

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

February 17, 2004

The minutes of the proceedings of a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Coos Bay held immediately following the Urban Renewal Agency meeting beginning 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, Jeff McKeown, and Kevin Stufflebean. Councilor Cindi Miller was absent. City staff present were City Manager Chuck Knight, City Attorney Nathan McClintock, Deputy Recorder Joyce Jansen, Police Chief Eura Washburn, Finance Director Janell Howard, and Library Director Carol Ventgen.

Consent Calendar

Mayor Benetti reviewed the consent calendar which consisted of the approval of the February 3, 2004 minutes. Councilor Stufflebean moved to approve the consent calendar as presented. Councilor McKeown seconded the motion which passed with the Mayor and all Councilors present voting aye.

Report from State Representative Joanne Verger

State Representative Joanne Verger reported the last legislative session was the longest in history and the first few months of the session were used to balance the budget. Rep. Verger reviewed the affects of voting down the tax increase will have on state services and reported she serves on the tax reform committee. The committee has scheduled meetings around the state to gather public input on tax reform. Rep. Verger also reported on the local and state economic condition, concerns about the fishing and lumber industries, the need for the state to establish a rainy day fund, and the benefits to municipalities and businesses of retaining SAIF but with legislative oversight. Councilor McKeown expressed appreciation for Rep. Verger's report and recommended she be invited to the council meetings on a regular basis. There was further discussion on school financing, tax reform and sales tax options, and the ability for Oregon to attract business and jobs to the state.

Public Hearing on the Proposed Plan Amendment to the Downtown Urban Renewal District and Enactment of an Ordinance Approving a Substantial Amendment to the Plan and Report

Mayor Benetti opened the public hearing on the proposed plan amendment to the Downtown Urban Renewal Plan. Finance Director Janell Howard briefly reported on the plan and report amendments, and explained the plan was put into effect in 1988 and taxes were frozen at that time for the urban renewal area. Mayor Benetti clarified that the amendment would not increase taxes for property owners in the urban renewal district, and the additional area being added is approximately six acres. Councilor Stufflebean commented by adding the property on which wastewater treatment plant I is located the city will be able to use urban renewal funds for upgrading the plant and will save all citizens money. Councilor Gould commented the

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amendment to the plan would give the city options for funding the mandated upgrades to the plant and will save citizens \$1.5 million.

Lou Leberti, Coos Bay, inquired if the expansion of the urban renewal district would include his neighborhood. Ms. Howard explained the property around plant I would be added and does not extend into the surrounding neighborhood. Geno Landrum, Coos Bay, commented the city contracts with OMI to run the wastewater treatment facility and inquired how much money one customer is allowed to withdraw from the district. Councilor Gould clarified that Mr. Landrum meant for one project and explained the agency designates the amount for each project. Mr. Landrum asked if the renewal funds could be used for infrastructure repairs in the downtown area. Mayor Benetti reported the agency is looking into building pump stations for the south end of town and for the Blossom Gulch area to address flooding issues. There being no further public comments, Mayor Benetti closed the public hearing.

Councilor Stufflebean moved to enact the ordinance amending the Downtown Urban Renewal Plan and Report. Councilor Eck seconded the motion. Deputy Recorder Joyce Jansen read the ordinance by title only and polled the council. The ordinance was enacted by the following vote:

Aye: Mayor Benetti and Councilors Eck, Gould, Larson, McKeown and Stufflebean
Absent: Councilor Miller
No: None

Authorization to Enter into a Contract to Purchase a Law Enforcement Dispatch/Records Management System

Chief Washburn reported the city has contracted with Lane County AIRS for police and fire records management since 1991. Last year the department was notified of significant changes to be made in AIRS and an increase in cost. Staff researched other programs that would better meet Coos Bay's needs and at an affordable cost. Chief Washburn briefly reviewed the cost savings and benefits of going with Custom Micro, Inc. (CMI) and introduced Curry County Sheriff Metcalf to the Council. Sheriff Metcalf reported Curry County had been with AIRS since 1989 and switched to CMI in November 2003. He commented the sheriff's department had always been happy with AIRS, but it had become cost prohibitive and with CMI, the county owns the system. They have been using the system since November and it is working well. The city of Brookings is also going with CMI. Sheriff Metcalf commented the system is user friendly and easy to learn.

Councilor Gould commented having Coos and Curry Counties in the same district, it makes sense to go with CMI. There was further discussion on the qualifications and abilities of CMI, and the cost savings to the city. Finance Director Janell Howard reported funding for the equipment would come from the capital reserve fund, operating costs would come from the general fund/police department budget, and some funding from the 9-1-1 fund and the technology plan fund. The immediate savings would come from monthly operating costs and by year 2007 the city would start saving money with a recurring savings of \$49,000 a year. Councilor Gould moved to authorize the contract to purchase the law enforcement

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dispatch/records management system. Councilor McKeown seconded the motion which passed with Mayor Benetti and all Councilors present voting aye.

Acceptance of the Charter Amendment Initiative for the May 18, 2004 Ballot – the Amendment would Create a New City Department Dedicated to Organizing Automobile Racing Events

John Buchanan, chief petitioner for the charter amendment ballot measure, reported enough qualified signatures had been collected to place the measure on the May 18th ballot. He read the ballot title to the assembly which is attached and hereby made a part of the record. Mr. Buchanan reported the charter amendment would create a new city department which would be managed by an elected seven-member commission, and the net earnings from the racing events would be dedicated to the Coos Bay School District.

Councilor Larson inquired how law enforcement would be handled for the races since the city is already short staffed. Mr. Buchanan stated he had talked with State Police and the State Fire Marshall and was told there are funds from the state budget for special events and police officers would be brought in for the event. Mayor Benetti commented Mr. Buchanan's efforts are commendable, however there are many issues to be dealt with, and he expressed concern regarding funding from the city going to the school district. City Attorney Nate McClintock reported he had researched the law and had not found anything that prohibited this function. Councilor Gould commented the impact of adding a new department to the city budget is unknown and that makes him nervous as the city already has a difficult time providing current services. Mr. Buchanan explained the commission intends to seek sponsorships to cover the operating costs so there would be little or zero impact on the city budget.

Mr. Buchanan commented citizens can reject the measure if they feel it will seriously impact the city's budget. Mayor Benetti stated the Council is concerned about the budgetary obligation if the measure passes and operating costs for the department would need to be included in the proposed budget. Mr. McClintock commented staff would be needed for a new department. Councilor McKeown commented the idea is great and if Mr. Buchanan was doing this on his own, he would be supportive; however, creating a new department brings concerns about budget and staff impact. Since all filing requirements have been met and the measure has been presented to the City Council in accordance to election law, the ballot measure will be submitted to the county for inclusion on the May 18, 2004 ballot.

Appointments to the Budget Committee

Applications were received from Melinda Anderson, Sheila Banks, Kristin Hanners, Chuck Holloway, Roy Metzger, John Mobley, and Jelena Wittwer for consideration for appointment to fill four vacancies on the Budget Committee. Interviews were held by the City Council February 11th. The City Council voted by ballot and Roy Metzger received a majority vote and was appointed to a three-year term. John Mobley, Shiela Banks, and Jelena Wittwer each received the four votes. After a brief discussion the Council directed the deputy recorder to contact the three applicants and inquire if one of the applicants would be willing to accept the appointment for one year to fulfill the unexpired term.

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City Manager's Report

City Manager Chuck Knight thanked the council for supporting the purchase of the computer system for the police department.

Public Comments

Wim deVriend, Coos Bay, expressed concern about the drop in business to several businesses in the downtown area on Wednesdays when the Farmer's Market is held. Mr. deVriend submitted a petition to the Council requesting the Farmer's Market change to Saturday or move to a different location. Councilor Larson expressed her support of the Farmer's Market and agreed with Mr. deVriend the current location is not good and suggested using the pedway. Mayor Benetti commented there would still be parking problems in the 101 parking lot. There was further discussion on downtown parking, other possible locations for the market, and installation of parking directional signage. Chris Coles, President of the Downtown Association, reported the market is willing to move to another location. She also commented the association has offered to promote the downtown businesses during the market and that the mission statement of the Downtown Association is to promote the downtown area. Mr. deVriend reviewed a survey of the downtown businesses regarding the concerns and loss of business during the Farmer's Market. Ms. Coles reported an average of 2,000 people are brought into the downtown area on the days the market is held. Mayor Benetti suggested Ms. Coles and Mr. deVriend meet with City Manager Chuck Knight and come back with a recommendation to the Council.

Joan Johnston, Coos Bay, commented she owns Sincerely Yours Antique Mall and expressed support for the Farmer's Market. She commented everyone benefits when so many people come to town and it is an opportunity to tell people what a great community we have. Geno Landrum, Coos Bay, also stated support for the market and suggested locating the event to Fir Avenue and North Front Street. Councilor Gould expressed concern with the trains coming through the area. Stan Blackwell, Coos Bay, commented the Council had addressed the parking issues last year, and the market does cause local businesses to lose business.

Lou Leberti, Coos Bay, asked if the Rescue Mission had an occupancy permit for their new location and if they had received a permit for their sign. He also inquired if the mission was current in their lease payments to the city. City Manager Chuck Knight reported they are current in their payments and he would check into the other matters and call Mr. Liberti with the information.

Council Comments

Councilor Larson thanked the applicants for their interest in serving on the Budget Committee. Councilor Eck commented the applicants were well qualified, and he had an opportunity to serve at the Zonta fund raising dinner recently. Councilor Gould also commented on the quality of applicants for the Budget Committee, and expressed appreciation for the public input at this evening's meeting. Councilor McKeown also commented on the citizen involvement and thanked Chief Washburn for bringing CMI to the Council. He also thanked Chief Metcalf for coming from Gold Beach to attend the meeting.

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Mayor Benetti commented the memorial dedication for Steve Clay was held this afternoon and it was very appropriate and fitting. The city goals will be discussed March 2nd and 16th and the public is invited to attend and give input on the process. Mayor Benetti referenced a letter received from McSwain and Woods regarding the historic design standards and he asked staff to review the standards at a future council meeting.

Mayor Benetti reported on a proposed project to place a sewer line from Empire to the North Spit. The city would be the lead agency with nine other entities participating in the project and it would cost the city \$10,000 annually for 20 years. The project would benefit economic development to the area and the Water Board and Northwest Natural Gas is also putting in a line. Mayor Benetti asked the Council if they would be interested in moving forward with the project and consensus of the Council was to explore the idea. Councilor Larson inquired if urban renewal funds could be used for the project and City Manager Chuck Knight reported West Yost would be looking into using urban renewal funds.

Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the City Council, Mayor Benetti adjourned the meeting to March 2, 2004 in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

Joe Benetti, Mayor

ATTEST:

Joyce Jansen, Deputy Recorder

BALLOT TITLE

CAPTION: Charter amendment creating a city department for organizing racing events.

QUESTION: Shall Coos Bay's charter be amended to create a new city department which is dedicated to organizing automobile racing events.

SUMMARY: This ballot initiative will create a new government department within the City of Coos Bay. This department will have as its purpose, the organization and promoting of an annual summer automobile race, which would be run on the streets of Coos Bay, as well as on Highway 101. The race course would be enclosed within concrete and steel safety barriers. The City of Coos Bay would earn money through the sale of admission tickets, entry fees, merchandise sales, parking and vendor space fees, and contracts with sponsors, advertisers and suppliers. This new department would be operated by an elected seven member board of commissioners. Net proceeds of the City of Coos Bay from this event would benefit the Coos Bay School District. No new taxes are authorized by this initiative.