

City of Creswell
Council Work Session Minutes
December 15, 2014

Council Present:

Omar Bowles
Adam Pelatt
Ted Romoser
Jane Vincent

Holly Campbell
Dave Stram

Staff Present:

Michelle Amberg
Cliff Bellew
Layli Nichols
Madeline Philips
Maia Hardy
Shelley Humble

City Administrator
Public Works Director
Finance Director
Planning Tech.
RARE Participant
Airport Manager

Lauren Sommers

City Attorney

Council Absent: Brent Gifford

Press: 1 – Scott Olson – The Chronicle

Audience: 8

The City Council work session was called to order by Mayor Dave Stram at 6:05 PM.

Presentations

A. County Road Funding – Local Vehicle Registration (\$84,898) – Bill Morgan (County Engineer)/Faye Stewart (County Commissioner)

Mr. Morgan came to Council on behalf of Lane County and the Roads Advisory Committee to hear from each of the 12 cities about how to fund continued road maintenance. After evaluation of the diminishing road fund, the citizen-appointed Committee landed on the vehicle registration fee. Mr. Morgan noted that both secure rural schools funds and gas tax are at a tipping point. Weight-mile tax is already imposed on trucks over 26,000 lbs. – these trucks exert a wear and tear on the road network. Vehicle registration fee can be pursued locally, but must follow Oregon law regardless of fuel source.

Corrective actions the County has taken (since 2000) include reduced employees, reduction in reserves fund, using innovative technology, and aggressively seeking grants. Despite these efforts, a \$9 million gap in operations still exists. Reserves are needed for disaster response in the event of snow and/or wind event and their impact.

The County would like to pursue “preventative maintenance” to avoid avoid expensive differed maintenance. Compared to other cities, Cottage Grove has \$9million in differed maintenance, Eugene has \$80 million. Road maintenance is a regional issue – users rarely know when they’re using one jurisdiction’s road or another’s; they just want it to work.

Revenue Options have been explored by the roads advisory committee: grant writing, county road bonds, Transportation Utility Fee, Transportation Service District (large and unpopular), Property tax local option levy, local gas tax* (* some cities already have one, cars are becoming more efficient making it less sustainable as a source of funding – a state increase would make it more favorable), and local vehicle registration fee were all explored.

The Road Advisory Committee believes the Local Vehicle Registration Fee will be the most successful – 40% of revenue would come back to the Cities, 60% of revenue would go to the County; restricted to only be used for roads. Scientific survey done on Lane County residents settled on \$35 tax.

The question before Council is: Does the City support putting the item on the ballot in May 2015?

Councilor Vincent noted that the rate would probably be ok for working folks. Individuals on fixed incomes and rural residents would likely be hit harder by this fee.

Councilor Campbell asked about restrictions on City portion of the fund for use on City streets.

Councilor Bowles noted a model in Idaho based on vehicle age that was successful.

Councilor Romoser asked about the timing of the fee. Faye Stewart rejoined with a history of funding streams for road funds involving timber harvest funding and gas taxes.

Councilor Romoser asked if the weight mile tax is beyond our reach as a county. Mr. Morgan noted that this tax is reviewed every 2 years by the State.

Mr. Heyman asked questions about taxes for hybrid/electric cars and the impact of the lower cost of gas, 6-8% more gas sold as a result. Bicycles use roads, have you considered taxing them (he hopes not!). Mr. Morgan explained that 90-95% of bike riders own a vehicle – so they're basically already paying that fee.

Jack Gradle noted that if the roads aren't fixed, we will all be paying the hidden costs in shocks, struts, front ends, to the mechanic.

The question before the Council is whether the Council supports putting the question on the ballot.

Mr. Stewart laid out a timeline for the process of drafting an ordinance and putting that forward through readings. Last week of January would be an opportunity for public testimony.

B. AWOS Update – Shelley Humble

The AWOS project went out to bid on December 9, 2014 and closes January 19, 2015. The bid was published in the Daily Journal of Commerce and on ORPIN, as well as in the Creswell Chronicle on Thursday. There has been some interest already. It will come back to Council at the next meeting for award.

No further questions were asked by Council.

C. Community Food For Creswell – Susan Blachnick

Susan Blachnick on behalf of Community Food For Creswell:

1. Using a vacant room for pantry customers to use during severe weather. CFFC filed an application for use of the space, requesting that it be granted free of charge, provided it is not otherwise reserved. This would be for a series of occasions.
2. Clarify the lease agreement Sections 2 and 13.2 on the use of the word "Trade Fixtures." Any improvement that does not constitute a trade fixture becomes permanent. The \$45,000 value of the solar panels are of significant and the value of them is vital to the organization's sustainability.

The Board would like to ask the Council to recommend next steps for discussing the ownership of the panels should the Pantry ever vacate the Cobalt Building.

Councilor Campbell asked whether EPUD has a position regarding what happens to the fixtures upon departure. Ms. Blachnick responded that CFFC had not asked. The cost of removing the panels would be about \$5000, though impact of the roof damage might be more. She noted that EPUD intends to grant the money to pay for the panels to CFFC. Ms. Campbell supported drafting an agreement regarding the panels.

Ms. Amberg noted that the agreement states that anything that is not a trade fixture is a contribution to the City in lieu of rent. A solar panel provides electricity and is not a trade fixture (such as a walk-in freezer). This project requires changes in wiring to the building, including an electrical panel and changes the utilities.

Councilor Campbell asked: what is the life expectancy of the solar panels? No answer was provided.

Councilor Bowles asked what it would cost, including all adjustments, to remove the panels (and what kind of damage the solar panels would cause). Discussions ensued regarding the lifespan of the roof. Cliff Bellew noted that he believed the steel roof with baked on enamel to be a lifetime roof.

Ms. Blachnick requested an answer to the roof question (#2) by January/February; Question #1 she would like an answer to as soon as possible, since it is nearly winter. Ms. Blachnick suggested she might have used the extra room 2 days last year.

D. [Moved from Item A: Chief Eckstine arrived at 6:50pm.] Fire Prevention Education Grant Request – Division Chief Paul Eckstein, Fire Marshal

Chief Eckstine requested \$800 for Fire Prevention and Education program:

1. Fire Prevention Week
2. Smoke detector
3. Movie night at the Fire house
4. Car seat program
5. Food Drive program
6. Smokey the Bear visit to local schools

Councilor Campbell directed Chief Eckstine to the website where he could find the application. The Cultural Services committee will then convene to review the application.

Chief Eckstine assured that the money would be spent in Creswell, and reporting would be frequent.

Discussion Items

Councilors agreed to swap Items A and B.

A. Library District Proposal for Community Center – Su Liudahl

Ms. Liudahl provided Council an update. An article was published in the Chronicle to gauge public opinion. The Library District Board is optimistic about the ability for the City and the Library to reach an agreement to jointly use the Community Center. The Library has thus moved forward with a design that will incorporate an expanded collection, more technology, and enhance the new library space with small meeting areas, without a large community room.

The Library Board realizes that they are more nimble than the City can be, and understand that it will take more time for Council to make a decision. Next steps Ms. Liudahl suggested included:

- More information is needed regarding the Community Development Block Grant,
- Utility costs, janitorial costs;
- Proposal about leasing, owning, or some blend? Taking over the building completely, or should the City continue maintenance?
- Trial period to try out an agreement? This would give the Library opportunity to try some additional programming.

Ms. Liudahl noted that in passing, there seems to be significant community support for the Library taking on community center functions. Councilor Campbell asked if the Library can handle the increased cost of carrying the building and whether it is within the mission of the Library District? Ms. Liudahl confirmed that it is well within the Library's mission to provide community programming.

Ms. Amberg noted that she had done research through the City files and State level CDBG managers – the timeline of federalization on the CDBG grant has elapsed, but the City ought to develop an agreement to assure continued provision of providing the same services. The CDBG grant is old enough that Federal managers would likely not have any concern about remodeling.

Councilor Campbell asked about any concerns of needed space for a police department. Councilor Bowles noted that should Creswell create its own Police Department, they could be offered the existing Lane County Sheriff space. The committee working on this issue has not specifically discussed use of the Community Center.

Council gave Ms. Amberg direction to bring the following information before the Council in the January work session, to be voted on in February:

- Utility costs, janitorial costs
- Details of the CDBG
- Trial period
 - Tentative proposed schedule (12 months) – to show an active, functioning building that provides activities (Mayor Stram thinks this could be a great opportunity to provide more services to residents of Creswell)
- Management
 - Advantages of leasing vs. owning (losing a City Asset)
 - Long term leasing
- More public input – do folks care or not?
 - How to gather this? Online survey (like policing survey) for feedback.
 - Su Liudahl might present on the topic to allow folks to weigh in
- Revisit a monthly newsletter in the utility bill, listing what is going on – add this to the January work session Discussion items.

Administration Committee – Adam Pelatt, Chair

Lauren Sommers, Attorney from Speer Hoyt, has been helping to review the proposed changes to vacation leave policy and a new shared leave policy. Some highlights include:

- Shifting from annual to monthly vacation leave accrual based on full-time schedule on p. 4.
- Part-time employees would earn vacation at different rates based on how many hours they work.
- Probationary employees must wait 6 months to use vacation but continue to accrue. Upon 6 months they can take vacation.
- Payment for unused sick leave would be paid out upon separation, however probationary employees would not be eligible for payout if separated in the first 6 months of employment.

- A cap would be imposed on the amount of vacation an employee can accrue (320 hours).

There are a few employees that have accrued more than 320 hours. Three options are proposed to resolve this: single payout (end of 2015), payout could occur over 3 years (beginning in 2015), or the employee can attempt to use-down the accrued leave hours until 2017; and then paid for the difference up to 320 hours on July 1, 2017. Employees can elect one of these options by February 1, 2015.

- A vacation-leave buy-back option may also be available upon request up to 40 hours per year, however the employee must use 40 hours in that year and must work at least 80 hours in that year.

Councilor Campbell asked if there is a limit on how many hours a City employee can take at a time. Ms. Sommers noted that there is not a limit at present. Councilor Pelatt agreed that this was one of the impetuses for looking at this question, due to high accrual of vacation leave.

Councilor Romoser asked why management leave was separated in versions. Councilor Pelatt noted that Management leave will be separated into a different policy. Good options are available, but nothing the committee agreed on.

Ms. Sommers noted that Section 2 discussed the transition from annual to monthly accrual: On Dec 31st each employee will be credited with the prorated number of hours that would have been accrued in this year. On January 1st the City transitions to monthly accrual. Councilor Pelatt noted that the key tenant to the conversation was to assure that no one lost any hours that they had earned.

City Administrator Amberg discussed the proposed Shared Leave policy. She noted that leave could be donated to another staff member who has a catastrophic event. Oregon family leave law allows for 12 weeks of protected leave in Oregon, but it is not all paid.

Councilor Romoser asked if the cost of the shared leave will come out of the department's budget. If the person on leave requires a department to hire a replacement. Ms. Amberg noted that both temporary replacement or flexible arrangements can be done.

Councilor Pelatt assured that the process to present this policy went through much research and many reviews. He thanked Ms. Sommers for her help in compiling this policy. These two policies were brought forward in the ensuing Special City Council Meeting.

Mayor Stram called a recess at 7:45pm.

Mayor Stram reconvened the work session at 7:52pm

B. Lane County Sheriff Contract – Sergeant Billy Halvorson

Sergeant Halvorson not present due to illness tonight. He would like the Council to consider making the sergeant a half time position. He would no longer do the Marine Board work. The increase would be \$15,000 over the next 6 months, costing \$30,000 per year thereafter (plus annual increases).

Ms. Amberg noted that, the community likes him and could benefit from a half a sergeant position. Funding, however, has not been allocated to do so. The City could drop ½ deputy to equal 2.5 deputies and a half a Sergeant. Half of a sergeant costs \$78,728, which could result in a reduction of around \$48,728. This would maintain 3 officers total, but we would lose 20 hours of patrol and pick up sergeant hours.

Ms. Amberg noted that Veneta is considering the same shift (1/2 sergeant). This could result in reducing a portion of the public safety fee. She does not know the hard figures yet. Ms. Amberg reminded Councilors that the Public Safety Fee is scheduled to sunset June 30, 2015 and could put this, along with the third deputy, in jeopardy.

Sergeant Halvorson needs to know as soon as possible; if he's going to stay on marine patrol, he has to attend additional training.

Councilor Vincent asked if he would be doing this separate from the PSU study. Ms. Amberg estimated that savings could be in the neighborhood of \$20,000. Ms. Amberg noted that the City got a discount rate on our 3rd deputy as a result of a misunderstanding within the Sheriff's Department. If the City is going to open the contract to renegotiate it, it's likely that the cost of the deputies will be corrected.

Ms. Amberg noted that the Council will have to discuss the Public Safety Fee as it relates to the budget for fiscal year 2015-16.

Mayor Stram expressed concern regarding the impact of losing 20 hours of patrol.

Ms. Amberg asked Sgt. Halvorson and he was optimistic about being able to offset the lack of patrol with his community policing model, despite not covering it hour-for-hour.

Councilor Vincent asked if we could use the study for assessment of this question. Ms. Amberg noted that the City will not get the results back from this study until early June. Council will have to decide on the fee separately from the results.

Councilor Bowles noted that Public Safety supporters have been talking about 3 1/3 coverage. Discussion has centered on needing at least this or more than this coverage. Though the Sergeant is dedicated to the community, we'd be giving up hours of coverage – which is the primary complaint of the public. The cost savings is nice, but the coverage may be more central to the issue.

Mayor Stram asked if Veneta would go for a 60/40 split.

Ms. Amberg noted that it just depends on the direction of City Council and their decision regarding the Public Safety Fee – If the Public Safety Fee sunsets, the City will lose the third deputy. If you keep the fee, the City can negotiate.

Councilor Vincent noted she could see the people coming with pitchforks already! With everything going on – the water, the safety fee, etc – The fee came with the understanding that the sunset clause will encourage a change that would make it not necessary.

Councilor Campbell recollects that the study was intended to be completed prior to the sunset. That way an alternative funding proposal would be aligned with the decision making process.

Councilor Bowles noted that although he was not a Councilor at the time, the sunset clause was wishful thinking, knowing that a solution would be a year or more out. Raising that fee prior to getting the study back would degrade the reason for doing the study. Unscientific research that Councilor Bowles conducted showed that those against the fee are very few, in comparison. Most were prepared to pay \$8-9; many were made happy by saying it would end or be reduced.

Councilor Campbell noted that this proposal was brought by Sergeant Halvorson, not brought by a Councilor. Is there a deadline on this decision or the ability to return to the previous model if we'd rather?

Ms. Amberg noted that Sgt. Halvorson is looking for a commitment from the two communities, Creswell and Veneta.

Councilor Romoser noted that he moved to Oregon in 1969 – a vote was required for every entity every year. In voting on every school/municipal budget, he's never voted one down. He may be affected by the County presentation, but he's uneasy about the fact that so many funds are out of money; Everyone's facing it, but he is uncomfortable about bringing so many money issues to constituents at one time.

Councilor Campbell would like to have more information on "Community Policing;" Ms. Amberg noted that her understanding included the Sergeant would:

- Meet with kids at the schools
- Have more face time,
- Spend time out of the car

Mayor Stram, in his conversation with Sgt. Halvorson, noted that this model would involve more time to meet with businesses, churches, face-to-face contact with community members and organizations, and allow citizens to get to know the police that serve them. This could be a form of customer satisfaction improvement. Crime prevention, neighborhood watch, and public education would be advantages to having the Sergeant half-time.

Mayor Stram is supportive of the model proposed by Sergeant Halvorson but is still concerned that Council may hear from the community regarding the reduced number of hours. If the city wants to renegotiate in the next fiscal year, Sgt. Halvorson would want to stay half time, and the City is budgeted for 3 1/3.

Council will need to make a decision in January.

Councilor Vincent insisted that we still need to get something out to the people and get their input. Their lives are at stake. We can't make such sweeping decisions as a Council without their input.

Councilor Campbell suggested that Sgt. Halvorson present his proposal to the public beyond businesses and schools, particularly the aging community. Councilor Romoser asked what opportunities for contact will we have over the next month? Councilor Vincent requested that information about this question be put in the utility bill.

Councilor Pelatt suggested reaching out to individuals to ask what they think. Committee members and public could help in Councilors' research. Councilor Campbell requested talking points and more details about his proposal to discuss at table talks.

Rick Zettervall suggested talking with Su Liudahl about using the Positively Creswell webpage and/or discussion – The City could use their Facebook page: This is a consideration and a decision will be made at the January Council Meeting.

Chamber of Commerce has a board meeting this week – Scott Olson offered that he could propose the topic to the Board.

This will be moved forward to the January City Council meeting.

C. City Hall Upstairs Conference Room Occupancy

Maia Hardy summarized the process of getting occupancy for the upstairs room of City Hall. The Building Inspector has approved the change in occupancy (no need to do further work); the Fire Marshall will review it tomorrow and grant occupancy. Jerry from the Building Department suggested that since the public is required to sheet rock to get final occupancy, the City might hold itself accountable to the same standards as the public.

Ms. Amberg asked for direction on what level of improvement the City Council would like to see done on this room.

Discussion ensued as to how much of the allocated funding is left for this project. Ms. Amberg explained that funds have been allocated out of this line item (in a forthcoming budget adjustment) for the Policing study and Staff training.

Mayor Stram requested an itemized scope with costs on: Sheet rock, painting, flooring, ceiling, and the bathroom. The Council supported this, and Council further asked for prioritization.

Since the funding is allocated, Council directed Ms. Amberg to go ahead with sheet rock and paint of the upstairs room in City Hall. Cliff Bellew requested drawings from the architect to get a comparable document to bid on. He may be able to sheet rock without drawings.

Councilor Campbell expressed concern for competing interest for the State shared revenue funds. She further explained that City Hall sets a tone – residents look at City Hall as representative of the community – She encouraged Council to show that we have pride in our building, thus we have a pride in our community. Councilor Romoser would like to see this project completed in a fiscally responsible way.

Ms. Amberg believes that the room is controversial and would like to be able to finish this off enough to get occupancy, to the same standard as other folks, without a huge investment. Ms. Amberg noted that the essential use question has not yet been answered or decided – will we use the room for a conference room? Offices?

Mayor Stram and Councilors provided consensus and direction to Ms. Amberg to move forward as budgeted on sheet rocking and painting the room.

D. Bald Knob – IFA Grant for Phase I/II Assessment

Maia Hardy summarized a memo distributed to Councilors regarding Bald Knob. General response from Councilors was that the redevelopment of Bald Knob would be catalytic to the City's economic success but that Councilors did not want the City to pay for it.

Ms. Hardy explained that Business Oregon has invited the City to apply for a grant up to \$60,000 towards Phases I/II. Without discussing if the City would acquire the property, this investigation would be required as due diligence if anyone is to acquire that property. This is a step towards a City role in economic development.

No questions were asked at this time.

E. Discussion of H2O Program

Councilor Romoser discussed ways Council might further contribute to the H2O fund or encourage donations. Councilor Campbell has some background understanding of the fund and Community Sharing who administers the fund.

F. Connect Oregon V Re-Application

Shelley Humble was emailed regarding a \$4 million addition in funding for the Connect Oregon V (part of ODOT) – The timelines will be adjusted, but the application cannot be revamped. Ms. Humble confirmed this.

Reports: Committees, Commissions and Boards

- A. (See Administrative Committee report delivered earlier)
- B. Cultural Committee – Holly Campbell, Chair

a. Winter Art Display

Councilor Campbell requested time at the January meeting to present new artwork by Creslane. January is a full meeting, so the Mayor could arrange to meet with the class prior to the January meeting (6:30pm)

b. Community Services Funding –

None presented.

C. Economic Development Committee – Jane Vincent, Chair

a. UO Airport Self-Sufficiency Plan Progress

Capstone has passed on the project. They recommended the consulting wing of UO, or PSU. Ms. Amberg feels that the scope of work would be fine to refer to another party.

Councilor Vincent mentioned that in her research she discovered that an Airport Park is identified in the Parks & Open Space Master Plan. She asked if the park concept will go forward. Mayor Stram confirmed that there is no formal recommendation from the Airport Commission and Economic Development Committee – this charge will be continued into the new year.

D. Finance Committee – Brent Gifford, Chair

a. Audit Update

Layli Nichols noted that the end of the year is fast-approaching, but we're getting close to completing the audit.

E. Public Safety Committee –

a. Status of policing study

Ms. Amberg sent the agreement to PSU. She believes they are already working on it.

F. Transportation and Public Works Committee – Holly Campbell

a. Water rate public education – Town Hall Meeting

There is a meeting Tuesday, December 16 at 10am at City Council to go over format and materials to present at the 7pm Town Hall meeting at the Creswell Community Center.

Councilor Vincent reported on her Town Hall meeting that took place Monday December 8th. Ms. Vincent was asked to revisit the rate at a City Council meeting.

G. Mayor's Report

a. Revision of Council Governing Rules

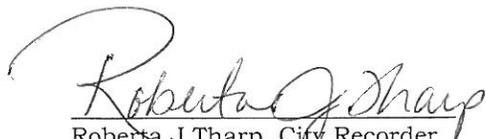
Mayor Stram presented a draft with contributions from Councilor Vincent of the City Council Governing Rules. Ross Williamson, the City Attorney was consulted on this draft. Bold print indicates new items.

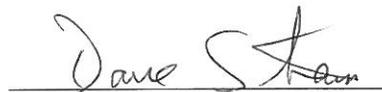
Councilor Vincent would like to have a Councilor comment period at the end of each council meeting. Mayor Stram does not particularly agree with this addition, but requested Council review this draft.

Councilor Pelatt suggested that this be included at the January work session, with intention to hear it in February.

Adjournment

There being no further discussion Mayor Stram adjourned the work session at 9:00 pm.


Roberta J Tharp, City Recorder


Dave Stram, Mayor