

CITY OF COTTAGE GROVE
CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA SESSION MINUTES
August 25, 2023

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Solesbee at 8:30 am.

Those in attendance virtually and in person: Mayor Solesbee, Councilors Dreher, Ervin, Fleck, Merryday, Savage and Stinnett.

Staff present virtually and in person: City Manager Richard Meyers, Assistant City Manager Jake Boone, Public Works and Development Director Faye Stewart, City Recorder Mindy Roberts, Finance Director Roberta Likens and City Planner Eric Mongan.

Public Hearing

None

Resolutions and Ordinances

- (a) A Resolution Adopting Standards and Guidelines for the Review of Applications for the Multi-Unit Property Tax Exemption Program.

City Planner Eric Mongan presented to Council a draft Standards and Guidelines procedure to be used by staff when analyzing applications for the Multi-Unit Property Tax Exemption Program (MUPTE).

Councilor Fleck asked if the timeline would slow the process and prevent developers from starting to build.

City Planner explained that most developers are getting their MUPTE in place before they decide if they are going to build.

Councilor Fleck asked if the Area Median Income (AMI) should be listed by reference so that it did not have to be updated by resolution each year.

City Planner said he wants developers to have all of the information they need and he suggested that the guidelines mention that it is based off of the current AMI and they provide that information to them separately.

City Manager responded that the resolution would have to reference the source that the information is coming from.

Councilor Dreher said she is in favor of having rent and income limit examples and then referencing that the data is updated yearly and stating the source.

Councilor Merryday asked if there could be discussion about the Work Session that will take place prior to the City Council meeting on Monday.

City Manager shared that all four respondents to the Request for Proposals will be available and are scheduled for a half hour each. He said they have been asked to make a brief 5 minute presentation and then open it up for questions.

Councilor Merryday asked if there is any additional materials or information.

City Manager responded that there is no additional information, but if there is something that Council wants from them he can make that request.

Councilor Ervin asked if the interview order can be changed.

City Manager explained that they signed up for interview times based on their travel needs and what worked best for their schedule.

Councilor Dreher asked if there is a list of general questions.

City Manager replied that there is not a list of vetted questions and reminded Council to not ask questions such as age and minority status.

Business from the City Council

(a) Selection of Consultant to Assist with City Manager Recruitment

No discussion was held.

(b) Approval of Thornton Lane and Airport Road Water Mainline Extension

Public Works and Development Director Faye Stewart explained that five bids were received for the water mainline extension. He added that Branch Engineering reviewed all the bid packages, found all to be complete and responsive with the exception of Meili Construction and he said they recommend the contract be awarded to Wind Rose Excavation, LLC. He continued by explaining the alternative pipe options.

Councilor Merryday said he read that C900 is a more durable product than steel and asked if that is in fact true.

Public Works and Development Director said it is the preferred product because it is lighter, more durable and easier to work with.

(c) Quarterly Homelessness Report

City Manager provided Council with the information and said City Staff will be available to discuss it on Monday night.

(d) Information Regarding Central Lane County Flood Map Update

City Planner Eric Mongan said that on Monday night he will present additional information regarding the Central Lane County Flood Map.

City Manager and members of Council thanked City Planner for his extensive work to encourage FEMA to reconsider the flood maps for our area.

(e) Concerns from Council

Councilor Ervin asked for an update about the intersection at Ostrander.

Public Works and Development Director Faye Stewart said the curbs have been painted and the materials have been received to make and install the sign.

Councilor Merryday said that he would like to have a listening session with the community regarding homelessness.

Councilor Fleck said he is interested if it is well facilitated.

Councilor Ervin suggested that it could be multiple sessions over a period of time.

Councilor Fleck urged caution due to the risk of a serial meeting and suggested a town hall concept in the Council Chambers.

Councilor Dreher said that she supports hearing feedback. She cautioned Council, that community members will share concerns and want action taken which may not be feasible based on restrictions.

Councilor Dreher suggested that the Agenda be changed so that responses could take place directly after public comment.

Mayor Solesbee said she is not opposed to that change.

Councilor Stinnett said that he supports moving the Agenda Item "Concerns of Council", so that Council does not appear to be non-responsive. He offered to share contact information for Oregon Humanities who host and facilitate community conversations on housing and homelessness.

Councilor Dreher said that she would support a facilitated meeting regarding homelessness.

Councilor Dreher asked if there were any additional policy and procedures for volunteers and committee members to enhance participation.

Mayor Solesbee expressed concern for a property located at 3rd and Monroe and the need to get the garbage cleaned up.

Public Works and Development Director Faye Stewart said the property can be posted and the City can now seek judgment to proceed with doing the clean-up. He added that he has also been in contact with the property owner who is working to resolve the issues.

Discussion was held about two other properties; one with tall grass and the other where people are trespassing and camping.

Business from City Manager

(a) Draft Personnel Manual

Assistant City Manager Jake Boone presented to Council a draft Personnel Manual for their review and to approve it to be presented to the bargaining units for review.

City Manager added that a lot of this Personnel Manual will not apply to the bargaining unit as they have their own agreement.

Councilor Fleck inquired as to why the City does not recognize several of the more common holidays like Presidents Day and Martin Luther King Day.

City Manager responded that these are the holidays for the non-represented employees and added that the bargaining unit has theirs listed in the bargaining agreement. He added that the bargaining units have four floating holidays and the non-represented have three to use throughout the year.

Mayor Solesbee asked if the policies were put into place due to laws and if employees would be educated on the rules.

City Manager responded that City employees take place in annual harassment prevention training and there is also training for new hires.

Discussion was held about intentional and unintentional touching or bumping into someone.

Assistant City Manager added that the Personnel Manual will be a live document and there will be additions and modifications as needed.

Councilor Dreher said that she appreciates things being spelled out in the Personnel Manual and she understands that the intent is to protect the workers.

(b) Report from City Manager

City Manager provided statistics surrounding the increased income for use of the Armory:

- Fiscal Year 2021-22 \$ 8,895.00
- Fiscal Year 2022-23 \$ 16,185.00

- 2021-22 - July through August \$ 230.00
- 2022-23 - July through August \$ 2,020.00
- 2023-24 - July through August \$ 3,307.00

City Manager said the Oregon Speed Zone review will be having a virtual hearing from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm on August 30th regarding lowering the speeds on London Road and South 6th Street in the county sections of the road.

City Manager said the City has received a warning letter from the DEQ regarding potential violations and lost or missing information and reports. He said everything that they have requested has been addressed and resubmitted.

Public Works and Development Director said the findings indicate that there is moss to be removed from the clearing contact chamber which is just before the water leaves the facility. He said it is cleaned once a year in the months of August or September when the flows are at their lowest and it would make the least impact. He added that the City has a new compliance officer who is going back as far as 2017 to review information and she is not able to locate some of the files.

Councilor Ervin asked if it has been determined when the Armory would have enough income to be a self-sustaining operation.

City Manager said the future improvements needed are significantly more substantial than the income derived and we continue to look for foundations and grants to make the improvements.

Mayor Solesbee said a lot of funding for the Armory comes from the Mayors Ball, but with so much going on she is not sure if we should do one this year.

Councilor Stinnett said he has been involved with organizing the Mayor's Ball in the past and they are a lot of work.

City Manager informed Council of a Subaru commercial featuring the City of Cottage Grove and the Covered Bridges. He added that it can be found on the City's Facebook page and people are welcome to share it.

City Manager announced that a job offer has been made to Cory Chase as the City's new Police Chief and his first day will be September 11th.

Mayor Solesbee asked if he has to live within the city limits.

City Manager responded that the Police Chief has to live within 30 minutes of the city limits. He added that the City Manager is the only one Council has the authority to say must live within the city limits.

Discussion was held about the City Charter requirement for the City Manager to live within the city limits.

Mayor Solesbee adjourned the meeting at 9:41 am.

Mindy Roberts, City Recorder

Candace Solesbee, Mayor