

WESTFIR CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Monday, July 6, 2020

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

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER:

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

MAYOR'S MINUTE:

Mayor Meske noted that Oregon is having a bit of a spike in Covid-19 cases.

CITIZEN COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS:

There were no citizen comments.

COUNCILOR COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS:

There were no Councilor comments.

VARIANCE APPLICATION FOR THIRD DOG (MAIZE), BALLARD:

Councilor Stark expressed concern that the court recommendations for managing the dog had not been met. City Recorder Nicole Tritten stated that there was no written record by the court. Councilor Thalia Lerin reported that Maize's behavior had improved with the Ballards, who walk her every day, have their yard fenced and installed a warning sign about leaving the gate open. Councilor Randy Stark made a motion to approve the variance for the third dog at Kristin Ballard's house. Councilors D'Lynn Williams and Thalia Lerin seconded, and the motion carried, 5-0.

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

REQUEST TO TURN OFF STREETLIGHT ON 2ND STREET:

Councilor Randy Stark reported that he spoke to three of the four property owners affected by the light. He stated that the power company turned the brightness down to 45%, but the property owners did not find that an adequate solution. Councilor D'Lynn Williams stated that she looked at land-use zoning, and the City is supposed to have a streetlight every 200 feet. Councilor Stark estimated it was another 100-125 feet to the next pole. He stated that one of the property owners planned to install motion sensor lights if the streetlight was turned off.

Councilor Stark opened the floor to the main petitioner, Kenith Johnson, to address the Council. Mr. Johnson stated that there are 2-3 streetlights within 200 feet of the light in question. He said that, with the motion sensor lights the residents plan to install, there would be sufficient illumination. He expressed his frustration with the slowness of City decision-making. Councilor D'Lynn Williams made a motion to allow streetlight V14R7R1 to be turned off by the City. Councilor Edward Johnstone seconded, and the motion carried 5-0.

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

OAKRIDGE AIR-SMOKE RESPONSE PLAN:

Representative Sarah Altemus-Pope joined the meeting in progress. She stated that Westfir didn't need to participate as a regular partner, but the City needs to know about the planning effort. She explained that the smoke response plan is largely about notifying communities about the timing of and reason for proscribed fires and what to do to protect citizens' health. She said it would be helpful to know how to reach Westfir citizens, whether by e-mail, community platforms, or Facebook. Councilor Williams suggested including information in the Westfir newsletter.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE UPDATE:

Mayor Meske asked Chamber President Lynda Kamerrer about Chamber activity in Oakridge. She said that the Chamber's Covid-19 subcommittee is continuing to help businesses with access to financial and other assistance. She reported that the Chamber had a phone meeting with bike industry businesses and expressed to them the concerns of local people about bike tourists coming from places that are more Covid-affected. She said the meeting was a good opportunity to talk to the industry about reinforcing basic safety behaviors with their customers such as hand hygiene, wearing masks, and social distancing. Councilor D'Lynn asked whether the Harvest Festival was going to happen. Ms. Kamerrer said probably not because the circumstances are too unpredictable and challenging for planning an event.

APPROVE MINUTES – June 1, 2020

Councilor Randy Stark made a motion to approve the minutes from June 1, 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 that he purchased three new water meters because he had installed the last unit on hand the previous month. He reported that there was a problem with the turbidimeter at the water plant and that he ordered a new unit. He stated that he was able to get, at no cost, a new sensor for the sewer plant, to replace the one that failed prematurely.

PLACEMENT OF SPEED SIGN:

Jackson recommended placing the sign alternately near the City Hall on Westoak Road and coming into town on Westfir Road. Councilor Stark stated that he thought drivers would pay more attention to the sign if it were placed where the speed limit decreases to 35 or 25 miles per hour. The Council decided to place the sign per Jackson's recommendation. Jackson stated that the sign could be placed in other locations if additional posts were installed. The Council budgeted \$200 for the installation of two posts.

POLICE / FIRE REPORT:

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

PORTAL USE APPLICATION:

Oregon Interscholastic Cycling League applied to use the Portal from August 13–16, 2020, for 30 people. Councilor D'Lynn Williams made a motion to approve the application of the Oregon Interscholastic Cycling League and to provide a grant of \$500.00 from the RTMP fund. Councilor Johnstone seconded, and the motion carried, 5–0.

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

MILL SITE PROPOSAL FROM RALPH CHRISTENSEN:

A letter from the owners, represented by Ralph Christensen, proposed the division of the mill site into 5-acre parcels to be divided among the three owners. Councilor Johnstone expressed some unease with the proposal. Mayor Meske stated that there is a national standard for what are termed “large lot subdivisions” and implied that the lots could not be further subdivided. Councilor Lerin pointed out that in the letter from Mr. Christensen, he specifically stated that the 5-acre lots could be subdivided. Councilor Williams stated that she was concerned about water, sewer, and utilities on the site. Mayor Meske said that five-acre lots was the most practical option, and in any event, the planning commission would have input on any new plan. Councilor Johnstone said that he thought some land should be preserved at the east end as an extension of the Portal and a place to hold events. Councilor Williams said she thought the Council should encourage the owners to develop the new proposal further, and the Council agreed.

Councilor Thalia Lerin exited the meeting around 6:47 p.m.

FIVE-YEAR TEMPORARY USE PERMIT APPLICATION, CITY OF WESTFIR:

Nicole Tritten asked if the Council had any guidance on the process of renewing the City’s 5-year Temporary Use Permit for the Bridge Lighting Festival. Councilor Williams suggested that Nicole consult with Melody Cornelius, the previous City Recorder.

CITY RECORDER REPORT:

Nicole Tritten presented the report and summarized the items. She asked the Council whether they wanted to interview the one applicant for the Relief Recorder position even though she could not work at the times specified in the job description. Mayor Meske stated that the matter should be addressed in executive session. The Council decided to leave the position open until filled.

Nicole reported to the Council that she sent the employee handbook to the City’s insurance company for review, and they recommended extensive changes to the document. The Council decided to review the changes in a work session.

Nicole asked the Council for clarification on the business license fee. She said she wasn’t sure if the annual gross receipts threshold of \$5,000.00 applied to gross receipts only from business conducted within Westfir, or from all locations. She stated that the business license application was clear, but the ordinance was not. Councilor D’Lynn Williams said she believed that the threshold should apply to gross receipts for all locations. Councilor Stark suggested that the ordinance be reviewed by the Council and revised for clarity. Nicole said that for now she would assume that the threshold applied to gross receipts for all locations since the Council believed that should be the standard.

DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION FOR PAUL AND JULIE MATHER:

The Recorder’s Report was suspended to review the application, which was not included on the agenda. Julie and Paul Mather appeared at the meeting remotely. Julie explained that the application was for a small addition to the existing house. Mayor Meske asked the Mathers whether they had any issues with the City’s 10-foot setback requirement and easement for electric lines. Paul replied that there was ample distance. Councilor Randy Stark made a motion to approve the development application for Julie and Paul Mather. Councilor Edward Johnstone seconded, and the motion carried, 4–0.

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

CITY RECORDER REPORT (CONTINUED):

Nicole said that a resident called and asked if he could build a 4-foot-tall fence topped by a 2-foot lattice along the front of his property. She said that she told the resident that there was a 3-foot limit, but she wasn't sure about the lattice. The Council said the lattice was considered sight-obscuring and therefore not to code.

Nicole reported that a resident who racked up a large water bill during the moratorium asked if he could pay the bill in two installments. The Council agreed that he could pay the total amount due in two installments, by July 17 and August 17.

CITY FINANCIAL REVIEW:

Nicole Tritten submitted the bank statement, cash deposits, and expenditure sheet. She updated the Council on the submission of documents to tax authorities for the 2020–2021 budget. She stated that she provided the Council with copies of Profit & Loss reports for the budget year just ended. Councilor Williams asked why the reports didn't show that transfers had been made from the General Fund. Nicole said it was an oversight on her part, and she would consult with the City's accountant.

Councilor D'Lynn Williams made a motion to approve expenditures for July 2020 in the amount of \$36,588.81. Councilor Randy Stark seconded, and the motion carried 4–0.

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

CITIZENS CONCERNS NOT ON AGENDA:

Elizabeth Stark stated that she would like to live in a community that encourages volunteers, and that the City needed to decide how to accommodate them. Councilor Randy Stark agreed to work with Nicole to figure out the City's options around liability insurance and present them to the Council at a later date.

COUNCILOR CONCERNS NOT ON AGENDA:

Councilor Stark expressed concern about an RV and a portable toilet occupying a property along Westfir Road. Mayor Meske stated that the people purchased the property with the intent to build a home and that they were not in violation of an ordinance. Councilor Stark said he thought that they were in violation because camping on your property for more than two weeks is prohibited. Councilor Williams suggested that Council discuss the issue at the next meeting, after reviewing the ordinance. The Council agreed.

ADJOURN MEETING:

Councilor Randy Stark moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilor D'Lynn Williams seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Meske, Mayor

ATTEST:
Nicole Tritten, City Recorder

DATE