

## MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

March 22, 2019

The minutes of the proceedings of a work session meeting of the City Council of the City of Coos Bay, Coos County, Oregon, held at 9:00 a.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 500 Central Avenue, Coos Bay, Oregon.

### Those Attending

Those present were Mayor Joe Benetti and Councilors Lucinda DiNovo, Drew Farmer, Stephanie Kilmer, Phil Marler, Carmen Matthews and Rob Miles. City staff present were City Manager Rodger Craddock, Finance Director Nichole Rutherford, Public Works and Community Development Director Jim Hossley, Library Director Sami Pierson, Fire Chief Mark Anderson, and Police Chief Gary McCullough.

### Review of the Following Agenda Items

#### Discussion of the City Council Goals

Solid Ground Consultant Amy Stork 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 as 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.

#### Review of Operating Principles and 25 Year Vision

Review of the 25 Year Vision, in conjunction with the Council's leadership approach indicated the following values:

- Coos Bay is a thriving, safe and beautiful city, with Council interest in promoting those themes through projects which encourage economic growth in an environment that supports and welcomes all sized businesses, while maintaining public safety and improving greenspaces within the community.
- Council's approach is both thoughtful and intentional, with the community-as-a-whole vision, while acknowledging the city's diverse population and each area's specific needs and qualities (Downtown, Empire, Englewood and Eastside).
- Through elected and appointed leaders, along with staff, the City strives to be a community partner, with collaborative communications and demonstrated fiscal responsibility, while building credibility through tangible actions.
- The Council models engagement with full encouragement of public participation from an informed community.

## Discussion of Key Issues

The following key issues were identified as priorities for 2019-2021:

Wastewater system: While the City has invested more than \$33 million in capital improvements, the overall system is aged and continued capital improvements are necessary. The following wastewater projects have been planned:

- Eastside wastewater lagoon road repair.
- Pump station #8 upgrades/replacements.
- Wastewater Treatment Plant #1 upgrades.
- Pump station #17 upgrades/replacements.
- Installation of a wastewater line under the bay to convey wastewater from Eastside.
- Review current policies related to improving and maintaining privately-owned sewer laterals.

Transportation system: Much as the wastewater system is challenged due to the age of the system, the City's transportation system is also in great need of repair. The infrastructure is aged and available funds for regular maintenance have continued to decrease over the years. To provide a much needed funding source, the Council recently adopted a Transportation Utility Fee (TUF). The following street infrastructure projects have been planned:

- Development of a five year rolling street maintenance and improvement plan.
- Production of an annual street report presented to Council and available to the public.
- Evaluation of possible LED street light upgrades.
- 4th Street capital road revitalization.
- Eastside Safe Routes to School sidewalk project.
- Development of parking lots in the Downtown District.
- Empire District road improvement projects (\$2.8 million).
- Front Street traffic and pedestrian safety plan.

Construction of new Library facility: The library continually experiences building degradation due to failure of foundation pilings. The circumstances of this failure will result in abandonment of the current building and construction of a new facility. The Empire District Urban Renewal Agency (URA) purchased a lot for the future site of the library. A fundraising campaign feasibility study and potential bond funding have been planned. The following is a focus of the Council:

- Consideration of co-locating community resources for unmet community needs, while potentially providing access to additional funding opportunities.
- Consideration of results from the feasibility study for development of fundraising activities and strategies.

Economic Development: The City continually strives to invest in the economic vitality of the community through the various partnerships within the community. Council noted support of the following options for economic development:

- Complete and encourage adoption the Jordan Cove Community Enhancement Plan, along with plan for use of development funds.
- Consider changes to URA facade program to incentivize redevelopment.
- Explore a loan program within the URA districts as an additional tool for redevelopment.
- Analyze lodging capacity, alongside community partners.

Housing Supply & Homelessness: The City is currently experiencing a lack of housing in general, and specifically low-income, which is a challenge to those who choose to live and work in this community. Homelessness is a significant hurdle for this community to overcome, causing impacts to health, safety, and livability for the community as a whole. Council wishes to focus on the following:

- Encourage upper floor development in the Downtown and Empire Districts.
- Be a leader in the homelessness conversation.
- Develop ways to incentivize supportive housing development, along with middle-income housing.
- Assign an officer to work as a community liaison with our partners and the homeless population.
- Evaluate potential policy approaches, with the assistance of the Homeless Work Group
- Consider the possibility of establishing a new URA District with the goal of incentivizing future housing development.
- Work on the Englewood School property in order to transfer to Oregon Coast Community Action (ORCCA) for supported multi-family housing development.

Communication with Citizens: Of utmost importance to the Council is regular, timely communication to the citizens of Coos Bay. In order for the community to be an active partner in the process of government, information should be shared which encourages participation. Council is interested in the following communication areas:

- Require staff to prepare news releases as part of preparation of materials to be presented to Council.
- Avoid usage of technical language in news releases and other communications.
- Research the possibility of a phone app to allow citizens to report issues and receive notifications.
- Hold one Council meeting each quarter within one of the areas of the City: Eastside, Englewood & Empire.
- Explore option to stream Council meetings via Facebook Live.

City Parks: Community parks provide a quality of life the City of Coos Bay values. Parks increase community vitality, provide recreational space for kids and adults alike furthering the community connection, and offer economic development benefits. Several projects have been identified by Council:

- Bridge replacement at John Topits Park.
- Reduction of brush at John Topits Park.
- Environmental analysis of Mingus Pond dredging and potential fishing enhancements for Mingus Park.
- Consider options to enhance the Preway.
- Review options for a potential park at old Wastewater Treatment Plant #2 site.
- Evaluate potential location for ball fields/facility development.

Public Safety: Public safety is of great importance to the City of Coos Bay. Challenges of addiction, mental illness, homelessness, and poverty are often factors of crime. Disaster preparedness is also an element of public safety the City values. Council has indicated the following aspects of interest:

- Support the continuation of South Coast Interagency Narcotics Team (SCINT).

- Develop and support a recruitment plan for volunteer fire fighters and police reserve officers.
- Promote the "Two Weeks Ready" campaign, with the goal of having 1,200 homes identified as meeting the campaign requirements.

### **Learning and Innovation from other Entities**

Council noted an interest in learning what has worked in other communities with the intent to follow successful plans which are in line with the focused goals of the Council. Additionally, Council believes projects approached with a sustainability aspect are important, as well as collaborating on projects with our community partners, such as the City of North Bend.

### **Council Schedule and Development of Staff Relationships**

Discussion around Council meeting schedule included possibility of having all meetings begin at 6:00 p.m., consideration of limited meetings during the summer and holiday season, as well as moving meetings into the community by having one meeting a quarter in Eastside, Empire, or Englewood. Continued discussion is necessary to determine the most effective way to conduct business in a manner which encourages and supports community involvement and input.

Additionally, Council discussed opportunities to connect with staff to provide feedback and appreciation for efforts made by staff to bring Council goals to fruition. The Council noted the goals were lofty, but attainable, and wanted to be assured staff felt they could partner with Council to accomplish the goals.

### **Next Steps**

Council goals would be formally established and timelines for completion developed in preparation for presentation and adoption at the April 16, 2019 Council meeting. Staff would then begin working to develop plans to complete Council goals; presenting plans and projects schedules for review and discussion with Council.

### **Adjourn**

There being no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Benetti adjourned the meeting. The next regular Council meeting was scheduled for April 2, 2019 in the Council Chambers at City Hall.



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Joe Benetti, Mayor

Attest: Nichole Rutherford  
Nichole Rutherford, City Recorder