

**City of Rainier
Regular City Council Meeting
July 12, 2021
6 p.m.
Rainier City Hall**

Mayor Jerry Cole called the Regular Council Meeting to order at 6 p.m.

Council Present: Connie Budge, Scott Cooper, Robert duPlessis, Mike Kreger, Levi Richardson, Brenda Tschida and Jenna Weaver

Council Absent: None

City Attorney Present: No

City Staff Present: Gregg Griffith, Police Chief; W. Scott Jorgensen, City Administrator; Sue Lawrence, Public Works Director

Flag Salute

Additions/Deletions from the Agenda: Councilor Brenda Tschida requested that item c under New Business be called Feed the Community. Cole noted the change. Public Works Director Sue Lawrence said she wanted to add water line bid for the D Street Loop project to new business. Cole said it can be added as item j. Council President Mike Kreger moved to add the water line bid for the D Street Loop project to new business. That motion was seconded by Tschida and adopted unanimously.

Mayor's Address: Cole, acting as one of the chairs of Rainier Days, presented plaques of recognition to Lawrence for the public works department's contributions to the event, and to City Administrator W. Scott Jorgensen for city staff's efforts to make it a success. A banner had been draped over a horse in the parade to honor former police chief Ralph Painter. Its owner wanted to donate it to the city. Cole hung it on a chair in the council chambers.

Visitor Comments: There were no visitor comments at this time.

Consider Approval of the Consent Agenda:

Consider Approval of the June 7, 2021 Regular Council Meeting Minutes—Kreger moved to approve the consent agenda. That motion was seconded by Councilor Jenna Weaver and adopted unanimously.

Unfinished Business

- a. Riverfront Trail Update-Jorgensen announced that the city has been

- awarded a grant of \$84,715 by the Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments to fund the project's third phase. Kreger moved to accept the grant award. That motion was seconded by Councilor Scott Cooper and adopted unanimously. Cole said he's excited that the park will be connected to downtown via the trail. People are using the trail and love it.
- b. Fox Creek Update-Jorgensen said that before the legislature adjourned, it passed House Bill 5006. That bill was the legislature's disbursement of federal American Rescue Plan Act funds. He had worked with Rep. Brad Witt's office to include \$100,000 for the Fox Creek feasibility study in the bill. It is now awaiting the governor's signature.
 - c. Senior and Multigenerational Housing-Councilor Connie Budge suggested the formation of the committee be added to the council agenda for August or September. Cole said the positions could be advertised in August and the committee could start meeting in September. Jorgensen said three duplexes are being constructed on a property next to the riverfront condos. The property on the other side has been purchased. It's his understanding that a single family home is planned for the site.
 - d. Nuisance House at 516 East E Street-Jorgensen said he included Chapter 15.15 of the city's code in the council packet for reference. The city has already gone through several of the processes outlined in it, including mailing notice to the owner, publishing and posting notices and holding a public hearing. Section 15.15.060(c) states that if council determines the building to be dangerous, which council has, it may by resolution order the building to be made safe and prescribe what must be done to make it safe. He's been in contact with the attorney representing the property owner and the owner's son. The attorney wasn't able to attend tonight's meeting and the son wasn't in attendance either. Jorgensen had hoped the attorney would be there so council could direct him to work with the attorney to draft the resolution. Council agreed by consensus that the property should be abated by the start of the next rain season. Cole suggested that a resolution be drafted to abate the nuisance by the end of September. Council agreed by consensus. Cole said the city can hire a contractor to demolish the house and place a lien on the property. Council agreed by consensus.
 - e. Reimbursement Request for Tree Removal on Maple Drive-Budge moved to remove this item from the unfinished business portion of the agenda. That motion was seconded by Cooper and adopted unanimously.
 - f. Second Reading of Ordinance 1079—Repeal RV Park Ordinance-Kreger moved to approve the ordinance. That motion was seconded by Tschida and adopted unanimously.
 - g. Geotech Study Bids-Lawrence said she tried to get three bids. One

- refused the bid because it was too big of a project for their firm. Another bid didn't cover all of the areas that the city needs and the limitations were considerable. Budge said she didn't feel that bid fit the requirements the city has to have. It also leaves an open door for the firm to charge the city \$160 per hour. That could add up to more than the other bid. Cooper asked about the pros and cons of the two bids received. Lawrence said the one from West Yost is adequate, appropriate and will give the city more information to fix the problem and deal with the sewer line. Kreger agreed with Budge. He's concerned about the limitations on one of the bids and the statements that the firm wouldn't be held accountable. Cole agreed that the bid from West Yost was better. Budge moved to accept the bid from West Yost. That motion was seconded by Kreger. Councilor Robert duPlessis asked if the bid from West Yost included work that was already done. Lawrence confirmed that it did. There was \$9,000 worth of work already done on this study. Cole said his intent was to get multiple bids. duPlessis said it's good to compare to see if the original bid was out of line. The motion passed unanimously.
- h. Speed Humps on C Street-Cole said council wanted to look at alternatives to the stop sign that was installed. Lawrence said that a study she sent to council found 85 percent speed limit compliance through the use of speed humps spaced 500 feet apart. That section of street would need three of them. Cooper asked if traffic cameras would be worth looking into. Police Chief Gregg Griffith said the state hasn't authorized cities of this size to use them. Kreger said speed humps are a good option. duPlessis asked about the differences between pre-manufactured humps versus using asphalt. Lawrence said the difference in cost is \$1,000 but she's not sure how long the manufactured ones would last. Cole asked Kreger what he would like to see, since it's his neighborhood. Kreger said asphalt. Cole asked if public works staff would be able to do the installation. Lawrence said they probably could, but the city doesn't have the necessary equipment. The speed humps would be \$3594 for all three and would involve less staff time. She could try to add the job to another project. That may be a better option for the city. A contractor would have the tools. duPlessis said that approach would lower mobilization costs. Tschida asked if there had been more complaints about the stop sign. Cole said he gets them in passing. People have been running it. Kreger agreed. People don't come to a complete stop there. Kreger said he would prefer asphalt over manufactured. Cole agreed. Lawrence said she could get a bid. Cole said he favored speed humps, they would slow traffic.

New Business

- a. Hudson Garbage Rate Increase Request-Hudson District Manager josh

Brown said the county recently approved a 2.6 percent price increase for the use of its transfer station. Hudson is also facing increased costs for labor, materials and fuel. The company is requesting a 2.6 percent rate increase for its Rainier customers. That's lower than the consumer price index, which is 4.8 percent. Cole said a customer using a single trash can once a week would see an increase of 66 cents per month, or \$7.92 per year. Cooper moved to accept the proposed rate increase. That motion was seconded by Kreger. Councilor Levi Richardson said the proposed increase was minimal. Jan Rich asked when it would take effect. Brown said he would prefer July 1. Cole said he would like it to start with the next cycle, August 1. Council agreed by consensus. The motion passed unanimously.

- b. Senior Center Request-Rich is requesting the use of property the city owns to do an expansion to add a walk-in freezer. She's applying for a grant to cover the expenses and isn't asking the city for any funding. Kreger has been helping with the projects. She proposes putting the freezer near the back door. The rhododendrons would have to be removed and concrete slabs added. The freezer would be eight by twelve feet. It would eliminate the need for the five freezers the senior center has now. There's no extra space inside the building without eliminating other items. The center has had to turn down food from the food bank and can't take advantage of some sales because there's not enough space. Removing the current freezers would add room. An engineering survey would have to be done and she's been in touch with an engineer. Cooper asked about security concerns. Rich said there will be a keypad lock and she would like to put a fence on three sides. They've thought about having a partial roof but won't need to change the building. Kreger moved to allow the request. That motion was seconded by Tschida and adopted unanimously.
- c. Ladies of Rainier Feed the Community Park Use Request-Tschida said the organization is a 501C3. There are young women in the community who want help with food. The idea is to serve food in the park once a month. It wouldn't be income restricted and isn't aimed at the homeless because they have resources in Longview. Single mothers aren't getting enough food. The group is working with the food bank and HOPE and would make sure to clean up the park after the event. Weaver said it could be beneficial to have another organization providing this kind of service. Cole asked if other locations have been considered. Tschida said they have. Weaver suggested allowing the group to use the park once to see how it goes. Sloan Nelson said he was concerned that this may pull away from other local nonprofit organizations. Another concern is that the Belly Brigade in Longview feeds the homeless. He's seen problems result from it, including more garbage. How would the success of this be measured? He doesn't want a migration of homeless from Longview. Tschida reiterated that she didn't think that would be the case because the homeless in Longview have access to resources

- there. Nelson said the migration is already happening. Longview has a huge problem and he doesn't want it in Rainier. Cole said Longview has a problem with homeless at its parks and city hall. He's not sure the park is the right place for this. He wants moms to be able to take their kids to the park. Cole decided to bring this to council because people in the community are worried about feeding the homeless there. Cooper said he received several calls about it earlier in the day. Cole said he heard about it all weekend during Rainier Days. There are valid concerns in the community. duPlessis said he had people ask him about it too. They want to know what happens if the homeless don't leave after the event. Kreger said he's been homeless twice in the past. But he knows what it took to deal with that issue in the past. It caused problems and they wouldn't leave. Tschida said people came to her saying they wanted the event. She doesn't need approval to use the park. Cooper suggested getting a small group together to find a solution and asked to table the matter. Tschida said she could change the date of the event. Cooper suggested talking to other organizations such as the senior center or churches. That might be a better avenue. Cole said he likes the program but not the proposed location. Jorgensen asked if the group had considered Riverside Community Church or contacted pastor Paul Rice. Tschida said she doesn't know him. duPlessis said he spoke with HOPE and they would like to partner. Cooper offered his assistance. Weaver moved to approve the reservation. That motion died for lack of a second.
- d. Parks Committee Recommendation on Pathway Expansion-Jorgensen summarized the committee's recommendation. Cole said he always wanted to see that area paved. Cooper said that work could be included with phase three of the riverfront trail project. Cole asked if it could be made wide enough for vehicles. Lawrence said it could. Council agreed by consensus to move forward with the recommended pathway expansion.
 - e. Library Board Discussion-Jorgensen said the group hasn't been meeting regularly since COVID started. Some policy issues have come up that would be appropriate for a board to consider and the superintendent is comfortable with the city taking the lead on getting a committee going again. Budge said the library is doing a summer reading program and hosted a discussion on senior issues the other day. There are user groups that could be represented on the board. Cooper said the more public involvement in the library, the better. Cole said the council could have a representative on the board, and so could the school district. Council agreed by consensus to table the matter and bring it back for further discussion at the August meeting.
 - f. Resolution 21-07-01—To Establish a Property Owner Assistance Program to Encourage the Removal of Hazardous Trees from Public Rights of Way and the Planting of New Trees-Cooper moved to approve

the resolution. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously.

g. Ordinance 1080—Establishing Rules and Regulations for Vacation Rental Dwellings

i. Annexation Policies-Jorgensen said that Lawrence has had a few residents who live outside of city limits but inside the urban growth boundary ask about hooking up to city services. Would they have to annex in order to do that? He checked the city's code and there is nothing in there about annexation. Staff is seeking direction so an ordinance can be drafted and put before the Planning Commission. If properties hook up to services without being annexed, they don't pay towards the debt service on the city's general obligation bonds. He had staff pull up information about how many utility customers are currently outside of city limits. There are four residential customers and one commercial that receive water and sewer. Ten receive water, nine of which are residential, with one commercial. Six receive sewer, four of them are residential, one is commercial and one is public. Lawrence said it's been allowed in the past and they are charged a different rate than city customers. Cole said there's the potential for a lot of commercial businesses off of Dike Road. Allowing them to hook up to city services means the city wouldn't get any tax revenue. Cooper said they should be part of the city. duPlessis said it would be short-sighted to not have them annex. Budge stressed the need for a policy stating there will be no services offered to customers in the urban growth boundary without being annexed into the city. Council agreed by consensus. Budge moved to direct staff to draft an ordinance with that policy. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously.

j. Ticket Machine Replacement-Lawrence said she recommends replacing the current machine with one that accepts cards. She received three proposals. The lowest costs \$10,788. It is in the budget. Budge moved to approve the proposal. That motion was seconded by Kreger and adopted unanimously.

k. Water Line Bid for D Street Loop Project-Lawrence said she received three bids for the materials and recommends the lowest of them. The paving portion of the project is scheduled for September. Kreger moved to approve the bid for \$19,723. That motion was seconded by Cooper and adopted unanimously.

Staff Report-Lawrence said she's applying for a Small Cities Allotment grant and wants to use it for Fox Street. Council agreed by consensus. Lawrence said 869 new water meters have been installed and there are seven left. Three have been received and she's waiting on four. The city is seeing a six to ten percent increase in water and sewer income due to the new meters being installed. Griffith reported that the police department will be participating in the National Night Out event August 3. Blodgett said the annual audit will be conducted in August.

Council Reports-Cooper and duPlessis said that Rainier Days went well. Cole thanked all the volunteers, including the dozen who cleaned up the park the day after. He also thanked his wife Kristi, who organized the vendors. Kreger thanked the city’s public works staff for its efforts in making the event a success.

City Calendar/Announcements

Cole adjourned the meeting at 8:48 p.m.

Mayor Jerry Cole

W. Scott Jorgensen, City Administrator