

The City Council for the City of Junction City, met in regular session at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 8, 2020, in a virtual meeting format via internet and phone.

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

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Crenshaw called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Changes to the Agenda

Add Staff Reports before Councilor Comments.

3. Approval of Minutes – August 11 and 25, 2020

MOTION: Councilor Thomas made a motion to approve the August 11 and 25, 2020 minutes. The motion was seconded by Councilor Rowe and passed by unanimous vote of the Council.

4. Public Comment on Items not Listed on the Agenda

Mr. Ken Wells, 554 SW Pine Street, Junction City, stated that he thought the Council decision at the August 25th meeting not to purchase the property at 350 Holly was a wise decision, especially since they still needed a Facility Plan. He continued that it was nice to have public comment at the first meeting of the month, and he thought it would be good for the Mayor to place it on the agenda for the second meeting of the month. He thanked the Mayor for adding staff reports to the agenda for the virtual meetings, as it was important for the citizens to hear the reports and be educated on things.

Mayor Crenshaw noted that his overall platform as Mayor was to ensure that the public received opportunities to speak, not only during public comment, but anytime the Council made a decision and he hoped that would be a precedent that would be lasting for Mayors to come.

5. Water and Sewer Rates Resolutions

A. Public Comment

Mr. Sidney Washburne, 520 Timothy Street, Junction City, stated that he knew that everything needed to go up, but he thought they should put this on the back burner, due to the fact that so many people were unemployed and not able to pay their bills.

There were no other public comments.

Mayor Crenshaw asked for a staff report. Director Kaping stated that before the Council were two resolutions for Water and Sewer Rates. In June of 2018, the City hired SCS Engineering (SCS) to do a rate study for Water, Sewer, and Sanitation. SCS made presentations to the Council in October and December 2018. Two options were presented, including a tiered structure and a fixed percentage, and Council chose to go with a fixed percentage. The final study was presented to the Council in January 2019, and two opportunities were held to receive public comments on March 12, 2019 and April 9, 2019. At the April meeting, the Council was unanimous in moving forward, and on May 14, 2019 the Council approved Resolution No. 1212 for Water Rates and Resolution No. 1213 for Sewer Rates.

Director Kaping continued that the annual rate increases should have come to the Council in May, but it was delayed because of COVID. The rate increases were included in the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 budget that the Council adopted in June. The monthly rate increase for an average customer would be approximately \$3.55 for Water and \$2.39 for Sewer. This was presented to the Public Works Committee on August 31, 2020 and they recommended moving it to Council for approval. The Council packet included SCS's recommendations on percentage increases each year over a five-year period.

Mayor Crenshaw clarified that the increases as stated by Director Kaping would be the actual increase per month for the average user. Director Kaping responded that was correct. Mayor Crenshaw asked if Director Kaping had a guestimate for a larger water user.

Director Kaping responded that it would be hard to say, as it depended on how much water they used, but a higher water user would definitely see a higher rate, as well as someone who had a larger meter, such as for commercial accounts.

Councilor Thomas asked about passing the resolutions, but possibly delaying their effective date for three months. Director Kaping responded that this had already been delayed by three months, as the rates should have increased in July.

Councilor Rowe asked Director Kaping to review what the rate increases would cover and the fact that these were not optional as they dealt with Water and Sewer treatment. Director Kaping responded that when they looked at the Water and Sewer Master Plans, it was realized that the City could not raise rates enough to cover all the projects in those plans. So, they looked at an alternate way, which was to establish Public Work's own Project Crew and to pick off some of those projects in house to keep costs down for ratepayers and do smaller rate increases. In addition, the City had a looming big Sewer Treatment project that had to take place that would cost somewhere in the neighborhood of 18 million dollars.

Councilor Rowe noted that in essence, Public Works was saving citizens money in the long range by doing these step by step. Director Kaping responded that was correct.

Councilor Rowe stated that there had been a lot of public interest in the last few months about the quality of the water in Junction City. He asked Director Kaping what Public Works was doing to correct that situation. Director Kaping responded that the Council had budgeted funds for Water Quality projects, which included installation of monitoring stations to gather data and automatic flushing devices to keep water turned over in low flow areas at night. The City also installed two additional water filters in the Water Treatment plant, which had drastically increased the removal rate for iron and manganese.

Councilor Ceniga asked for confirmation that the rate increase estimates were per the monthly bill and not per consumption unit. Director Kaping confirmed it was per monthly bill for the average user, which would be a total of about \$6.00 per month.

Councilor Ceniga noted that Mr. Washburne had brought up that people may be unemployed and unable to pay their bills. She asked if there was a plan to do anything to help with that. Director Kaping responded that the Public Works Committee was currently working on that and it would be discussed at the Council Work Session at the end of this month.

Councilor Ceniga stated that she totally understood that the increases were necessary as things needed to be done and all came with a cost. She asked if SDCs (System Development Charges) could be used for water and sewer infrastructure for new residents. Administrator Knope responded that it depended and was on a case by case basis. If the department was replacing an 8 inch waterline with an 8 inch waterline, the answer would be no, but if the department was replacing a 2 inch waterline with an 8 inch waterline, SDC funding could be used because the capacity had been increased in that 2 inch line.

Councilor Gambia stated that he was really excited that those plans had been rolling out and was fully in support of the acquisition of equipment over the last couple of months to do some of those projects. He asked how this was working in terms of the stated goal of improving the water quality. Director Kaping responded that the plan was working, and he still wanted to collect a little more data before making any drastic changes. Just by changing the way flushing was done and installing automatic flushing devices, they had seen an increase in water quality.

Councilor Thomas asked if citizens should still call Public Works if they were having problems with their water. Director Kaping responded that yes citizens should do that, as Public Works tracked every water complaint.

Mayor Crenshaw noted that with the current moratorium in not shutting off people's water, technically the City was allowing customers to defer their debt to a later date. He encouraged the Council to consider that to delay implementation of these increases would simply mean a greater increase for the next period; whereas, if they proceeded with this plan and then worked with those who had extraordinary financial needs, that would actually be in the best interest of the City at this time.

Mayor Crenshaw asked if there were additional public comments.

Mr. Washburne asked what Director Kaping was referring to when he talked about night flushing. Director Kaping responded that the automatic flushers were scheduled to run at night, but regular flushing occurred during the day.

B. Resolution No. 1 – A Resolution Establishing Water Rates for the City of Junction City and Repealing Resolution No. 1212.

C. Resolution No. 2 – A Resolution Establishing Sewer Rates and Charges for the City of Junction City and Repealing Resolution No. 1213.

Mayor Crenshaw asked if there were additional public comments. There were none.

MOTION: Councilor Rowe made a motion to approve Resolutions No. 1 and No. 2. The motion was seconded by Councilor Stott and passed by unanimous vote of the Council.

6. Budget Resolution for Oregon Coronavirus Relief Fund Grant

Director Crocker presented the resolution to recognize funds received from the Oregon Coronavirus Relief Fund Grant and to appropriate \$135,700 to the Economic Development Programs Line item in the Community Development Loan Fund.

Mayor Crenshaw asked if there were any public comments. There were none.

A. Resolution No. 3 – An Appropriation Resolution for the Fiscal Year Commencing July 1, 2020 and Ending June 30, 2021 and Making Appropriations within the Community Development Revolving Loan Fund.

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

7. Finance Management, Utility Billing, and HR Software RFP

Director Crocker presented the RFP (Request for Proposal) for Finance Management, Utility Billing, and HR Software. The City had been using Springbrook for over 25 years; the company had been sold a few years ago, and the system and service were no longer proving to be reliable. If Council approved this RFP, staff would issue the RFP and once bids were received staff would prepare recommendations for the Finance and Judiciary Committee to review, before coming to Council for final review and award of purchase.

Mayor Crenshaw asked if there were any public comments. There were none.

MOTION: Councilor Stott made a motion to direct City staff to proceed with the RFP process for the Financial Management, Utility Billing, and HR Software. The motion was seconded by Councilor Ceniga and passed by unanimous vote of the Council.

8. Oregon Public Works Cooperative Assistance Agreement

Director Kaping presented the Oregon Public Works Cooperative Assistance Agreement renewal for a second five-year term. The agreement through ODOT (Oregon Department of Transportation) allowed all Public Works Departments that signed the agreement to assist each other during times of emergency.

Mayor Crenshaw asked if there were any public comments. There were none.

MOTION: Councilor Rowe made a motion to approve the Oregon Public Works Cooperative Assistance Agreement and authorize the Public Works Director to sign the necessary documents. The motion was seconded by Councilor DiMarco and passed by unanimous vote of the Council.

9. Purchase of a Truck from Lane County Auction

Director Kaping presented the request for Public Works to purchase a truck from Lane County Auction for the Projects Crew. Funds had been budgeted and the Public Works Committee reviewed on August 3rd and forwarded to Council for approval.

Mayor Crenshaw asked if there were any public comments. There were none.

MOTION: Councilor Stott made a motion to approve the purchase of a truck from the Lane County Auction, not to exceed \$10,000, and authorize the Public Works Director to sign the necessary documents. The motion was seconded by Councilor Rowe and passed by a vote of 5 to 1, with Councilors Stott, Ceniga, Gambée, Rowe, and DiMarco voting in favor and Councilor Thomas voting against.

10. Purchase of a Truck/SUV from Lane County Auction

Director Kaping presented the request to purchase a truck or SUV from Lane County Auction to replace the current Public Works Director's vehicle, which was at the end of its useful life and would be sold on the public auction site. Funds had been budgeted for this vehicle to be replaced this year, as part of the Vehicle Replacement Program. The Public Works Committee reviewed on August 3rd and forwarded to Council for approval.

Mayor Crenshaw asked if there were any public comments. There were none.

MOTION: Councilor Stott made a motion to approve the purchase of a truck/SUV from the Lane County Auction, not to exceed \$15,000, and authorize the Public Works Director to sign the necessary documents. The motion was seconded by Councilor Ceniga and passed by unanimous vote of the Council.

11. Phone System Replacement Project

Administrator Knope stated that before the Council was a request to approve a contract with Jive Communications (Jive) for a new phone system. The City's current phone system was antiquated and budgeted to be replaced this year. Three quotes were received, and an internal staff phone committee reviewed and recommended Jive. Currently the City was paying \$2,100 a month on the various phone systems and would cost around \$1,250 with Jive, so this would provide a cost savings to the City as well as provide an up to date system; Jive would maintain the equipment, as this was a cloud based system, and the City could get updated phones when needed. This was a three-year contract.

Mayor Crenshaw asked if there were any public comments. There were none.

Motion: Councilor Stott made a motion to approve the contract with Jive and direct the City Administrator to sign the necessary documents. The motion was seconded by Councilor Rowe and passed by unanimous vote of the Council.

12. Business Pandemic Impact Support Program Update

Councilor Gambée recused himself from this discussion.

Administrator Knope provided an update on the Business Pandemic Impact Support Program. Since July 1st, 104 grants had been issued for a total of \$152,000. With the \$135,000 that was put back into the program tonight, that would give the City about \$198,000 to loan out, which should last through the end of the year. Thank you notes were still being received from the business community, who appreciated the assistance.

13. Staff Reports

Director Kaping reported that there were three construction projects occurring on the west side of town: 8 duplexes at the Reserve; 126 unit apartment complex called Maple Springs Apartments; and the first phase of 90 homes at Rolling Meadows south of 10th Street. Full build out of Rolling Meadows would be 330 lots.

Councilor Thomas asked if the City was equipped to keep up with sewer and water. Director Kaping responded the City was equipped and staff was looking at where to have another well for increased future water capacity. For future sewer capacity, that was one of the things that was currently being considered in the Sewer Plant Upgrade.

Councilor Rowe asked if there was any discussion about annexing Oaklea Drive. Director Kaping responded that because so much was being built on both sides of the road, the county would probably request that the City take Oaklea Drive from 1st Street to 18th Street at some point.

Councilor Rowe asked if the developer was going to be required to put up fences and curbs/gutters/sidewalks. Director Kaping responded that the current subdivisions did not border Oaklea Drive, so that would come in a different phase. For Reserve Phase II, there

were some requirements to widen Oaklea Drive, which could come back on the horizon fairly soon.

Chief Morris reported that with all the smoke from the wildfires, the department had been inundated with phone calls. Lane County Sheriff’s office had virtually all their staff out doing evacuations up the McKenzie and other municipal agencies, including Junction City, were providing back up support for priority one Lane County calls. The department had increased staffing levels during this time, to assist other agencies and provide local coverage.

Councilor Thomas asked about an emergency vet service expenditure of \$4,155 from last month. Chief Morris responded that was for animal abuse/neglect cases. Councilor Thomas asked if the vet bills would be paid back at the end of prosecution. Chief Morris responded yes, and it was the goal to seek restitution.

Councilor Thomas asked where the \$3,800 went from the ambulance that was sold. Administrator Knope responded that it went back into the Police Department Capital Reserve Fund.

Attorney Connelly reported that she had worked with various staff members on items that were brought to Council tonight and was currently working with Planning Technician Andrews on the Mobile Food Cart Code draft language. She was working with a number of cities on allowed uses of their CARES Act Grant funding, and she expressed kudos to City staff for acting quickly and proactively setting up its program to be able to hand out that money.

Administration Knope reported that because of air quality issues, court would be cancelled this week and rescheduled to a date later in the month.

14. Councilor Comments/Questions

Councilor Ceniga asked if there were any updates on the burned building at 7th and Ivy. Director Kaping responded that he spoke to someone on site who said a contractor had been acquired and would start working on the building. Councilor Ceniga asked if it had been determined who owned the building. Director Kaping responded that it was owned by the Huntley’s, who were not related to Sue Huntley.

Councilor DiMarco gave a shout out to City law enforcement and the fire district, as well as other first responders in the area; he expressed appreciation and thanks for everybody’s work.

Councilor Gambie thanked Administrator Knope and each of the department directors for their good work and stated that he was constantly amazed at the level of work they put in to serve citizens and save money. He noted that he could list dozens and dozens of ways Administrator Knope and the department heads saved money or improved services. When the budget got tight, they did not shut areas down, but instead figured out ways to operate at a lower cost, and he thanked staff for that good work.

15. Mayor’s Comments

Mayor Crenshaw referred to the heavy smoke in the area from the wildfires and hoped that everyone was able to stay indoors and avoid the smoke. He recognized the hardships that neighboring communities were going through and hoped that everyone received the warnings on their cell phones. His heart went out to anyone who had lost their home in this event. He hoped that Junction City would survive without any fires and noted that the smoke was definitely upon the City from the many local fires. He hoped that everyone stayed safe and would be able to attend the Council meeting at the end of the month.

16. Adjournment

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Kitty Vodrup, City Recorder

Mark Crenshaw, Mayor