

## **MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

**March 18, 2003**

The minutes of the proceedings of a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Coos Bay held at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 500 Central Avenue, Coos Bay, Coos County, Oregon.

### **Those Attending**

Those present were Mayor Joe Benetti and Councilors Jon Eck, Roger Gould, Anna Marie Larson, and Kevin Stufflebean. Councilor Cindi Miller was due to illness and Councilor McKeown out of town due to business. City staff present were City Manager Bill Grile, Deputy Recorder Joyce Jansen, City Attorney Nathan McClintock, Fire Chief Stan Gibson, Police Chief Chuck Knight, and Library Director Carol Ventgen.

### **Flag Salute**

Mayor Benetti opened the meeting and led the assembly in the salute to the flag.

### **Consent Calendar**

Mayor Benetti reviewed the consent calendar which consisted of approval of the minutes of February 4<sup>th</sup>, February 18<sup>th</sup>, February 27<sup>th</sup>, and March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2003, and approval of the Woodland Drive speed zone request study. Councilor Stufflebean moved to approve the consent calendar as presented. Councilor Eck seconded the motion which passed with the Mayor and all Councilors present voting aye.

### **Discussion of HB 2267 – Room Tax Bill**

Councilor Stufflebean reported HB 2267 would implement a 1% transit tax for the purpose of promoting the tourism industry and he requested the City of Coos Bay support the bill. He noted the North Bend City Council has submitted a letter to Rep. Verger supporting the bill if the preemption was not included. Councilor Stufflebean commented many cities use the transit tax to supplement general fund operations, however, Coos Bay uses the funds for supporting tourism efforts. Scott West, Executive Director of the Oregon Lodging Association, spoke in favor the HB 2267 and explained the financial impact the association believes the 1% tax would have on Oregon. Mr. West reported the bill grandfathers current transit taxes, but 100% of future increases would be required to be used for tourism purposes. Mayor Benetti commented future increases would stay in the local area and Mr. West noted only the 1% statewide tax would go to the state. There was further discussion regarding 100% of future room tax increases would be required to be spent on tourism promotion and the estimated revenue that would be generated by the statewide tax. Councilor Stufflebean moved to submit a letter of support for HB 2267 to Representatives Verger and Krieger, and Senator Messerle. Councilor Gould seconded the motion which passed with the Mayor and all Councilors present voting aye.

### **Annual Coos Art Museum Report by Reed Lockhart**

Reed Lockhart reported the Coos Art Museum has had another successful year and he expressed appreciation for the City's support of the museum. Mr. Lockhart reviewed the exhibits, workshops, and programs provided by the museum, and reported the permanent

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collection grew by 25 works last year. Mr. Lockhart reported the museum will soon have the permanent collection on their web site and noted the workshops and exhibits bring visitors from across the country as well as from other countries. Mr. Grile reported the city and the museum have discussed partnering to bring public art into the downtown area, beginning with a local artist, Lanny Little. Mayor Benetti commended Mr. Lockhart and the museum board for doing a good job of making the museum an asset to the community.

### **Department Head Report by Fire Chief Stan Gibson**

Chief Gibson reported the Lions Club annual TV auction was a success and each year they focus on one project in the community. This year they chose the Coos Bay Fire Department and collected \$1,000 for safety equipment, in addition to raising \$12,000 for local community projects. Chief Gibson commented the department will participate in a blood screening program April 5<sup>th</sup> for the purpose of finding a bone marrow match for Bridget Morris. The screening will be done at no charge. Miss Morris is 12 years old, attends Sunset Middle School, is active in sports and 4H, and was recently diagnosed with leukemia. Chief Gibson reported OSHA was in town last week and indicated the factfinding phase of the investigation has been completed and they hope to hold the closing conference with the City in 30 days. The state fire marshal's report is also expected soon and NIOSH is awaiting results of the equipment testing.

### **Consideration of Replacement of the Mingus Park Pool Boiler**

Mr. Grile explained the boiler was built in 1972, maintenance is difficult because parts are no longer available, and it needs to be replaced. The cost to replace the boiler is \$26,000 and it is estimated the new boiler will save 40% in fuel costs. Mr. Grile reported Mingus Park Pool Management has offered to partner with the City in the purchase of a new boiler. Mr. Rod Danielson from School District 9 reported the district has the ability to install the boiler. Mayor Benetti reported Councilor McKeown's recommendation was for the City to use repair and replacement funds to pay the whole amount. Mayor Benetti moved to fund the full \$26,000 from the repair and replacement fund. Councilor Gould seconded the motion which passed with the Mayor and all Councilors present voting aye.

### **Public Comments**

Ralph Mohr, Coos Bay, thanked the Council for supporting the pool and commended Steve Doty and Phil Christianna for their dedication and hard work. He noted often the people doing the work behind the scenes for the common good of the community go unrecognized. Mr. Mohr invited the City Council and members of the public to use the pool and he offered to give free swimming lessons.

Giles Parker, Coos Bay, requested the Council consider removing France's flag from the boardwalk because they have not been honest with the America regarding the conflict with Iraq. Councilor Stufflebean commented the issue is not whether the Council does or does not support the war, but rather is an issue of France's behavior toward the USA. Councilor Larson stated Mr. Parker's comments were offensive and she did not support removal of the French flag. After further discussion, consensus of the Council was to replace all the national flags with American Flags. Mayor Benetti commented the City has for several years flown the American flags from May through July 4<sup>th</sup>.

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### **City Manager's Report**

Mr. Grile reviewed the annual appropriation request to be sent to Senator Smith's office, reported the Budget Sub-Committee has held two meetings, and commented on the City's financial reserves. The City has \$800,000 in the repair and replacement reserve fund and an estimated \$3 million in timber. Mr. Grile reported briefly on possible infrastructure improvements to the City dock to attract larger vessels and noted the dock is a tremendous asset to the community.

### **Council Comments**

Councilor Larson commented it was good to hear that Councilor Miller's health is improving. Councilor Stufflebean reported the Boys and Girls Club hosted the annual basketball tournament which brought people from around the state. He attended his first Tourism Promotions Committee meeting and commended Tricia Benetti for keeping the promotions committee going without staff assistance. Councilor Stufflebean commented he will be out of town for the next council meeting. Councilor Eck congratulated the Lions Club on their successful TV auction and commented the funds raised support many good programs.

Councilor Gould commented the Boys and Girls Club is used for a number of community events such as the recent Jazz Festival. He noted the citizens have past city manager Jim Watson to thank for setting up the timber sale program to fund an equipment replacement reserves. Mayor Benetti commented normally half of the timber revenue goes to the repair and replacement fund and half to the general fund; however, this year the City placed all the revenue in the general fund. Councilor Gould commented it is a challenge for both Coos Bay and North Bend to look for ways to economize and not dip into assets when annual expenditures are exceeding the revenues. He further commented consolidation would help the community maintain a level of service without taking from reserves when times are tough.

Mayor Benetti commented many of the increases are not within the City's control, such as the increases in PERS and insurance premiums. Mayor Benetti reported budget meetings are coming up in April and encouraged the public to attend. He thanked the Boys and Girls Club for the reception, reported on a meeting with the Water Board and noted the board will report quarterly to the City Council. Mayor Benetti commented the Water Board is working with the City on the Newmark Project on the relocation of water mains in the Newmark area.

### **Adjourn**

There being no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Benetti adjourned the meeting to April 1, 2003 in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

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Joe Benetti, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Joyce Jansen, Deputy Recorder