

CITY OF COTTAGE GROVE
CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA SESSION MINUTES
January 5, 2024

Mayor Solesbee called the meeting to order at 8:35 am.

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

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

Council requested notification further in advance of meeting time changes.

Resolutions and Ordinances

(a) Resolution Approving the Petition for Formation of a South Lane Park & Recreation District

Public Works and Development Director Faye Stewart presented to Council a resolution supporting the formation of a South Lane Park & Recreation District (SLP&R) and \$5,000 support to fund creating necessary legal documents. He explained the resolution of support would be needed in order for the SLP&R District Steering Committee to move forward.

Council comments and questions included concern about future expenses, lack of a facility for the district to use, lack of detailed information and clarity about the plan, tolerance of the voters to support the district in addition to needed street funding and if compression would affect the other special districts.

Clarification was given that the first step would be to establish boundaries and a tax rate to allow the operations of the district to begin, there would be multiple stages to the plan and further decisions would be made once programs were in place and the community provided feedback.

Public Works and Development Director indicated that he would request representatives of the Steering Committee be available at the Council meeting to answer questions and concerns.

Discussion continued regarding the processes, next steps and timeline of the SLP&R District Steering Committee.

Business from the City Council

(a) Municipal Court Judge Contract Renewal and Amendments

Public Works and Development Director Faye Stewart reminded Council of the annual report provided by the Municipal Court Judge, Martin Fisher and the Executive Session Council held to evaluate his performance. He added that this contract renewal would extend the contract to December 31, 2024.

There were no questions or discussion.

(b) City Manager Employment Agreement

Public Works and Development Director Faye Stewart called attention to the proposed City Manager contract for Mr. Sauerwein and clarified that this would be the appropriate time on the Agenda for questions, clarification and discussion.

There were no questions or discussion.

(c) Appointment of City Manager Pro Tem

Public Works and Development Director Faye Stewart pointed out that his Interim City Manager appointment is through January 8, 2023. He said at this time on the agenda, Council would have an opportunity to approve designation of a City Manager Pro Tem through the time the new City Manager is planned to arrive.

There were no questions or discussion.

(d) Election of Council President

Public Works and Development Director Faye Stewart reminded Council that at its first meeting each year, Council must elect a Council President from its membership.

Councilor Ervin corrected the memorandum, indicating that he has been the Council President for one year not two.

(e) City Council Subcommittee and Liaison Appointments

Public Works and Development Director Faye Stewart stated that traditionally the Mayor appoints members of Council to various subcommittees and liaison positions annually. He added that the Mayor recommends Council retain their current assignments and further discussion can be held at the upcoming Council meeting if needed.

Councilor Fleck noted that Lane County Area Commission on Transportation requested Council to add an alternate liaison appointment.

Discussion held regarding the status of Vision Keepers.

(f) Planning Commission Appointment

City Planner Eric Mongan indicated that Staff received one application from incumbent Commissioner Garland Burback and the sub-committee will consider recommending his re-appointment and re-advertising for the remaining vacancy.

Discussion held about the boundary requirements of the vacant position and of other committees.

(g) Cottage Grove Economic Opportunities Analysis Advisory Committee Appointments

City Planner Eric Mongan requested two members of Council be appointed to the Economic Opportunities Analysis Advisory Committee. He presented history of the last analysis, discussed grant monies received to complete the analysis, and shared who would be involved in the planning process and the benefits it will have to the City.

Council asked the amount of grant money received in comparison to the amount of money applied for and if this grant application had any connection to the Downtown Feasibility Study.

City Planner explained the request was for \$120,000, which included a .50 FTE, the amount received was \$60,000. He added that the City was not successful in obtaining the Business Oregon Rural Opportunities Grant and he shared what changes might need to take place to put us in a better position.

(h) Council Direction to Staff Regarding Three City Resident Proposed City Initiatives

Public Works and Development Director Faye Stewart reviewed with Council three initiatives proposed by Michael Borke and shared possible actions Council could take.

He said Exhibit A would amend the City Charter, Chapter III, Section 7 to require the four City Council positions representing City Wards be elected by the residents in the ward for which they have filed.

Council discussion and questions included:

- The history of voting only by Ward versus voting for all positions within the City.
- Low voter participation within any individual Ward.
- Cost associated with printing additional ballots.
- The need for voters to feel represented within their Ward.
- Recommended that the petitioner go through the signature gathering process.

He said Exhibit B would amend the City Charter, Chapter VII, Section 32 to require a vacated City council position remain vacant until filled by a vote of the City residents at the next General Election.

Council discussion and questions included:

- Acknowledged the intent to avoid the entire Council being made up of appointees.
- Inquired how the initiative is different from what is already in place.
- Recommended that the petitioner go through the signature gathering process.
- Expressed desire to have voters decide as long as it is timely.
- Inquired what the related expenses would be.

He said Exhibit C is a proposed Ordinance amending Ordinance 3174 Section 122.24.020 of Cottage Grove Municipal Code pertaining to overnight camping. The proposed Ordinance would require that overnight campsites only be occupied from 6:00 pm to 7:00 am the following day.

Council discussion and questions included:

- Concern for ramifications of the proposed ordinance not being objectively reasonable.
- Expressed advantage of current ordinance allowing control of public spaces.
- Concern for time required by staff to manage proposed ordinance.
- Concern with involving staff at a potential political level.

Discussion held regarding Michael Borke being available at the Council meeting to answer questions and Assistant City Manager Jake Boone expressed concern that the ordinance lacked content to make it enforceable.

Public Works and Development Director Faye Stewart reminded Council of an upcoming meeting with discussions surrounding the issues of homelessness. He said the meeting would provide an opportunity for staff to gather information regarding costs and impacts of any plans that Council may be considering.

(i) Concerns of Council

Council Committee and Board reports included:

Councilor Fleck reported an upcoming meeting with the Lane County Area Commission of Transportation Lane County (ACT) and Lane Regional Air Protection Agency (LRAPA).

Council Savage reported a change in the Presidency of the Chamber of Commerce from Tiffanie Williams to Cameron Reiten.

Councilor Merryday reported an upcoming meeting with the Cottage Grove Community Development Corporation (CDC).

Business from City Manager

(a) Report from City Manager

Interim City Manager/Public Works and Development Director Faye Stewart reported an interest in joining Council to meet with and provide information to our State Representative, Senators and Staff in an effort to garner support for upcoming City projects.

Discussion held regarding upcoming dates for opportunities to visit the State Capital.

Mayor Solesbee adjourned the meeting at 9:55 am.

Mindy Roberts, City Recorder

Candace Solesbee, Mayor

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