

The City Council for the City of Junction City, met in regular session at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 14, 2023 in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 680 Greenwood Street, Junction City, Oregon and in a virtual meeting format via internet and phone.

PRESENT: Mayor, Kenneth Wells; Council President, Karen Leach; Councilors Sandie Thomas, Sidney Washburne, Andrea Ceniga, and Ken Hancock; Excused Absence: John P. Gambia; City Administrator, Jason Knope; City Attorney, Carrie Connelly; Police Deputy Chief, Eric Markell; Public Works Superintendent, Jeremy Tracer; Finance Director, Mike Crocker; and City Recorder, Kitty Vodrup.

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

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

2. Changes to the Agenda.

Removed Item 11, Intergovernmental Agreement – Baker City.

3. Approval of Minutes – February 14 and 28, 2023

MOTION: Councilor Washburne made a motion to approve the February 14 and 28, 2023 minutes. The motion was seconded by Councilor Ceniga 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.

Tyler Mikkelsen, 276 Knight Avenue, Eugene, Oregon, noted that he was a 12-year employee of the Junction City Police Department. In 2019, he returned from a deployment to Africa with an injury, and he shared how previous Chief Bob Morris had been there for him and greatly assisted him in adjusting back to civilian life. He requested that the Council delay appointing an interim chief, and he expressed his support for Deputy Chief Markell to serve as interim chief.

Ron Holt, 260 Crona Street, Junction City, requested that the Council revisit City Code that was set in 1974. Per City Code, he was required to pay for a repair for a pipe that connected to his sewer that was under a City street; a minimum bid he received was \$10,000 which he could not afford and he was trying to sell his home.

Cindy Montgomery, 1215 Oak Street, Junction City, noted that she had been on the Planning Commission, and at a public hearing they had been told that as long as the developer met the City Code criteria, the Commission pretty much had to approve the application, even if there was public testimony in opposition. She asked if the City Code could be amended to give more weight to public hearing comments; otherwise, she felt it gave citizens hope for something that there was no hope for and was a waste of their time.

5. Municipal Judge Annual Report

Municipal Court Judge Ashlee Wiese presented her annual report:

- She was in her sixth year as judge.
- During the pandemic, they had to develop emergency procedures and a whole new system to run the court, including virtual attendance, safety protocols, having people attend classes online, etc.
- There has been a big debate as far as criminal justice reform was concerned and whether they would go back to everybody needing to be physically present in court or if they could continue using some of the efficiencies experienced during the pandemic.
- She would be working with Deputy Chief Markel on policies regarding utilizing the jail space, which they had been using and needed the ability to use. She added that the City had a contract with the City of Springfield and sentenced defendants would sometimes go to that jail.
- Some defendants were assigned to community service if they were not able to pay court fines, and she provided the example of someone walking four miles each day to volunteer for the Scandinavian Festival, resulting in her fines being forgiven and her license reinstated.
- The court handled misdemeanors, assaults, DUIs, etc.
- She noted that it made the community safer to keep court within the community. Very few misdemeanor cases were being filed by the District Attorney's office in Lane County. The

ability to keep cases in the City's court, adjudicate them here, utilize the City's jail, and utilize resources like community services and road crew, was the only way the City would be able to continue to have a good say over that part of the system. She added that municipal courts all over the state were becoming far more equipped to handle the local situation because the counties were not equipped to do it.

- Next week she and the two judge pro-tems would be attending the Oregon Municipal Judge's Association Conference.
- During the pandemic, they had virtual court attendance from someone in Ireland and another from a beach in Alaska.
- The court continued to look at efficiencies in court scheduling, to reduce police officer overtime and to retain court appointed attorneys by scheduling their cases on the same day.
- Judge Wiese commended Court Clerk Sandra Mills on her vast knowledge and excellent work, which made the court run efficiently and smoothly.

6. Fire District Report

Chief Brandon Nicol reported: Had 2131 calls in 2022 and 1921 calls in 2021. Most calls were EMS (Emergency Medical Services), and fire calls were 200 to 300 per year. Department was made up of 83% volunteers, and the volunteers responded to the EMS calls at night. 10% of their EMS calls were for lifting assistance, and he encouraged people to utilize family or friends for non-emergency situations. Backyard burning was scheduled to open June 15th but could open later depending on conditions at that time.

7. Planning Commission Appointment

Administrator Knope reviewed that there were two Planning Commission alternate member vacancies and one application had been received. The Planning Commission recommended appointment of Albert Williams.

Mayor Wells appointed Albert Williams to fill the Alternate Member unexpired term through October 31, 2024.

8. Community Center Design RFP

Administrator Knope presented the RFP (Request for Proposal) to obtain an architect to perform the upgrade design work at the Community Center. The City had received \$500,000 in grant funding from the state and this was the first step towards this project.

The Council consensus was in favor of having staff issue the RFP.

9. Scandia Run Street Closure Request

Superintendent Tracer presented the street closure request for the annual Scandia Run. The Community Services and Development Committee reviewed on March 7, 2023 and recommended approval.

MOTION: Councilor Leach made a motion to approve the street closure request for the 48th annual Scandia Run on August 12, 2023 as conditioned in Attachment B with the nonexclusive use of city streets for street closure from 7:45 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hancock and passed by unanimous vote of the Council.

10. Public Works Fence

Superintendent Tracer presented the request to extend the fence to the south and west of the Public Works shop for added security and more employee parking. Staff reached out to three vendors and two submitted bids. The Public Works Committee reviewed on March 6, 2023 and recommended approval.

MOTION: Councilor Leach made a motion to award the fence project to Oregon Fence Company in the amount of \$25,685 and authorize the Public Works Superintendent to sign the necessary documents. The motion was seconded by Councilor Thomas and passed by unanimous vote of the Council.

11. City Prosecutor Contract Extension

Director Crocker reviewed that the City had a contract with Leahy and Cox for City Prosecutor services, which had an initial two-year term through January 2023 and allowed for two extensions for two years each. The Finance and Judiciary Committee reviewed on February 2, 2023 and recommended approval of a two-year extension.

MOTION: Councilor Thomas made a motion to approve the 2-year extension as presented for the City Prosecutor Contract with Leahy Cox, LLP and authorize the Mayor to sign the necessary documents. The motion was seconded by Councilor Washburne and passed by unanimous vote of the Council.

12. Budget Contingency and Transfer Resolution

Director Crocker presented the resolution for budget contingency and appropriations transfers in the General Fund.

Jack Sumner, 1067 Quince Drive, Junction City, stated that he was a member of the Budget Committee and a taxpayer and asked if this met the standards or changes that could be made during the year. Administrator Knope and Director Knope responded yes.

A. Resolution No.1 – A Resolution Transferring Contingency and Other Appropriations for the Fiscal Year Commencing July 1, 2022 and Ending June 30, 2023, within the General Fund.

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

13. Interim Chief Intergovernmental Agreement

Administrator Knope presented the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) to have Coburg provide Interim Police Chief services to Junction City. He noted that Chief Morris had retired last week, and the interim chief would work between 10 to 20 hours per week and keep things going while the City worked on recruitment for a new chief. He added that Coburg was reviewing and could pose another option of a temporary employment contract rather than an IGA.

Jack Sumner, 1061 Quince Drive, Junction City, stated that he hoped there would be a selection committee, as well as input from citizens, to select the next chief.

Mike Bonner, 1467 W. 17th, Junction City, stated he had worked for the City for 24 years and was President of the Police Association. He asked if Councilor Ceniga had a conflict of interest, as she was a Reserve Officer for the City of Coburg. Attorney Connelly responded that unless funds from this contract were going to pay Councilor Ceniga in her position as Reserve Officer, there would not be a financial conflict of interest. Councilor Ceniga stated that she was not paid in her role as Reserve Officer for the City of Coburg.

Cindy Montgomery, 1215 Oak Street, Junction City, stated that as a residential and commercial property owner in Junction City, she would love to see a larger police department and asked what the hiring process for an officer was in Junction City. Deputy Chief Markell responded that there were written, physical, medical, and psychological tests, extensive backgrounds, oral boards, and the ability to graduate from academy. Administrator Knope added that hiring department heads was the role of the City Administrator; however, in the case of the police chief position, he intended to have various interview panels from staff, law enforcement, Council, and community members and have a public meet and greet with the top three.

MOTION: Councilor Hancock made a motion to approve the Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Coburg for Chief of Police services and authorize the City Administrator to sign the necessary documents. The motion was seconded by Councilor Leach and passed by unanimous vote of the Council.

14. Council Agenda Forecaster

Administrator Knope presented the forecaster. Would have a few regular session items and the second Council training on March 28, 2023.

Councilor Leach asked if the Council would like to talk about allowing Council members to attend Executive Sessions virtually. The Council consensus was yes. Administrator Knope responded that he would work with Attorney Connelly and bring to the April 11th meeting.

15. Committee Reports

Finance and Judiciary Committee met on March 2, 2023. Councilor Leach reported:

- Recorder Vodrup reviewed a Public Records Policy draft, and she would bring back answers to questions that a member of the public and a Committee member had.

- Reviewed budget.

Public Works Committee met on March 6, 2023. Councilor Washburne reported:

- Reviewed street overlay on Maple between 10th and 12th.
- Director Kaping would be looking into a Rural Development Emergency and Imminent Community Water Assistance Grant. This grant was up to 1 million dollars to help with wells but could take between six and 12 months to be received.

Lane ACT. Councilor Washburne reported:

- Starting next year, Springfield would be getting 719 ADA ramps put in.
- There were different transportation bills being considered by the legislature.

Lane Council of Governments Board of Directors met on February 23, 2023. Mayor Wells reported:

- Senior and Disabled Services gave a presentation on all the services they provided over the year to senior citizens.
- Talked about the upcoming changes because of legislation on SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), where people would have less money for food as the pandemic bill ended.
- A metropolitan planning organization provided their annual report.
- Discussed budget.

16. Staff Reports

Deputy Chief Markell reported: The three new officers would graduate from academy on Friday and they were excited to come back and continue the training process.

Superintendent Tracer reported: Busy with maintenance projects and getting things caught up from snow and rain. Would be working on the water line in the alley between Juniper and Ivy and on the overlay on Maple between 10th and 12th.

Director Crocker reported: The Secretary of State put out their summary of audits, and of the 241 cities in Oregon, 19 filed extensions and 26 had deficiencies. The City had not had any deficiencies in quite a few years, and he expressed appreciation to the City's auditors for doing things on time on not having to file extensions.

Recorder Vodrup reported: Reminder that the filing window for Council and Planning Commission members to file their electronic Statement of Economic Interest with Oregon Government Ethics Commission was March 15th – April 15th.

Administrator Knope reported: Councilor Hancock had brought up some questions at the last work session about the Committee role on personnel matters. Administrator Knope followed up with Councilor Hancock for clarification. An updated personnel manual was currently under review by the union and association and would be coming to Council. Administrator Knope was also working with Attorney Connelly on a process that would address Councilor Hancock's concerns.

Councilor Hancock expressed appreciation to Administrator Knope for following up on this so quickly and noted that the issue was using the Council in the appellate role, which probably was no longer needed.

Administrator Knope continued his report: Met with Grand Ronde Tribe Cultural Preservation representatives a few weeks ago about the site at the Reserve. Great conversation and the Grand Ronde Tribe had many resources and would be happy to help the City with the project on the north end of the Reserve and the path and wetlands project on the west side. Other cities had put code in place to help protect cultural resources and that was something that Administrator Knope would bring to Council in the future.

Attorney Connelly reported: Working with Public Works and Junction City Fire to finalize the antennae placement contract, which would be coming to Council. She completed the homelessness code audit for staff review on whether or not the code needed to be amended. If there were amendments the Council wanted to make, those would need to have final action on or before June 1, 2023. She noted that Rebekah Dohrman had left their firm and taken a job at Lane County Counsel's office. Attorney Connelly continued that she would be happy to discuss

further the issue brought up about public hearing testimony. She noted that public hearings were part of the public process mandated by the goals in state statute.

Councilor Hancock shared that he thought it would be beneficial to have the homelessness review go to the Public Safety Committee, and Administrator Knope responded that could be done in April.

17. Previous Month’s Expenditures.

None.

18. Councilor Comments/Questions

Councilor Thomas expressed appreciation to everybody and all staff. She thanked Administrator Knope and Recorder Vodrup for their work.

Councilor Leach thanked staff and expressed appreciation to Administrator Knope for answering every question that she had.

Councilor Hancock stated that the Council had approved adding citizen members to the Council Committees and asked about the application process. Administrator Knope responded that after 30 days, staff would begin advertising and taking applications.

Councilor Hancock noted that the next Public Safety Committee meeting would be held on March 23rd and he looked forward to seeing people there.

19. Mayor’s Comments

Mayor Wells stated that the Council did approve adding two citizen members to each of the four Council Committees: Public Works Committee, Public Safety Committee, Finance and Judiciary Committee, and Community Services and Development Committee. He looked forward to having citizen input on the committees and noted that the committees usually met once a month for around an hour in length. He noted that there was also a citizen member vacancy on the Budget Committee and an alternate member vacancy on the Planning Commission. He encouraged citizens to apply for these positions and noted that information could be found on the City’s website.

Cindy Montgomery noted that when she spoke earlier about public hearings, her question was how did one go through the process of getting a code adjustment so that public hearings could be weighted in a decision that the Planning Commission makes. Administrator Knope responded that he would look into that and get back to her shortly.

20. Adjournment

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Kitty Vodrup, City Recorder

Kenneth Wells, Mayor