

The City Council for the City of Junction City, met in regular session at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 12, 2019, in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 680 Greenwood Street, Junction City, Oregon.

PRESENT: Mayor, Mark Crenshaw; Councilors Sandie Thomas, Robert Stott, Andrea Ceniga, John Gambee, and Bill DiMarco; Excused Absence: Councilor Dale Rowe; City Administrator, Jason Knope; City Attorney, Carrie Connelly; Police Chief, Bob Morris; Public Works Director, Gary Kaping; and City Recorder, Kitty Vodrup.

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Crenshaw called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Crenshaw asked for a moment of silence to honor the life and service of former Mayor David Brunscheon, who passed away on January 28, 2019.

2. Changes to the Agenda

None.

3. Approval of Minutes – February 12, 2019

MOTION: Councilor Stott made a motion to approve the February 12, 2019 Council Minutes. The motion was seconded by Councilor DiMarco and passed by unanimous vote of the Council.

4. Review of Previous Month's Expenditures

Mayor Crenshaw asked if there were any Council comments or questions on the previous month's expenditures. There were none.

5. Public Comment on Items not Listed on the Agenda

Mr. Keith Perkins, 1012 Green Meadows, Junction City, stated that Highway 99 was cleared during the recent snow event, but some of the side roads had lots of snow, which made it difficult to get out. He added that he would like to see the street sweeper be used to break up the snow.

6. Public Comment on Rate Study

Director Kaping reviewed that in June of 2018, the City hired SCS Engineering to perform a Water, Sewer, and Sanitation rate study. At the December Council meeting, SCS presented two options; using a variable rate or a fixed rate, and the Council decided to stay with the fixed rate. The final report was reviewed by Council in January, with direction to hold two meetings on March 12 and April 9, 2019 for the public to provide comments. He noted that copies of the full report and an informational flyer were available.

Mayor Crenshaw invited questions and comments from the public.

Ms. Cathie Campbell, 554 Kalmia Street, Junction City, stated that since the City had purchased a water filtration system from Veneta, she had more yellow water. Director Kaping responded that the filtration system was not the cause of that; however, the water filtration system was being pushed towards its limit, so the City was looking to add two additional filters.

Ms. Campbell asked if it was the addition of new housing that caused the increase in yellow water. Director Kaping responded that new housing was not the cause. He stated that what caused a lot of the problem was the addition of a giant waterline that DOC (Department of Corrections) had put in. The prison was never built, so the water did not move as fast as it needed to which caused water age problems. The City's engineers were currently working on how to monitor that and when and how flushing should occur.

Mr. Keith Perkins stated that he and his wife JoAnn had lived in Junction City for about 7 years and his wife had talked to City staff many times about their yellow water. (He showed an example of yellow water that recently came from their home). He noted that he knew it would cost a lot of money but thought they should start doing something to correct this.

Ms. JoAnn Perkins shared that when the maintenance guy came to clean their water tank, there was dark sediment in the tank and on the filter. Mr. Perkins added that he did not have a problem with rates going up, as long as the problem was fixed.

Administrator Knope stated that as part of the proposed rate increases, the intent was to dedicate \$75,000 to \$100,000 a year to start putting away capital to work on projects related to water quality issues. The area of subdivisions where the Perkins lived (Raintree, Prairie Meadows, and Brenelain Court) were most heavily impacted by the water age issue because of the oversized waterline that Director Kaping had referred to.

Director Kaping referred to the rate study informational flyer and noted that the first three bullet points were projects to address water quality issues. He added that the City had been working behind the scenes to address this and would continue to do so.

Ms. Cindy Montgomery, 1215 Oak Street, Junction City, noted that Junction City's utility rates seemed high, compared to other communities. She noted that other utility companies like power and gas offered assistance and wondered if the City would be offering the same. Director Kaping responded that the City used to offer a Sewer Assistance Program, but that was discontinued a few years ago by a previous Council.

Mayor Crenshaw encouraged citizens to attend a Public Works Committee meeting to talk about reinstating a Ratepayer Assistance Program.

Ms. Montgomery stated that the proposed rates were a large increase over a very short period of time. She noted that the average bill in the study was not close to her average bill. Director Kaping responded that to find the average, they looked at every single bill; the rate study included the percentages of average bills.

Ms. Jessica La Farga, 92460 River Road, Junction City, asked what Committee to talk to about assistance. Mayor Crenshaw responded the Public Works Committee, which met on the first Monday of each month. Director Kaping added that if there was something a citizen would like to talk to the Committee about, they could get a hold of him and he would provide the paperwork to request that an item be placed on the agenda.

Mr. Zane Goodwin, 474 W. 8th, Junction City, stated that his water was really clean, but he saw a lot of complaints. He expressed concerns that the City was giving tax breaks to businesses coming in; Winnebago was one of them and now they were leaving. He referred to Northern Gold Foods also receiving a tax break, yet they would be using City water and adding to the existing system.

Councilor DiMarco responded that he shared Mr. Goodwin's concerns on tax breaks in general, but in this case the tax break was for property taxes and could not be applied to the water system. The City had to pay for the water system through utility rates and the new companies were not getting a break on utilities. Administrator Knope added that was correct.

Ms. Diane Darnell, 155 Thane Place, Junction City, expressed concerns that there would be many people in town who would not be able to afford their water bill and would not qualify for rate assistance.

Ms. Vonda Delorenzo, 932 Kaylee Avenue, Junction City, asked how much the rate study cost. Director Kaping responded it was about \$85,000 and that a rate study should be done every 5 to 10 years.

Councilor Thomas asked for confirmation that the proposed water bill was a 6.5% increase every year for four years and then 2% after that. Director Kaping confirmed that was correct. Councilor Thomas noted that would total 25% over four years.

Mr. Perkins asked if the City had enough water for the people that would be moving in when the 200 plus homes were built. Director Kaping responded that currently the City had enough water and adding two filters to the treatment plant would add capacity.

Ms. Tiffany Walker, 226 SW Quince, Junction City, asked if the rate study took into account all of the new homes that were going in. Administrator Knope responded that the rate study did account for growth over the next few years.

Ms. Walker expressed concerns that the new rates would cause her monthly bill to triple in five years. Mayor Crenshaw did some percentage calculations and provided the example that the impact over five years on a \$100 monthly bill would be around a \$30 increase.

Ms. La Farga asked if this was typical for percentage rate increases, compared to other counties. Administrator Knope responded that it was typical and common to see double digit percentage increases.

Ms. Campbell asked if there was a plan in place to educate the public on why the rates were happening and to have benchmarks where the community could see progress taking place.

Mayor Crenshaw responded that these public comment meetings were the first step to educate the public and flyers had been prepared. He added that the City had an open door policy where anyone could come at anytime to ask questions. Administrator Knope added that Public Works was working on creating a list of projects, which would be tied back to the rates. Staff was also working on digital communication improvements to provide regular reports on projects and benchmarks. In addition, the City would be regularly communicating on the improvements being made on water quality.

Mr. Perkins suggested that the City create a flyer that provided some actual dollar figure examples of what the rate increases would look like on various monthly bill amounts, similar to what the Mayor had shared; the flyer could be mailed out with the utility bill.

Ms. Montgomery asked if this was a band aid and maybe instead of a rate increase, they should be looking at a bond to improve the water quality issues. Administrator Knope responded that the water quality had been improved with the installation of the water treatment plant, but they were still in process of identifying and developing a plan to address issues in the distribution system, such as water age, old pipes, etc.

Ms. Montgomery stated that it seemed like they were doing a large rate increase for a band aid, when people might not mind paying more to have water they could drink.

Ms. Campbell noted that she would much rather pay for a bond than a rate increase.

In response to a question on bonds, Administrator Knope explained that there were two types of bonds. One was a general revenue bond through property taxes and the other was a rate revenue bond which would be backed and paid for by the water and sewer utility rates.

Councilor Ceniga asked what percentage of Water, Sewer, and Garbage bills were past due. Director Kaping responded that he did not have a percentage. He noted that Public Works shut off an average of 7 homes per month out of 2200 accounts.

Ms. Montgomery said the rate study was based on a 5/8 inch meter and asked what percentage of the 6,000 homes had a 5/8 inch meter. Director Kaping responded probably 90%. Ms. Montgomery asked how you would know what size meter you had. Director Kaping responded there should be a rate code on the utility bill that would show meter size.

Mayor Crenshaw asked Director Kaping to add to the list of frequently asked questions, what size meter do I have and where to find that out.

Councilor Thomas asked if churches had a 5/8 inch meter. Director Kaping responded that many of them did and many had both an irrigation meter and a water meter.

Councilor Thomas asked if the one inch meter was used more for businesses. Director Kaping responded yes and they paid a higher rate.

Councilor DiMarco provided some history that the water treatment plant that the City purchased from Veneta was basically a new plant that had been barely used and was purchased a little above scrap, even though it had new parts. The entire cost of putting the plant together was a little more than the amount the state was arranging for the City to pay to design their water plant for the prison (\$675,000) and that plant would have cost millions more to build. In 2010, the Council voted to give back 3.5 million to the state that had been part of an agreement with the state to assist with infrastructure improvements; at that time DOC said that

if the City gave them that money back that would ensure that they would work with the legislature and the City would get the hospital and prison.

Councilor DiMarco stated that no one in the room was responsible for the current water issues, and staff was working hard behind the scenes to find solutions. He suggested that the state be contacted about solutions/funding for the oversized pipes. He noted that the legislature was talking about assistance to cities with water and sewer infrastructure problems and these things could be discussed at the Finance and Judiciary Committee. He added that he would like to see the City fast track the implementation of a ratepayer assistance program.

7. Budget Contingency Transfer Resolution for Building

Administrator Knope presented the resolution to transfer \$14,100 from contingency to Materials and Services (\$10,100 to Building Official Contract and \$4,000 to Planning Services Contracted) in the Building and Planning Department.

A. Resolution No. 1 – A Resolution Transferring Contingency Appropriations for the Fiscal Year Commencing July 1, 2018 and Ending June 30, 2019 within the General Fund – Building and Planning Department.

MOTION: Councilor Stott made a motion to approve Resolution No. 1. The motion was seconded by Councilor DiMarco. As the vote was being considered, three Councilors voted in favor (DiMarco, Stott, and Gambee) and Councilors Ceniga and Thomas abstained from voting.

Councilor Ceniga stated that she had some questions.

MOTION: Councilor DiMarco made a motion to reconsider Resolution No. 1. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gambee and passed by unanimous vote of the Council.

Discussion followed and included the purpose and process for using contingencies. Administrator Knope noted that the City had experienced some unanticipated bills this year as part of switching away from the Clair Company contract; thus, the contracted line item was higher than what had been budgeted.

MOTION: Councilor Ceniga made a motion to approve Resolution No. 1. The motion was seconded by Councilor DiMarco and passed by unanimous vote of the Council.

8. Street Closure Request – 2019 Pet Parade

Director Kaping presented the request from Chuck Cook of the Junction City Lion's Club to hold the annual Pet Parade on May 4, 2019.

MOTION: Councilor Stott made a motion to approve the street closure request for the Annual Pet Parade on May 4, 2019 as conditioned in Attachment B with the nonexclusive use of City streets for street closure from 11:45 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The use of City streets will apply to the route show in Attachment A. The motion was seconded by Councilor Thomas and passed by unanimous vote of the Council.

9. Street Closure Request – 2019 Function 4 Junction

Director Kaping presented the request from Corrie Lucas, Function 4 Junction President, to hold the annual Function 4 Junction on May 31 – June 1st, 2019.

MOTION: Councilor Stott made a motion to approve the street closure request for the Annual Function 4 Junction on Friday, May 31, 2019 and Saturday, June 1, 2019 as conditioned in Attachment B with the nonexclusive use of City streets for street closure from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. on Friday, May 31 and 5:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. on Saturday, June 1. The use of City streets will apply to the route shown in Attachment A, contingent upon approval from the Oregon Department of Transportation. The motion was seconded by Councilor Thomas and passed by unanimous vote of the Council.

10. Street Closure Request – 2019 Scandinavian Festival

Director Kaping presented the request from the Scandinavian Festival Association to hold the annual Scandinavian Festival August 8 – 11, 2019.

MOTION: Councilor Stott made a motion to approve the street closure request and conditions as presented and a Noise Permit for the 2019 Scandinavian Festival, as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Ceniga and passed by unanimous vote of the Council.

11. Job Descriptions

Administrator Knope presented the following:

A. Senior Center Aide Position

Resolution No. 2 – A Resolution to Create the Position of Senior Center Aide Pursuant to Personnel Policy Section 4.2 and Assigning a Range within the City's Compensation Schedule.

MOTION: Councilor Ceniga made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2. The motion was seconded by Councilor Stott and passed by unanimous vote of the Council.

B. Community Center Aide Position

Resolution No. 3 – A Resolution to Create the Position of Community Center Aide Pursuant to Personnel Policy Section 4.2 and Assigning a Range within the City's Compensation Schedule.

MOTION: Councilor Stott made a motion to approve Resolution No. 3. The motion was seconded by Councilor Ceniga and passed by unanimous vote of the Council.

C. Planning Technician Position

Resolution No. 4 – A Resolution to Create the Position of Planning Technician Pursuant to Personnel Policy Section 4.2 and Assigning a Range within the City's Compensation Schedule.

MOTION: Councilor Stott made a motion to approve Resolution No. 4. The motion was seconded by Councilor DiMarco and passed by a vote of 3 to 2, with Councilors Stott, Gambee, and DiMarco voting in favor and Councilors Thomas and Ceniga voting against.

12. Planning Commission Appointment

Director Kaping noted that three applications had been received for a Planning Commission alternate member position.

Mayor Crenshaw stated that he wanted to get more people involved who were not already serving the City in another capacity; therefore, he appointed Doug Easterday to serve as an alternate member.

MOTION: Councilor DiMarco made a motion to approve the Mayor's appointment of Doug Easterday to serve as an alternate member on the Planning Commission, filling the unexpired 4 year term through 2020. The motion was seconded by Councilor Stott.

Discussion followed and included that the Planning Commission had recommended appointment of Jack Sumner, due to his experience and potential changes with the City Planner position.

VOTE: The motion failed by a vote of 2 to 3, with Councilors Stott and DiMarco voting in favor and Councilors Thomas, Ceniga, and Gambee voting against.

Mayor Crenshaw appointed Jack Sumner to serve as an alternate member.

MOTION: Councilor DiMarco made a motion to approve the Mayor's appointment of Jack Sumner to the alternate member position on the Planning Commission. The motion was seconded by Councilor Ceniga and passed by a vote of 4 to 1, with Councilors Thomas, Ceniga, Gambee, and DiMarco voting in favor and Councilor Stott voting against.

Mayor Crenshaw thanked Mr. Sumner for his service to the community.

13. Council Agenda Forecaster

Administrator Knope presented the forecaster. Since the February 26th Work Session was cancelled, the Council Training would be rescheduled to the March 26th Work Session.

14. Staff Reports

Chief Morris reported: The department was continuing with enhanced traffic enforcement on Highway 99 and would be working with Lane County Sheriffs on traffic enhancement/enforcement on River Road/High Pass/1st Street. The legislature was looking at changing current statutes to allow cities to use speed radar cameras; the cameras would be placed in a vehicle and use photo radar. This would help with enforcement in school zones and other areas.

Mayor Crenshaw thanked the department for their efforts in making the highway safer.

Councilor Ceniga asked how the U of O (University of Oregon) dispatching was going. Chief Morris responded that it was going well, and the U of O was happy with the service. They looked forward to getting a finalized contract.

Director Kaping reported: Public Works was very busy with the recent snow event, and he commended the Public Works crew for doing an outstanding job. Public Works was currently working on the water and sewer infrastructure grant work that the Scandinavian Festival Association had been awarded. Bids were out for downtown street work. Staff was working with the City Engineer on improved flushing and monitoring of the water system, as well as the best places to take water samples.

Councilor Ceniga stated that Public Works did a phenomenal job during the snow event.

Attorney Connelly noted that the second Council training would be coming up, and any suggested topics or questions could be shared with Administrator Knope.

Councilor Thomas stated that it was awesome that the City was getting contracts like the dispatching contract with the U of O. She asked if there was anything that said that 74% of taxpayer funds needed to go to the Police Department. She noted that maybe some of that could be used for other departments, if the Police Department was able to be self-supporting.

Administrator Knope responded that the 74% allocation to the Police Department was set by Council approved fiscal policies; these were reviewed every five years and were scheduled for review in two more years. He noted that the revenue from dispatch contracts went directly into the Dispatch Division, which could become self-supported, but the other areas of the Police Department, administration, patrol, and jail would not be able to be self-supported.

15. Councilor Comments/Questions

Councilor Gambie asked about funneling questions for the Work Session. Attorney Connelly responded that she could answer questions at the Work Session, but if asked in advance, she would have more time to prepare a response.

Councilor Gambie asked about the projects associated with the rate study. Director Kaping responded that the rate study included \$75,000 annually to be saved and put towards gradually picking off some of the priority water and sewer projects in the master plans. To have included all the master plan projects would have increased the rates by 145%, which was not doable. It was noted that staff would be exploring other ways to pay for projects, such as through a bond, federal and state grant funding, etc.

Administrator Knope stated that he wanted to make sure that it was clear to everybody that a bond could not be done instead of a rate increase, because part of the rate increase was to cover operational costs; if the projects were removed from the rate study, there would still be a rate increase anyway.

Councilor Gambie asked where the Planning reorganization discussion would be held. Administrator Knope responded that planning reported to the Finance and Judiciary Committee.

Councilor Gambie asked when they would look at the percentage allocations for property taxes and general revenue. Administrator Knope responded that the percentages were set by Council approved fiscal policies and reviewed every five years or sooner if desired by the Council. Next review was scheduled for Fall/Winter of 2020.

Councilor Gambie thanked staff for all their hard work.

Councilor Ceniga asked where the conversations would be held on what was planned with the 24 police vehicles. Administrator Knope responded that the Public Safety Committee would be discussing and then it would come to Council.

Councilor DiMarco noted that with the bucket system, the Council could intervene anytime they wanted in a situation that they considered to be an emergency because they created the policy. He said that they had put larger contingencies in the current budget to address potential issues like Police Department contracts not coming in, etc. He added that Finance and Judiciary served in an advisory nature on the planning reorganization, and the City Administrator had the authority under the Charter to propose reorganization of departments and bring them forward to the Budget Committee.

16. Mayor's Comments

Mayor Crenshaw stated that he recently attended a Lane Area Commission on Transportation meeting and discovered that Junction City had done much better in dealing with the recent snow storm, compared to other neighboring communities. Mayor Crenshaw credited that to the level of preparedness and in Junction City being a self-sufficient town. He commended Public Works and the rest of City staff for doing a great job and also commended the community for standing up against those elements and being able to handle a winter storm.

17. Other Business

Ms. Perkins noted that she had come in many times to voice water quality complaints. Director Kaping responded that all water quality complaints were passed on to Superintendent Tracer to be tracked. Ms. Perkins noted that Tiffany Shafer from Public Works had provided great information on the oversized pipes causing water quality issues.

Ms. Campbell asked about the City being proactive and doing a survey on water quality, rather than waiting for people to voice complaints.

Ms. Montgomery suggested having an online survey.

18. Adjournment

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Kitty Vodrup, City Recorder

Mark Crenshaw, Mayor