

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF A CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

February 18, 2017

The minutes of the proceedings of a City Council Work Session of the City of Coos Bay, Coos County, Oregon, held at 8:30 a.m. at Fire Station No. 1 Conference Room, 450 Elrod Avenue, Coos Bay, Oregon.

Those Attending

Those present were Mayor Joe Benetti and Councilors Lucinda DiNovo, Drew Farmer, Jennifer Groth, Stephanie Kilmer, Stephanie Kramer, and Phil Marler. City staff present were City Manager Rodger Craddock, Finance Director Susanne Baker, Library Director Sami Pierson, Public Works Director Jim Hossley, Community Development Director Eric Day, and Police Chief Gary McCullough.

2017 Discussion of Council Goals

Solid Ground Consultants Amy Stork and Joe Hertzberg facilitated the discussion for the day; provided the results of the Council's individual interviews for Council goals, and defined the outcomes for the day. Identification of the Council priorities for the next two years to make policy decisions, explore new opportunities, and allocation of scarce resources (staff time, Council time, and funds). Maintaining focus on the broader priorities would be important because there would always be more needs than capacity within the limited time permitted. The Council would provide broad oversight to the City Manager who would develop the budget and implement the Council's priorities.

The individual interviews provided suggestions on: Engaging the public with work session held in places other than the Council Chambers; through marketing, inform the public of the good work being done; create advisory committees and task forces through collaboration; use social media; and add a live feed of the work sessions to the website. City Manager Rodger Craddock discussed the new electronic agenda software for ease of access by the public of all the City's committees.

Wishes:

- Sidewalks, trails, water access, bike racks, and healthy recreation
- Waterfront with a mix of green space and businesses that tourists and residents could enjoy
- Better tourism and economy
- Economic diversity
- Vital and thriving economy, especially downtown and waterfront
- Well maintained, beautiful city
- Eastside developed for recreation and tourism
- Hustling and vibrant business areas
- Updated and maintained infrastructure
- School district among top in the state for education
- Community free of crime and drugs because community developed a way to deal with it
- Public safety perceived positively, drug culture diminished
- Unified vision for Coos Bay, North Bend, and the County

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Themes:

- Infrastructure
- Tourism
- Economy
- Plan

Impacted:

- Residents
- Tourist

Discussion by the Council on the areas within the City to develop which would meet the Council's goals. Consider all of the community's assets, which were geographically challenged, to develop a plan to provide diversity, encourage economic and industrial growth. Define what the Council would like Coos Bay to be in 25 years. Consider the financial leverage of the City, with citizen approval, for visible results and growth. Communicate to the public the infrastructure updates and needs to evidence the long term plan and goals achieved. Address perceptions through increased communication.

What role does the Council play to create a vision for the community? Council to lead; move forward with what would be best for the City; Council to empower and give direction to the staff to move forward. The City should be a good steward, good partner, and good communicative and collaborative leader.

Discussion of Key Issues:

Wastewater system – The Council adopted a 20 year capital improvement plan with systems which must be updated. The pending financial plan would address the system and financial needs for the next five years. This would be critically important for the economy, residents, and tourist; areas of the city where the existing infrastructure would not support new development and growth. Decisions would be needed on the level of service. Preemptive communication should be achieved to continue educating the public of the infrastructure deficiencies and what it would take to remedy. The Council's role to address this over the next two years included: acceptance of the five year plan, the level of service, policy decisions (time of sale inspection of laterals and remedy) and have the City financially support the repair for the long term benefit of the wastewater system. Beyond two years, develop an ocean outfall with regional partners.

Partners: Charleston and Bunkerhill Sanitary Districts

5 year segment of plan
Communication plan
Financing

Road maintenance – Lack of a policy to preserve the streets, responsibility of a utility to repair street cuts, needed funding, and plan to move forward. Streets task force formed to explore possible resources, bonding potential (year two), street utility fee, gas tax (year one), system development charges (new construction), local improvement districts, parking districts and assessments, urban renewal (year one), and special option urban renewal levy. Gas tax, five

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cents for five months. Communicate the plan through small group meetings facilitated by the Council. Complete a street to show the intended results of a gas tax. Multiple funding resources would be needed to address street infrastructure needs. November ballot would entail consensus and start the process for a successful campaign. The question would be whether or not to tie the passage of the ballot measure to the success of the ballot measure in Coos Bay/North Bend. This would take the Council's time and attention in the immediate future. Councilor Groth stated the coordination of the campaign would be a lot of work and encouraged participation.

Discussion on the parking district rules, impact to the city to maintain the parking lots, and off street parking for businesses located within the parking district. Implement the parking district assessment (year two) to maintain the parking lots through a venue that would not be impacted by tax compression.

Library – The condition of the library demanded it be addressed before the building failed and it could no longer be used. Issues would be to locate a new site (year one), create a budget (year two), and develop fundraising plan (year two). Using urban renewal funds to purchase and make the site shovel-ready. Using these funds would dictate the new site be within the district and would likely relocate businesses. Mayor Benetti suggested incorporating into the new library a senior center and emergency shelter to generate additional funding options. Functionality of the new library should include input from a variety of sources.

Partners: Indian tribes, various library boards/committees, and steering committee

Tourism and economic development – Promotion and attractions should be separated when addressed. Address attractions by what served the residents best. The Council's role had been to provide funds through the transient occupancy tax to the Coos Bay North Bend Visitor's Convention Bureau (VCB) and the remaining tax to fund the Visitor Information Center, support many attractions (Coos Art Museum, Sun Museum, etc.), festivals, watering flower baskets, etc. Mayor Benetti suggested raising the room tax, more to the VCB, to compete with Newport, Florence, and Astoria on promotions; increase partners (County and Charleston), and place the funding percentage into the Charter. Focus on success of what there was within the community to evidence to the citizens why they should support an increase in the transient occupancy tax (year two). Would like to see more stable functionality within the VCB, which could be achieved in year one with a revised agreement of the continuance of the VCB whomever the partners. Impact of an increased amount provided to the VCB (year one).

Partners: North Bend, Coquille Indian tribe, Bay Area Chamber of Commerce, group for County wide promotions, south coast promotions, and Travel Oregon.

Councilor Stephanie Kramer arrived at 11:30 a.m.

The urban renewal plans contributed to the economic development within the City. Both urban renewal plans would need to be updated to address how those funds would impact economic development. Downtown urban renewal plan (year one) and empire urban renewal plan (year two). Community Enhancement Committee draft plan to be sent to the Council; adoption in year one.

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Downtown: Minimum of one meeting for the Agency, public input, and various partners (six months). Staff would include Community Development, City Manager's Office, Public Works, and Finance. Maximum allowed indebtedness remaining, approximately \$34 million.

Empire: Review of process and the maximum indebtedness remaining, approximately \$6 million (eight months to one year).

Partners: South Coast Development Council (lead), Coos Bay Downtown Association, Community Coalition of Empire

Perception for doing business with Coos Bay had changed; updated development code, reviewing pending permits weekly to ensure they were continually moving forward. The work that had been done needed to be marketed to remedy issues and/or perceptions. Council's role would be communication with the community, listening, market the positive outcomes, and use talking points to ensure everyone was relaying the same message. Change the message, how can we help you; and promote the number of permits/inspections completed.

Waterfront development, Central Dock, what infrastructure improvements would need to be completed to assist the development. Update Front Street master plan. The Brownfields grant, extended, provided two years to complete and adopt. The structure of system development charges (used for new growth) would be a time consuming and complicated process, ongoing with a 2018 goal for completion. An overall development plan would also need to be completed. Lack of capital improvement plans for streets and facilities.

2017-19 Priorities

Wastewater - Five year segments of plan

- 17-18 Level of service
- 17-18 Policies
- 17 Financing
- 17 Communication Plan

Street Maintenance

- 17 Gas Tax
- 17 Urban renewal funds
- 18 GO bond
- 18 Street utility

Library

- 17 Find site
- 18 Create budget
- 18 Adopt fundraising plan

Economic Development

- Tourism Promotion
- 17 Stabilize VCB
- 17-18 Consider increasing room tax

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Development Plan

- 17 URA plan Downtown
- 17-18 URA plan Empire
- 17 Jordan Cove CEP
- 17 Hollering Place
- 17 Waterfront Plan
- 18 SDC's
- 18 CIP (holistic)

Charter

- 18 Housekeeping issues: revenue bonds, meeting schedule, invalid section (public safety) VCB funding

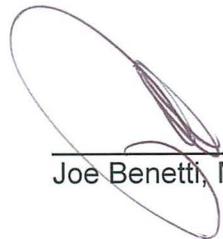
Housing – Discussion on increasing the amount of affordable housing and putting partners together to provide for a private solution; and the resources for the homeless population. Possible use of urban renewal funds to rehabilitate blighted buildings for housing. County had the social services resources, would address the matter county-wide, and would create a task force. Use code violation properties to rehabilitate and increase affordable housing.

Charter review – General obligation bonds, revenue sources that would create a new tax, would be required to be placed before the electorate. Financing options were limited and currently the City utilizes bank loans as financing options, which were more expensive than the use of revenue bonds. Proposed changes would allow revenue bonds as a financing resource; remove the public safety staffing requirement as it was unconstitutional; and allow for the Council to not have to meet twice a month (due to holidays in December and summer month); and add VCB funding. With purchasing policy updates, some of the current agenda items would not need to come to the Council for approval. Discussion ensued on the staging of ballot titles to be effective. The VCB funding source could be linked to a request for increase in transient occupancy tax.

Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Benetti adjourned the meeting. The next regular Council meeting was scheduled for February 21, 2017 in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

Attest: 
Susanne Baker, City Recorder



Joe Benetti, Mayor