

WESTFIR CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Monday, May 4, 2020

Audio/Video Teleconference, 5:30 p.m.

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER:

Councilor D'Lynn Williams called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Councilors Edward Johnstone, Thalia Lerin, and Randy Stark were present. Mayor Matt Meske was absent.

MAYOR'S MINUTE:

Councilor D'Lynn Williams stated that, as the Tree Planting Festival had been cancelled, she missed being able to attend, and that it was strange not to have a parade the first week in May.

CITIZEN COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS:

Citizen comments were not taken.

COUNCILOR COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS:

There were no Councilor comments.

Mayor Matt Meske joined the meeting at 5:32 p.m.

EXTENDED DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY:

Mayor Matt Meske reported that he extended the City's Declaration of a State of Emergency, which would have expired April 30, until July 5, following the timeline of Governor Brown's declaration. The extension was made by Mayor's Order 2020-2.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE UPDATE:

Chamber President Lynda Kamerrer presented the update. She reported that local businesses are stressed financially, but also by the anxiety of a whole new way of life under Covid-19 restrictions. The Chamber has been gathering resources from the Federal, State and County level and sharing them with local businesses. She stated that the Chamber is posting information about which businesses are open and their hours on the Chamber website and at the kiosk at Greenwaters Park. She said that a Harvest Festival has been planned for October 10–11 as a Chamber fundraiser, but it is uncertain whether it can be held. Councilor D'Lynn Williams thanked Lynda for her helpful summary.

VARIANCE APPLICATION FOR THREE DOGS, CHRISTOPHER BALL:

Councilor Randy Stark asked for specifics about the address of the owners and type of dog. Councilor Stark asked whether there had been a history of problems with dogs at that property. Nicole answered that she was unaware of any such history. Mayor Meske stated that he was familiar with the owner and had no reason to believe he was not a responsible dog owner.

Councilor Edward Johnstone made a motion to approve the variance for a third dog for Christopher Ball. Councilor Thalia Lerin seconded, and the motion carried 4–0.

AYES: Meske, Williams, Johnstone, Lerin **NAYS:** 0 **ABSTENTIONS:** Stark

APPROVE MINUTES – April 6, 2020; April 9, 2020; April 20, 2020

Councilor Randy Stark made a motion to approve the minutes from April 6, April 9, and April 20, 2020. Councilor D'Lynn Williams seconded, and the motion carried 5–0.

AYES: Meske, Williams, Johnstone, Lerin, Stark **NAYS:** 0 **ABSTENTIONS:** 0

WATER / SEWER REPORT:

Jackson Stone presented the water and sewer report. He said everything was functioning well. He did report one burnt out light bulb on the turbidity meter at the water plant, which he worked around by borrowing a bulb from an unused secondary meter. He stated that he ordered a new bulb. The Mayor asked whether Jackson had a chance to look at the budget for the water and sewer departments. Jackson answered that he had not, but that he had been in communication with Nicole about his departments' requirements for the next year.

POLICE / FIRE REPORT:

There was no fire report. There were no comments on the police report.

REVIEW CHANGES TO EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK:

Mayor Meske stated that it had been a couple of months since the Council had last discussed the changes and reminded them that the revisions were recommended by the City's insurance company, CIS. The Mayor asked whether the Council was comfortable approving the changes as discussed in earlier meetings. Councilor D'Lynn Williams stated that she approved of the changes. There were no other councilor comments or questions.

Mayor Matt Meske made a motion to approve changes to the employee handbook. Councilor Randy Stark seconded, and the motion carried 5–0.

AYES: Meske, Williams, Johnstone, Lerin, Stark **NAYS:** 0 **ABSTENTIONS:** 0

CITY RECORDER REPORT:

Nicole Tritten presented the report and summarized the items. She stated that the OLCC sent notice of renewal of the Westfir Lodge's liquor license, and that the Council did not need to respond if they had no objections. None of the councilors were opposed.

Nicole reported that she received a public records request, and the organization, Open the Books, asked if the City's fees could be waived since they are non-profit. Mayor Meske asked about the nature of the request, and Nicole said that it was employee wage and compensation information. Mayor Meske stated that he would prefer to charge the fee since the organization was not local and the fee not excessive. The Council agreed with charging the fee.

Nicole reported that she heard from the City's insurance agent, Brown & Brown, that CIS discovered that the City's audit had not been filed, and consequently there would be a gap in crime coverage until the audit was completed. Nicole informed the agent that the auditor had received an extension from the Secretary of State's office until February 15. Nicole pointed out to the agent that, since CIS provides coverage for 90 days from the date the audit was due, the City should retain crime coverage until May 15. The agent reported back to Nicole that CIS accepted this timeline and coverage was not suspended. Nicole further reported that after informing the auditor of the deadline, he requested records to review,

which she scanned and e-mailed to him. The auditor appeared not to want to meet in person this year because of the pandemic.

Nicole reported that she ordered the solar speed sign, and the vendor said it would take 5–6 weeks to arrive. She stated that she accepted the estimate from Pave Northwest for the asphalt jobs, as approved by the Council, and they responded that they would be in touch within a few weeks about scheduling.

Nicole reported that there was no resolution establishing the Fiberoptic Fund, and that she could not find examples of resolutions to create operating funds either in City records or on the internet. Mayor Meske suggested that she ask The League of Cities, of which Westfir is a member, or check with the Oakridge City Administrator, Bryan Cutchen.

Finally, Nicole asked the Council if they wanted to publish the Budget Hearing notice in the *Dead Mountain Echo* as usual, given its expense and the fact that this year the Governor's Executive Order No. 20-16 provided relief from the requirement to publish the notice in the paper of record. Order No. 20-16 required only that the notice be posted prominently on the internet 5–30 days before the public hearing. Mayor Matt Meske stated that the Budget Hearing notice should be published in the *DME* as usual, and the Council did not object.

CITY FINANCIAL REVIEW:

Nicole Tritten submitted the bank statement, cash deposits, and expenditure sheet. Nicole reported that the Concerts in the Park event in Oakridge had been cancelled. She asked Council whether Westfir should pay the approved grant money toward the next event to ensure that RTMP funds were being spent on tourism. Mayor Meske stated that it wasn't prudent since the event was cancelled. He suggested that the City might consider providing bigger grants to the events that do happen in 2020 as a way to better distribute tourism funds.

At the April 9 Special Session, the Council voted to approve \$60,000.00 in expenditures for April and May. Nicole reported that no additional funds were required, so the Council did not vote on a specific expenditure amount for May.

CITIZENS CONCERNS NOT ON AGENDA:

The Council discussed citizen concerns received by phone and e-mail. Kenith Johnson on Westoak Road called the office to request that the City have the streetlight behind his house turned off. Mr. Johnson said that he spoke to his neighbors, and they agreed. Councilor D'Lynn Williams stated that she was opposed to turning off any streetlights for safety reasons. Mayor Meske said he was fine with the request if the neighbors agreed, and he made a motion. The motion was not seconded. Councilor Randy Stark and Councilor Edward Johnstone asked to see signed approval from the immediate neighbors who are affected by the light. Mayor Matt Meske requested that Mr. Johnson provide the light pole number.

Resident Dick Shearer e-mailed a suggestion that the City consider a riparian tree planting event. Mayor Matt Meske stated that it's something the City would consider in the future with cooperation from the Middle Fork Willamette Watershed Council.

COUNCILOR CONCERNS NOT ON AGENDA:

Councilor Randy Stark reported that the street signs at the junction of Winfrey Road and Sunset Road on the west end near the railroad tracks were installed backwards, after having been knocked down. Jackson Stone replied that he would call Lane County Public Works the next day and inform them.

Councilor Stark had another concern. He reported that his neighbor Larry has been voluntarily mowing and weed-eating a large area down by the road to the sewer plant. His neighbor wanted to know if the City had a riding mower he could borrow for that work. Jackson Stone stated that the City has a riding lawnmower, but he cannot let a private citizen use it for reasons of liability. Jackson said that he would mow the area in question; it was just a matter of finding the time.

ADJOURN MEETING:

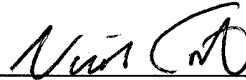
Councilor Randy Stark moved to adjourn the meeting. Mayor Matt Meske seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:37 p.m.

AYES: Meske, Williams, Johnstone, Lerin, Stark **NAYS:** 0 **ABSTENTIONS:** 0

Respectfully Submitted,



Matt Meske, Mayor



ATTEST:
Nicole Tritten, City Recorder

6-10-20
DATE: