The meeting was held via GoToMeeting. Those in attendance either in person or virtually were Mayor Gowing, Councilors Ervin, Boone, Fleck, Roberts, Solesbee and Stinnett (8:32). Staff present were City Manager Richard Meyers, Public Works & Development Director Faye Stewart, and City Recorder Trudy Borrevik.

Mayor Gowing said there was a Work Session on Monday at 6:00 pm for training on ethics, meeting laws, etc. which would be conducted by the City Attorney. He said the City Recorder would be delivering information to Council this morning for the Work Session.

Public Hearings

(a) **Public Hearing for Ordinance Amending the Cottage Grove Comprehensive Plan Land Use Diagram Map & Title 14 Land Use District Map for JDL Construction/Double H Investments South Side of Gateway Blvd (MCPA 5-20) Map 20-03-27-32 TL 1300, 1403, 1900, 1800 (vacant) Map 20-03-27-32 TL 1700 (320 21st Street)**

Public Works and Development Director Faye Stewart explained what the public hearing was about.

There were no questions/comments from Council.

(b) **Public Hearing Declaring Surplus Real Property Tax Lot 20-03-29-41-01501**

Public Works and Development Director Faye Stewart explained what the hearing was about.

Councilor Fleck recused himself from Item (b) and left the meeting.

Councilor Ervin said a few meetings back a similar item was brought to Council regarding City property and overgrown blackberry bushes and wondered if this was a similar situation.

Faye said it was different situation and explained.

Richard said the City believes there was a mix-up years ago when the road was vacated and the street and the property in question were given the same tax lot number.

Councilor Ervin asked about transparency and if someone could get the wrong idea of what the City was doing. He asked about the possibility of a long term lease versus transferring the property to Community Sharing.

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Richard said the City was never supposed to get the property to begin with as the property should have gone with the property and not had the same tax lot number as the road.

Councilor Solesbee asked if it could be proven.

Richard said all the evidence lead the City to believe that the City shouldn’t have ever received the property in 2015.

**Resolutions and Ordinances**

(a) First Vote for Ordinance Amending the Cottage Grove Comprehensive Plan Land Use Diagram Map & Title 14 Land Use District Map for JDL Construction/Double H Investments South Side of Gateway Blvd (MCPA 5-20) Map 20-03-27-32 TL 1300, 1403, 1900, 1800 (vacant) Map 20-03-27-32 TL 1700 (320 21st Street)

(b) A Resolution Declaring Surplus Real Property Tax Lot 20-03-29-41-01501

Mayor Gowing said the Ordinance and Resolutions were explained during the public hearing section.

**Business from City Council**

(a) Budget Committee Recruitment

Councilor Stinnett asked if the Budget Committee members had to reside inside the City limits.

Richard advised that yes, they did need to reside inside the City limits.

(b) Vision Keeper Committee Interviews

(c) Councilor Subcommittee Appointment for Planning Commissioner Interviews

(d) Councilor Subcommittee Appointment for Historic Landmarks Commissioner Interviews

(e) Councilor Subcommittee Appointment for Urban Forestry Commissioner Interviews

Richard said items (a) through (e) items were to appoint a three member sub-committee to interview applicants for each of the committees/commissions.

(f) Concerns from Council
Councilor Ervin said he caught the tail end of the Monday joint meeting with the Chamber and asked if Richard could provide a recap.

Richard said he would cover it in the City Manager’s Report.

**Business from City Manager**

(a) **Ratification of Emergency Action Creating Curbside Pickup Parking**

Richard said this was an item that was discussed at the meeting Monday with the Chamber. He said with the new “freeze” he would like to reprint the curbside pick-up signs and include the number of the business. He said options and ways to enhance the program and make it available for retail establishments was discussed. He said Council did have the authority regarding parking but the emergency declaration was in place and should have been ratified by Council back in April.

Mayor Gowing said the Chamber had done a good job of listing all the businesses in town with the phone number, hours, etc. on their website.

(b) **Low-Income Housing Property Tax Exemptions**

Councilor Fleck declared a potential conflict of interest. He said Community Sharing didn’t have intention of doing rental property but there was the possibility in the future.

Richard said SquareOne Villages operated Cottage Village on Madison and they received their property tax statement which was almost three times what it was before the improvements. He said they would have to raise the rent $100 per month for each unit with the increase. He said it was anticipated since SquareOne Villages was a non-profit, they wouldn’t have to pay property taxes, however the tax code said since they were renting the property it was an income and taxable. He said SquareOne Villages has requested a property tax exemption and explained the process to Council. He said staff was asking Council if was interested in moving forward. He said staff had questions of legal counsel to review regarding options.

Councilor Fleck said he was generally supportive but had concerns that if too large a percentage of housing was exempt from property taxes it would put a undue burden on City services.

Richard said one option was a percentage of the poverty level.

Councilor Boone asked if the property were sold if the tax exemption expired. He asked if the exemption would be specific for the Cottage Villages or if it was for all non-profit housing project.

Richard said if the property were sold the tax exemption would end and the taxes would probably be pro-rated. He said every non-profit who wanted a property tax exemption would have to apply annually and be approved by the Council.
Councilor Ervin said in looking at the poverty level tables, there were probably a lot of families who were low income. He asked why it was only for non-profits and not individual property owners.

Richard said that was one of the questions. He said the exemption was specific to non-profits who rented to people at the 60% and 80% AMI. He said Council could add other criteria as long as it was consistent with the statute.

Mayor Gowing talked about the Legion Cottages, who weren’t being built by a 501(3)(c) but the value of the property increased considerably. He said they could come to Council for a tax exemption and then a precedence was being set and where does Council go from there.

Richard said they might be exempt because they were owned by the County Housing Authority.

Councilor Fleck asked if tax exemptions would only be for new construction versus existing. He said criteria needed to be addressed and would like to see it explored.

Councilor Solesbee said it needed to be decided if the exemptions were aimed at bringing new housing to Cottage Grove or to give breaks across the board. She confirmed that Monday night it was just a discussion and nothing would be voted on.

Richard said those were things that Council needed to decide. He said it was just a discussion on Monday night.

Councilor Stinnett asked if other communities had done property tax exemptions.

Richard there were three to four cities who staff was aware of that had a similar program.

Councilor Fleck said he would send the AMI table to Richard.

Richard provided an update on the meetings staff had with the Chamber of Commerce and businesses on Tuesday morning and Wednesday evening. He said there were six to eight businesses attending each meeting. He talked about concerns that the businesses had. He said the City would be purchasing media time for the local newspaper and KNND Radio to advertise for businesses. He said the Chamber and the City wouldn’t be doing the tree lighting and pictures and cookies with Santa this year, however the City will be putting up a tree in All-America Square. He said he and Shauna Neigh had come up with a slogan “Jingle Don’t Mingle” and the idea to have someone dress up like an Elf and go around from business to business doing short videos to post on the Chamber’s Facebook page. He said he thought the meetings went well and it was nice to visit with the business owners. He said one concern from businesses was how to tell people who come into their business without a mask that they have to leave. He said the City and Chamber were sharing information on COVID and other money available to businesses as they were received.

Richard said the pallet shelters had arrived and had been put together and were inside the City Shop property. He said they would be moved to the site when it was completed. He said today
after the meeting he would be at the City Shop to show the shelters to any of the Council. He said if anyone was interested in volunteering to contact Forrest or Mike at Community Sharing or Teresa at the Community Center. He said himself and Forrest and Mike would be visiting nearby businesses to talk about the project.

Councilor Solesbee said she was getting people coming to her businesses stating they have a medical reason not to wear a mask. She asked how they were supposed to handle that.

Richard said the General Employer Guidance on the OHA page had a form that a business could fill out and post on the door that stated those who entered had to wear a mask and if they couldn’t, reasonable accommodations would be made. He advised not to ask them why they couldn’t wear a mask. He said the reasonable accommodation would be listing the business number for them to contact you. He said if someone went into a business without a mask, the business owner could be fined.

Mayor Gowing talked about service animals and said it was similar.

Councilor Fleck said the pallet shelters would be called Community Sharing Warming Shelter. He said they had hoped to open December 1st but it didn’t look like everything would be completed by that date.

Councilor Fleck left the meeting at 9:20 am.

Mayor Gowing said he had a business contact him this week who complained about businesses around them not adhering to the mask requirements. He suggested that they try to talk to the business first or ask Shauna from the Chamber to talk with them.

He said Shauna from the Chamber and PeaceHealth did a good job with Businesses After Hours last night.

Mayor Gowing adjourned the meeting at 9:24 am.

Trudy Borrevik, City Recorder

Jeffrey D. Gowing, Mayor

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