's assets with her in detail. Based on this personal relationship, she would recommend American Appraisal for the contract.

Mayor Hampton clarified that the lowest bidder does not have to always be chosen, if they are not deemed the most responsible bidder.

Councilor Clark noted that there is a \$200 difference in the quote totals and being that American Appraisal has researched the project it would be a personal choice based on contact and professionalism.

Chantell clarified that she has met one-on-one with American Appraisal and was very pleased with the company overall.

Motion by C. Schorer and seconded by R. Clark to approve the contract with American Appraisal Associates for the implementation of the City's Infrastructure Assets to be in compliance with GASB 34. R. Dreiling (Aye), G. Fortune (Aye), R. Clark (Aye), Mayor Hampton (Aye), D. Rehwalt (Aye), A. Kordosky, and C. Schorer (Aye). Motion carried 7-0.

5.4 Oakridge/Westfir Kids Inc. Pre-School Rental Waiver Request

Gordon said he received the request to waive the rent for the summer months.

Suzette Waelti, Elected President Oakridge/Westfir Kids, said that she recently found out that the pre-school has lost its grant funding and cannot afford to make monthly rent payments. They are looking for ways to reduce the costs until they can apply and get new funding. They are currently researching many different options for new revenue.

Councilor Clark asked, "How many children are in the summer program?"

Suzette responded that there are up to 30 children a day, ages 3 to 12, and they are transported to swim lessons and art programs.

Councilor Clark asked if the parents pay a fee for the service.

Suzette said yes, it is \$2 for the first hour and \$1.75 for each additional hour.

Motion by A. Kordosky and seconded by R. Dreiling to approve the request for a fee waiver from the Oakridge/Westfir Kids, Inc. Pre-School. Mayor Hampton (Aye), A. Kordosky (Aye), R. Dreiling (Aye), G. Fortune (Aye), R. Clark (Aye), C. Schorer (Aye), and D. Rehwalt (Aye). Motion carried 7-0.

6.0 COMMUNITY SERVICES

6.1 Highway 58 Refinement Plan

Gordon reported that there are no additional reports from staff but a few more written comments were received and passed out to the Council.

Councilor Fortune made a motion to approve the three-lane/five-lane option in the Highway 58 Refinement Plan as outlined in the final report from CH2MHill and Angelo Eaton and Associates.

Councilor Kordosky asked if the access management plan would have to be accepted if the Council passed the motion to accept the three-lane/five-lane option of the refinement plan.

Gordon said the access management plan does not have to be accepted if the community is not satisfied with the access to the businesses. By not approving the access management plan it would effectively end our effort on the planning of the project but not the Oregon Department of Transportation's (ODOT) efforts.

Councilor Rehwalt said that in the minutes of the March 15, 2007 minutes the Mayor appointed the Community Services Committee to oversee the public meeting. In those instructions, the Mayor asked for a recommendation from the committee and he does not see such a recommendation in the packet this evening.

Mayor Hampton asked the committee if it has a recommendation for the Council.

Councilor Schorer said the committee recommends moving forward with the access management plan. She said it does not mean that it has to be addressed immediately, but the committee feels it would be a mistake to not plan for what will happen in the future.

Councilor Rehwalt said it is time to either get the plan going or stop it and he believes the people in town are aware of that. He has received letters and attended meetings and has not heard a "huge cry" from anyone in the community about the project except to leave the lane configuration as it is. The businesses seem to be operating in fear and he understands how they feel. He said some see this as a problem, but it can be looked at as an opportunity to be seized. In the interest of the business community, pedestrians, bikers, truckers, and other users of the highway he feels that an agreeable plan that will work for everyone can be attained. He said this is called a shared vision and the community does not have this at this time. He is confident though that this can be accomplished over time and with a slight change in the process for taking public comments. He noted that he was thinking about motioning to postpone action, but feels that the amount of time gained would not make sense, and he does not feel that it needs to be postponed indefinitely. He said there are fatal flaws in the plan and this has caused the negative reactions that have been occurring in town.

Councilor Clark asked Ed Moore, ODOT Senior Region Manager, "If the Council does not move forward on the planning process, would I be correct in thinking that ODOT will be more prone to go with the three-lane/five-lane option?"

Mr. Moore responded that ODOT does favor a three-lane cross section over a four-lane roadway. He continued to reiterate from the prior meeting that an evaluation of the highway would be done to review approaches and create a strategy for legal and illegal accesses. If the City has a plan, then ODOT is required to work with that. He said the City's Planning Commission would conditionally approve an agreeable access management plan. Right now the City has a concept of the highway, but no access plan. Without the access portion it is not considered a useable plan and ODOT would use its own standards, administrative rules, and operating procedures to redo the highway.

Councilor Rehwalt asked Mr. Moore who would fund and who would do the access management plan.

Mr. Moore said that if ODOT does the plan, then the State Highway employees would do the project with state money. If the City applies for another grant, it would be state money and an engineering firm outside the City would be hired to do the work.

Councilor Rehwalt clarified that ODOT would not have to do an access management plan if the City chooses to do one.

Mr. Moore confirmed that the City's access management plan would become ODOT's plan for the project.

Councilor Rehwalt commented that there would be a time to either approve or not approve the access plan. He said the motion being made tonight does not have the statement to not approve the plan if the access management portion is not doable. He said it only approves the three-lane/five-lane option.

Mayor Hampton noted that he understood Mr. Moore's comments to mean that if the City chooses not to pass the access management plan then there is no plan at all and ODOT will continue with its own process.

Councilor Rehwalt said he understands this; he just wanted to make sure that the Council is aware of what it is voting on.

Mayor Hampton clarified for the Council that this motion tonight is step one and the access management will be step two. If we don't approve step two then we really don't have anything according to ODOT.

Councilor Kordosky confirmed with Mr. Moore that the businesses would have a chance to work with ODOT if ODOT ends up doing the plan.

Mr. Moore said yes, the businesses would be contacted and the access for each business would be discussed with them.

Councilor Dreiling clarified that if the City proceeds with the access management plan, and the businesses are not satisfied with the design, then the Council has the option to not adopt the access plan. He said there would be another chance in the next stage for the businesses to review and the Council to reject the plan if not acceptable.

Councilor Rehwalt said, "Not under this motion."

Mayor Hampton and the other Councilors corrected Councilor Rehwalt and said, "Yes, we can."

Councilor Rehwalt said he understands what is being said, but the motion is not what the Planning Commission made with the caveat to reject the plan being approved if the access management plan is not acceptable.

Councilor Dreiling asked for clarification that the businesses along the three-lane section would not lose their right of ways.

Mr. Moore said that is how the design was done and it seems to him that the sidewalks and bike lanes would be able to fit in the current road widths. He said you could identify some elements that may need right of way extensions but that may not be needed. He noted that what Mr.

Rehwalt is trying to say is that the motion does not include the ability to reject the access management plan.

Councilor Fortune noted his support of this project since the beginning and quoted the following from a prior citizen letter, "If you fail to plan, then you are planning to fail." He said changes are likely to take place over time and he understands the business owners' feelings, but it is also important to work with ODOT and discuss the options available. He believes it is important to move ahead on this project.

Mayor Hampton stated in the last forty years in Oakridge he has seen the highway change several times. He said he does expect it to change more in the future. He noted that he respectfully disagrees with Councilor Rehwalt in the aspect that "a lot" of citizens are against the plan. He said he has not received any e-mails or phone calls and only received a few letters that did and did not support the plan. He feels that the highway will change and the Council has two choices. Either be a part of the change or choose not to and allow ODOT to do what they will. He did have concerns about the possible impediment of a four-lane changing to a three-lane section. Mr. Moore has clarified that this change would not cause an issue and he feels that he must believe and trust in what Mr. Moore has presented. He has no evidence that this information is not true and he feels the Council needs to move forward with the access management plan.

Motion by G. Fortune and seconded by C. Schorer to approve the three-lane/five-lane option in the Highway 58 Refinement Plan as outlined in the final report from CH2MHill and Angelo Eaton and Associates. G. Fortune (Aye), R. Clark (Aye), C. Schorer (Aye), R. Dreiling (Aye), A. Kordosky (Aye), D. Rehwalt (Nay), and Mayor Hampton (Aye). Motion carried 6-1.

7.0 POLICE SERVICES

7.1 Approval of Lowell Police Contract

Mayor Hampton asked if there are any questions from the Council on the contracts being presented.

Councilor Clark made a motion to authorize the mayor to enter into an Inter Governmental Agreement with the City of Lowell for Law Enforcement Services.

Councilor Clark asked if the new rates include the recent gasoline increases.

Chief Gomez gave a small explanation of how much time and costs are involved in the services that we provide for the revenue received.

Councilor Fortune asked if the gas was specifically calculated in the cost.

Chief Gomez said he does not believe the gas was a direct factor but he feels that the increase in revenue is sufficient for the expenses incurred. If not, then instead of negotiating the cost, he will review and negotiate the number of hours that they will provide services.

Motion by R. Clark and seconded by D. Rehwalt to authorize the mayor to enter into an Inter Governmental Agreement with the City of Lowell for Law Enforcement Services. G. Fortune (Aye), R. Clark (Aye), C. Schorer (Aye), D. Rehwalt (Aye), A. Kordosky (Aye), R. Dreiling (Aye), and Mayor Hampton (Aye). Motion carried 7-0.

7.2 Approval of Westfir Police Contract

Councilor Fortune made a motion to authorize the mayor to enter into an Inter Governmental Agreement with the City of Westfir for Law Enforcement Services.

Councilor Clark asked how many hours does this contract entail.

Chief Gomez said this contract includes approximately three to four trips per day through town. This averages out to be a few hours a day. He noted that we also receive an additional \$10,000 from the Westfir COPS grant.

Motion by G. Fortune and seconded by R. Dreiling to authorize the mayor to enter into an Inter Governmental Agreement with the City of Westfir for Law Enforcement Services. A. Kordosky (Aye), D. Rehwalt (Aye), R. Dreiling (Aye), R. Clark (Aye), C. Schorer (Aye), Mayor Hampton (Aye), and G. Fortune (Aye). Motion carried 7-0.

8.0 EMERGENCY SERVICES

Gordon reported that Chief Shorey is attending the Hazeldell budget committee meeting this evening.

9.0 REPORTS FROM BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Councilor Fortune said the Lane Regional Air Protection Agency had its budget meeting.

Councilor Dreiling said the Trails Plan is now out for review until May 23rd. He said he presented the plan to the Oregon Recreation Council Committee, which is also helping to fund the state trails projects. He confirmed that the City would be receiving a Rural Tourism Marketing Program (RTMP) Grant for improving trails.

Councilor Dreiling said the Oakridge/Westfir Chamber had its annual open house last week. There were seven new businesses that joined the Chamber and several other new businesses attended the event.

Councilor Dreiling attended the one-year celebration for Oakridge UPBEAT (Unique Program for Business Enhancement and Advancement Together). Approximately twenty businesses in the program displayed their wares and met with Dr. Ernesto Sirolli (creator of the Enterprise Facilitation model). He said it was really nice to see all the businesses and some he was not even aware of due to them being home based businesses.

Councilor Schorer said the Community Services Committee had the Highway 58 meeting on May 9. She thanked Ed Moore for attending the event and helping to answer everyone's questions. She said she learned a lot from the presentation and now understands why some people were afraid of the preliminary plan. She believes it went well overall.

Councilor Rehwalt commented that Councilor Schorer did a great job of running the May 9 meeting. He said it has been quite a battle to get this to this point with this project and now that the Council has made its decision, he will jump on board and not continue to fight this.

Councilor Clark went to a Rural Housing Rehabilitation Policy Committee meeting. She learned that some counties were recently audited and everything turned out great. She noted that Oakridge has done remarkably well in the program with the wood stove replacements. The money in this program is now starting to come in and there will need to be policy amendments. Several members including Councilor Clark will meet to discuss the policies.

Mayor Hampton noted that this program is a revolving loan program.

Councilor Clark said that is why they are developing the policies for the second round of distributing the funds.

Councilor Clark noted that the Council Administrative Committee meeting on Monday, May 21 has been cancelled.

Mayor Hampton reported that the Middle Fork Willamette Watershed Council has made its move and is now located in the Lowell City Hall. The Council has hired an Education Coordinator that is working with a fourth grade class of students in Lowell. They will be doing outdoor research at the Elijah Bristow State Park. He believes the intent is to start with Lowell and then expand the program further and hopefully into the Oakridge area at some point.

Mayor Hampton said the Treeplanting Festival was a very busy week. There will be a wrap-up meeting on June 4th at 4:30 p.m. at Greenwaters Park. You can attend or submit written comments expressing your thoughts on how the festival went.

Mayor Hampton said the Rural Development Initiatives (RDI) folks came up on May 7th and met with a group of local citizens to discuss leadership training. The group identified 100 prospective people in the community to attend four weekends of training. The program will need thirty people to attend the trainings and possibly thirty more at another time. He said it is important to have social capital in our community and that is what this program will help provide.

Mayor Hampton attended the Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) meeting. The Food Policy Council, Eugene Schools Superintendent, and a representative from Lane Community College gave presentations relating to the economic benefits of education. He noted the hardships that the college has had over the last decade in decreased funding and the studies that have been done showing the economic benefits of training people at the college. He said the legislature has some additional money this year, so we will have to see how they choose to distribute it. He said he was not appointed to the Regional Investment Board again and that Florence Mayor Phil Brubaker will be the small cities' representative.

Mayor Hampton noted that he will not be able to attend the upcoming LCOG training and asked that if any Councilors attend, to please pick him up a packet. He said that LCOG is also having an open house on June 7th, which is an Oakridge Council meeting night.

10.0 MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilor Dreiling reminded the Council that the Trails Plan would be on the next Council meeting agenda for approval. He noted that it is on the City's website and he can get copies for the Council if they need to review it.

Mayor Hampton noted that Councilor Schorer has asked to be excused from the next meeting on June 7th. He authorized her to be excused.

