

The City Council for the City of Junction City, met in regular session at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 9, 2024 in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 680 Greenwood Street, Junction City, Oregon and in a virtual meeting format via internet and phone.

PRESENT: Acting Mayor, Karen Leach; Councilors Sandie Thomas, Sidney Washburne, Andrea Ceniga, John P. Gambee, and Ken Hancock; Excused Absence: Mayor Kenneth Wells; City Administrator, Jason Knope; City Attorney, Carrie Connelly; Police Chief, Mark Waddell; Public Works Director, Gary Kaping; Finance Director, Mike Crocker; and City Recorder, Kitty Vodrup.

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Acting Mayor Leach opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m., led the Pledge of Allegiance, and took roll call.

2. Changes to the Agenda

Move Item 7 – Judge Pro Tem Appointments to the February 13, 2024 meeting.

3. Approval of Minutes – December 12, 2023

MOTION: Councilor Ceniga made a motion to approve the December 12, 2023 minutes. The motion was seconded by Councilor Washburne and passed by unanimous vote of the Council.

4. Public Comment on Items not Listed on the Agenda

- A. Follow-up from Staff on Previous Comments. None.
- B. New Comments from Public.

Steve Robinson, 1040 Tamarack Street, Junction City, shared safety concerns with someone sleeping in front of the entrance to City Hall on a Saturday morning and blocking the utility drop box when he was trying to drop off a payment. He noted that he was legally blind, and this was a serious safety issue to have people blocking entrances or sidewalks.

5. School District Update

Superintendent Troy Stoops distributed a hard copy report: Enrollment was down by 30 students; continued implementation of their Strategic Plan; updated staff contracts to assist in recruitment/retention; polled the community for feedback on the Facilities Plan; the board would review options of a 39 million or a 57 million dollar bond to make improvements to the schools for the May or November election.

6. Personnel Manual Update

Administrator Knope presented the new Personnel Manual. The current Personnel Manual was adopted in 1998 and was last amended in 2007. The City Attorney recommended that the City use the City County Insurance model manual and customize to include the various elements of the City's current manual that were still relevant. The AFSCME Union, Police Association, City Attorney, and Finance and Judiciary Committee had reviewed. An updated resolution was distributed that changed the language from "rescinding" to "repealing."

A. Resolution No. 1 – A Resolution Repealing Resolution No. 670, as Amended, and Adopting the City of Junction City Employee Personnel Manual Dated October 2, 2023.

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

7. Council Agenda Forecaster

Administrator Knope presented the forecaster. Lateral Sergeant Position and Dispatch Contracts not Being Executed would be on January 23, 2024 agenda.

8. Committee Reports

There were no Committee meetings in January.

9. Staff Reports

Chief Waddell reported: Lockers had been installed; work continued on the façade of the new building and in the patrol room; working to relocate evidence trailer on site; working on getting a memorial plaque and fallen officer signage for Chief Woodrow Whetstone who had been slain in the line of duty in 1960; working on filling vacancies; would like to look at taking one of the officer vacancies and creating a lateral Sergeant's position; and he spoke with Mr. Robinson about the complaint he shared under public comment and would be working on that issue.

Director Kaping reported: 13th and Elm Well work was close to be completed; the Raintree Cultural Study had been completed; the water rights work had been completed for Raintree and, Alderdale and water rights work for Bailey Park was underway; the Cultural Study was close to being done at Alderdale; revamping the 17th Street pump station and other pump rebuilds were occurring; and had one Sanitation vacancy on hold, until they completed the Sanitation discussion.

Director Crocker reported: The \$50,000 RLF loan to Fighting Fish Investments was at the title company; property taxes were 98% collected; City budgeted to received 3.4 million in property taxes and to date had received \$3,383,000; and he was working on budget.

Administrator Knope reported: New City Hall work was underway, except for flooring and some additional office furniture. He would bring back to the Council some ways to alternately fund the remainder of work as were getting close to the end of appropriations for this year; Staff met with Arbor South last week on the Community Center project, and he asked the state for a six month grant deadline extension through December to complete this work; he was working on grant applications and funding with state and federal for water and sewer projects; and IT Coordinator Jacob Hawes was working on a grant with Homeland Security for network security improvements.

10. Previous Month's Expenditures

None.

11. Councilor Comments/Questions

Councilor Hancock thanked Chief Waddell for using the hiring processes so the right candidates could be hired; he expressed appreciation to Director Kaping for his work on the wells and to Director Crocker for the financial reports. He noted that the School District received large monthly payments from the City for the Construction Excise Tax (percentage of building permits) for growth, and he wondered if there would be anything like that in place for police that the City could implement to address growth. He thanked Chief Waddell for working on the memorial recognition for Chief Whetstone. He thanked Mr. Robinson for sharing his comments tonight and noted that some citizens had recently expressed similar concerns about someone blocking the library entrance. He noted that the Council had done a lot of work on this topic and asked if the City could enforce not blocking entrances to buildings and not obstructing sidewalks.

Attorney Connelly responded that the City code had a prohibition against blocking entry ways to public buildings as well as public rights of ways. As long as there were reasonable alternative locations for individuals to sit, lie, sleep, and keep warm and dry, those provisions could be enforced. The City did not have a proactive duty to wander the streets to remove people and needed to work within budgetary abilities and priorities. She added that anyone experiencing a problem should call the Chief of Police or Police Department, who would handle the issues appropriately in accordance with City practices.

Councilor Thomas stated that citizens had also shared with her safety concerns with someone blocking the Library entrance, someone in the alley by the Raven and someone behind the Beer Station. She thanked Chief Waddell, Director Kaping, Director Crocker, Administrator Knope, and Recorder Vodrup for their work and expressed appreciation to the citizens in the audience who cared enough to attend and find out what was going on.

Councilor Ceniga thanked Mr. Robinson for attending the meeting and sharing his concerns. She expressed confidence in the Police Department's ability to address those situations.

Councilor Washburne asked if there was City Code language to address panhandling, as several citizens had said it was occurring in the City. Councilor Ceniga and Director Kaping responded that the City did have code language that prohibited that.

Councilor Washburne thanked everyone for their work last year, as they accomplished quite a few things. He added that they had a lot of things to work through this year but they would accomplish those as they were a good working team.

12. Mayor's Comments

Acting Mayor Leach expressed appreciation to the entire staff who worked so hard. She thanked Administrator Knope, Chief Waddell, Director Kaping, Director Crocker, and Recorder Vodrup for all they did and for their good work. She thanked the Council for their hard work

and open communication and thanked citizens for attending meetings. She thanked Mr. Robinson for sharing his concerns tonight and was confident Chief Waddell would handle this situation the best way he could. She added that she was excited to see the new City Hall completed and looked forward to 2024.

13. Adjournment

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Kitty Vodrup, City Recorder

Karen Leach, Acting Mayor