

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

May 7, 1996

The minutes of the proceedings of the regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Coos Bay, Coos County, Oregon, beginning with a work session at 7:00 p.m. and proceeding to a regular session at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Those Present

Those present were Mayor Joanne Verger, Councilors Joe Benetti, Gary Combs, Cindi Miller, Don Spangler, and Judy Weeks. Councilor Dave Williams was absent. Staff members present were City Manager Bill Grile, City Attorney Randall Tosh, City Clerk Joyce Jansen, Police Chief Marc Adams, Community Services Director Bruce Meithof, Library Director Carol Ventgen, and Accounting Operations Supervisor Mary Beth Holst. Media representatives were also present.

WORK SESSION

Mayor Verger reviewed the consent calendar and item #e was removed because the governor had already made an appointment to the Marine Board. Councilor Weeks expressed concern about the City taking title to The Eagle. City Manager Grile said the boat would not be placed in the water and would not be moved from storage until a location had been selected. Councilor Spangler said there was interest for placing it in Empire. City Manager Grile requested direction from the Council in response to Mr. Lee's letter concerning problems at the skateboard park. City Attorney Tosh pointed out that Ordinance No. 228 was essentially the same ordinance as before, with changes made in the penalty clause. Mayor Verger mentioned receiving a number of calls against the proposal of opening up Mall Block 0 and on the placement of the parking structure. City Attorney Tosh reviewed the changes in the Chamber of Commerce lease and said the major change was the mutual option to terminate. Mayor Verger reported Councilor Williams had agreed to serve on the Tree Board. City Manager Grile referred to a model of the current downtown signage and suggested appointing an ad hoc committee to study signage needs.

COUNCIL MEETING

Flag Salute

Mayor Verger led the assembly in the salute to the flag.

Consent Calendar

Mayor Verger presented the consent calendar which consisted of the following items:

- a) approval of minutes of the regular meeting of April 16, 1996

Council Minutes - May 7, 1996

- b) OLCC license renewals
- c) resolution 96-15 - transfer of appropriations for Empire Lakes restroom project
- d) resolution 96-16 - recommendation for appointment of Phil Matson to the Oregon Water Resources Commission
- f) National Nursing Home proclamation
- h) Drinking Water Week proclamation

Item #e was removed from the agenda because the appointment to the State Marine Board had already been made. Mayor Verger read the proclamations to the assembly and Councilor Benetti stated a conflict of interest on item #b. Councilor Miller moved to approve the consent calendar as presented. Councilor Weeks seconded the motion which carried with the Mayor and all Councilors present voting aye.

Proposal to Take Title to "The Eagle"

City Manager Grile reported that Emery Hanson had contacted him about donating the fishing vessel, The Eagle, to the City. Mr. Grile recommend accepting the title to the vessel and said he anticipated no additional cost to the City. The Port of Coos Bay offered to continue to store the vessel until the City makes a decision on a location. It was suggested the vessel could be used as a tourist attraction on Front Street or in the Empire district. Councilor Combs recommended staff do an inspection of the boat, and address the cost for maintenance and risk management issues. Mayor Verger moved to take title to The Eagle and continue storing the vessel at the Port facility. Councilor Miller seconded which carried with the Mayor and all Councilors present voting aye.

Skateboarding/Rollerblading Issue

City Manager Grile reported when Ordinance No. 228 was enacted in March the Council directed him to return with a report on where skateboarding would be allowed. A request to review the ordinance and remove rollerblading from the document was made by Gary Rifkin. Mr. Grile reviewed staff options for amending the ordinance: (A) distinguish roller blades and roller skates from skateboards, (B) prohibit roller blades in the downtown core area, and (C) roller blades would be permitted in all other pedestrian areas, but would be required to yield to pedestrians. Councilor Benetti commented the ordinance was the same as before except for the changes made for penalties. Mr. Grile referred to a letter from Mr. Lee, owner of property located across from the skateboard park, which listed several concerns including vandalism, noise, rudeness, and trespassing. Chief Marc Adams reported the police department had met with the apartment manager and had come up with some suggestions. He said a four-hour surveillance with a video camera showed the park was being used the way it was intended. The main problem appears to be trespassing on the underground parking area. Chief Adams commented the department was continuing to contact some of the regular users of the park and suggested no trespassing signs be installed at the apartment complex. Mayor Verger commented the skateboard park was already there before the apartment building was constructed. City Attorney Tosh suggested the owner consult their attorney as to the liability. There was considerable discussion about rollerblading and where it should be allowed. Mayor Verger

Council Minutes - May 7, 1996

commented that other cities allow rollerblading in downtown areas and on sidewalks. Chief Adams said a major difference between skateboards and rollerblades was that the rollerblades stay with the person. Most of the complaints regarding skateboarding are about property damage. City Attorney Tosh reviewed the offense structure of the ordinance. Councilor Miller inquired if people were being sighted and Chief Adams responded it was difficult to sight because they must be seen performing the act in order to be sighted. Consensus of the Council was to approve A and C of staff's recommendation and have the City Attorney to draft an ordinance. Councilor Combs requested a report on the cost of additional lighting, fencing, signs, and crosswalk at the park. Staff was requested to prepare a report for the June 4, 1996 council meeting on how other cities regulate skateboarding and rollerblading.

Award of Bid - Timber Sale Contract

City Manager Grile reported that the recommendation from Greg Stone, Stuntzner Engineering, was to award the contract even though the bid was lower than expected, and it is unlikely the prices will increase because a of the high proportion of spruce and hemlock in the sale. Councilor Miller moved to award the bid of \$335,158 to Superior Lumber Company. Councilor Benetti seconded the motion which passed with the Mayor and all Councilors present voting aye.

Opening Mall Block "O" Proposal

City Manager Grile reported the Parking Committee recommended opening Mall Block 0 to traffic. The approximate cost of the project was \$212,619. Mr. Grile commented there were a number of factors to be considered such as blending pedestrians and vehicles, future uses of the parking lot, and the Highway 101 enhancement project. Staff recommendation was to delay any action on the opening of the block until all inter-relationships are addressed.

Eric Absolon, owner of the Bank Brewery, commented that opening up Central Avenue has done a lot for the downtown area and supported opening Block 0.

Cora Vanderveldon, Coos Bay, said she worked in the downtown area and does not feel the City should spend money on opening Block 0 and should consider other factors before making a decision.

Steve Clay, downtown business owner, suggested the Council consider the effects on the left turn lane on Anderson Avenue, pedestrian crossing at Central Avenue, and proximity of the Chamber building if Block 0 were opened to traffic.

Jim Berg, business owner on Central, appreciated the City's efforts to develop the downtown area, and opening Block 0 would enhance the way for north bound traffic to get into downtown.

Mayor Verger commented this was a time for discussion and encouraged the public to make comments. She suggested combining the opening of Block 0 and the parking structure comments.

Eric Absolon, recommended hiring a consult to look at the parking situation and determine if a parking structure is necessary.

Mike Crow, downtown business owner, commented that as a rule cities under 50,000 do not need a parking structure and suggested the City carefully evaluate the necessity for one. He recommended hiring a consultant.

Council Minutes - May 7, 1996

Ralph Larson, downtown property owner, said a parking structure was not necessary and suggested constructing more parking lots.

Flora Lee Lockhart, downtown business owner, said she had served on the parking committee for 12 years and the major problem is employer and employee parking.

Mayor Verger requested comments from the Council on opening up Mall Block 0. Consensus of the Council was to delay action.

Parking Structure Proposal

Discussion continued on the downtown parking situation and whether a parking structure was necessary. Further public comments were heard.

Steve Clay, downtown business owner, commented that some parking areas in the City were underutilized and other areas had very serious parking problems. He suggested the City not use ODDA for consultation on parking, but form a citizen committee to study alternative traffic routes through downtown and look at solutions for the parking. Mayor commented ODDA (now Livable Oregon) was well thought of by other cities. Mr. Clay said the focus of the study should be on parking and traffic and that ODDA doesn't have the expertise to do the study in that way.

Sargent Webster, North Bend, said the problem was that people are not willing to walk any distance.

Mike Crow, downtown business owner, commented that the study should take into account the view of the bay and boardwalk. He said he does not support the structure being located between north and south bound traffic and that the structure is not the answer to the parking problem.

Bill Rosencrantz, downtown business owner, asked if the location for the structure had been decided and Mayor Verger responded the location had not been established.

Cora Vanderveldon, employee at Abel and Swank Insurance, commented they offer a parking lot for customers and very few customers use it. She said the problem was with employees parking in spaces that should be left for customers.

Gary Rifkin, downtown business owner, said when the Golden Hind was in port a few years ago, people found a place to park. If there is a reason to stop, people will do it.

City Manager Grile commended Bruce Meithof for a superb job of putting together the report. He recommended the City prepare an RFP for a consultant to address downtown parking, structural and non-structural, and study the traffic circulation pattern. Mr. Grile reported that a traffic study had been completed as part of the BATS study and he would contact CH2M Hill about using the study. Community Services Director Meithof reported that during a phone conversation with Malcolm Johnstone, Livable Oregon, said Coos Bay did not need a parking structure and that a survey revealed that less than 50 percent of the available parking was used. Councilor Benetti commented that much of the commercial space in the downtown area was not used because of the lack of parking and he recommended the City hire a consultant to perform the study. Mayor Verger requested the study be broken down in segments so the Council could make selections from the RFP. Councilor Spangler moved to instruct the City Manager to prepare an RFP for a consultant to study the parking and traffic needs in the downtown area. Councilor Miller seconded the motion which carried with the Mayor and all Councilors present voting aye.

Council Minutes - May 7, 1996

Renewal of Chamber of Commerce Lease

City Attorney Tosh reported the lease as presented was a standard commercial lease and had been negotiated with the attorney for the Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Tosh noted several changes in the lease: in lieu of payment of rent the Chamber would provide tourist information; an outside sign for public restrooms would be provided as long as the City provided maintenance of the restrooms; provision for a one-year notice of termination; and the Chamber would be allowed to rent out the meeting room for periods of up to three days without approval by the City. Councilor Benetti asked if the Chamber could expand the building without the City's approval and Mr. Tosh responded they would need written consent from the City. Councilor Weeks moved to approve the lease. Councilor Combs seconded the motion which passed with the Mayor and all Councilors present voting aye.

Council Appointment to the Tree Board

Mayor Verger reported that Councilor Combs had requested he be replaced on the Tree Board. Councilor Combs said that several other commitments take his time and he is unable to attend the tree board meetings. Mayor Verger moved to appoint Councilor Williams to fill the position on the Tree Board. Councilor Weeks seconded the motion which carried with the Mayor and all Councilors present voting aye.

Discussion - Signage for Downtown Area

City Manager Grile reported staff had been asked to review downtown signage. He recommended Council appoint an ad hoc committee consisting of two downtown business owners, a Downtown Association representative, a representative from ODOT, the City Manager, the Community Services Director, and any Councilors desiring to attend, to study the signage needs. The Councilor Spangler said he would like to serve on the committee. Councilor Benetti recommended appointing someone from the Planning Commission as well. Crystal Shoji, Chamber Director, suggested the committee consider placement of the restroom sign at the Chamber building as well. Council Weeks moved to appoint an ad hoc committee to study signage for the downtown area. Councilor Spangler seconded the motion which carried with the Mayor and all Councilors present voting aye.

Public Comments

Chris Guernsey, Coos Bay, speaking on behalf of the Library Board of Trustees, staff and volunteers, thanked the City Council for their continued support of the library project.

Flora Lee Lockhart, Coos Bay, asked Councilor Miller to come forward and placed her arm around her. Mrs. Lockhart explained that comments made at a recent budget committee meeting regarding a radio broadcast had been misquoted.

Sargent Webster, North Bend, commented he would like some of the attention paid to skateboard problem given to the mission problem. Councilor Spangler said a meeting had been set

Council Minutes - May 7, 1996

for Friday with the Bay Area Rescue mission.

City Attorney's Report

City Attorney Rosh reported that Ralph Larson had filed a petition for an initiative to change language in the City Charter regarding voting on the selling of bonds.

City Manager's Report

Mr. Grile reported that due to staff falling behind on several projects, he was recommending contracting with a local civil engineer to prepare five of the Local Improvement District projects. He said staff would not be moving forward with the wastewater UV project and improvements to pump station 19 until after the decision was made on management of the wastewater system.

Mayor and Council Comments

Councilor Combs reported on the Parks Commission meeting. He said Gus Langley had donated azaleas and flowering trees for park improvements. Mr. Combs commended staff on the maintenance of Mingus Park and reminded everyone of the Choshi Gardens dedication on June 9th. Mr. Combs complimented Crystal Shoji on her service to the City as Chamber Director.

Councilor Weeks inquired about the tennis courts being locked. Community Services Director Meithof commented the courts are always locked and keys are available at city hall.

Councilor Spangler requested the City take a position on the use of the Coos Head property. Mayor Verger commented there would be opportunities for the public to comment on the project and that currently the Youth Authority was looking at the facility.

Mayor Verger reported that the public access channel would soon be ready for videoing council meetings. She asked the Council to encourage staff to have cameras installed in the council chambers for future taping.

Executive Session

An executive session was held pursuant to ORS 192.660 (1) (h) for the purpose of discussing pending litigation.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the City Council, Mayor Verger adjourned the meeting to the Urban Renewal Agency.

Council Minutes - May 7, 1996

URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY

Chair Joe Benetti opened the Urban Renewal Agency meeting in which an executive session was held pursuant to ORS 192.660 (1) (h) for the purpose of discussing pending litigation.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Urban Renewal Agency Board, the meeting was adjourned to the City Council meeting on May 21, 1996 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

Joanne Verger
Mayor of the City of Coos Bay
Coos County, Oregon

ATTEST:

Joyce Jansen
City Clerk of the City of Coos Bay
Coos County, Oregon