

The City Council for the City of Junction City, met in regular session at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 13, 2022 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, Beverly Ficek; Council President, Ken Wells; Councilors Sandie Thomas, Sidney Washburne, Andrea Ceniga, John Gambee, and Karen Leach; City Administrator, Jason Knope; City Attorney, Rebekah Dohrman; Police Chief, Bob Morris; Public Works Director, Gary Kaping; Finance Director, Mike Crocker; and Planning Technician/Admin Aide Tere Andrews.

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

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

2. Changes to the Agenda

None.

3. Approval of Minutes – August 9, and 23, 2022

MOTION: Councilor Washburne made a motion to approve the August 9, 2022 minutes. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wells and passed by unanimous vote of the Council.

MOTION: Councilor Thomas made a motion to approve the August 23, 2022 minutes. The motion was seconded by Councilor Leach and passed by unanimous vote of the Council.

4. Proclamation – City’s 150th Birthday

Mayor Ficek read a proclamation, proclaiming September 15 – 18, 2022 as the City of Junction City’s 150th Sesquicentennial Celebration.

5. Public Comment on Items not Listed on the Agenda

A. Follow-up from Staff on Previous Comments. None.

B. New Comments from Public.

Darin Olson, 1715 W. 1st Avenue, Junction City, asked what the status was of getting a new electronic reader board, as he had recently put up a message on the current reader board and it was very difficult to do. He added that with so many good events happening in the City, it would be nice to have a better reader board. Director Kaping responded that he was waiting for a sign company to submit a bid and added that discussions on a new reader board were occurring at Community Development Committee meetings.

Mr. Olson continued that the Budget Committee had talked about how many police officers the City should have. He provided an example of a small town in Iowa where his father was on the Council and they set a ratio of 1 officer for every 600 people.

Roy Rowlett, 411 E. 2nd, Junction City, expressed problems he and his neighbor were having with a contractor building behind their properties. He cited drainage issues, the footprint being moved out, and other concerns and noted that he had been working with City staff on this issue. Director Kaping responded that the contractor had met building code requirements for the footprint, and the City would not issue a Certificate of Occupancy until the drainage issues were fixed. Director Kaping added that some of the other concerns would be a civil matter.

School District Superintendent Troy Stoops, 325 Maple Street, Junction City, distributed and reviewed a handout and apologized for not be at the Council meeting last month where the School Resource Officer (SRO) contract was discussed. He asked the Council to reconsider partnering with the School District for the SRO, and he expressed the importance and value of the position. He continued that public partnerships were very important, and safety and security in their buildings were a high priority. He noted that they had an average of 40 suspected child abuse and neglect reports each year; the Junction City Police Department (JCPD) responded to each one, and these were also reported to Department of Human Services. The School District was proposing to contribute \$66,000 (57%) towards this contract, in which the SRO would work 173 Student Contact Days, leaving 113 days (42%) of the contract days for the JCPD.

Councilor Thomas responded that the Council took this issue very seriously and did know how important the position was. She continued that they did not take this lightly but had an obligation to the City taxpayers to have enough officers on the ground and running before assigning an officer as an SRO and that would take a number of months. She added that she

was at the last School Board meeting and was surprised to hear that they did not want to contract with Lane County.

Councilor Leach stated that she was also at the School Board meeting and was surprised by the comments. She continued that the Council did take this issue very seriously and it was a tough decision. She said that their obligation was to the people in the City and they needed to make sure they were covered before dedicating an officer to the schools. They were excited to have three new officers who would be going through academy soon, and after they were fully trained they could look at the SRO position. After the Council discussed this, she asked Administrator Knope to pass along to Superintendent Stoops that the Council recognized how important the SRO position was. She noted that the School District could hire someone else to fill this roll right now, and she agreed that it was important for the City and School District to work together.

Councilor Ceniga thanked Superintendent Stoops for attending the meeting and noted that the Council did take this very seriously. As a former officer in Junction City and currently one at Coburg, she knew the importance of this position and wanted someone in the schools and hoped that the School District had a back up plan to fill this position. She continued that the Council had an obligation to the taxpayers and community to provide police services, and she had tried to figure out a way to make the SRO work right now, but it came down to staffing and not being able to meet the needs that were already required of the Police Department.

Councilor Gambie thanked Superintendent Stoops for his comments and thought the School District's offer to the City was very generous and a fair percentage of the weight of a full-time officer. He did not believe this was about law enforcement or public safety but was a political issue. He hoped they could reconsider after the election and hoped that the people that voted dozens of times against public safety in Junction City would not be able to continue to serve on the Council. He added that Superintendent Stoops came in with a reasonable, nice proposal, and he was sorry that the Council shut the door on it but hoped they could get the word out to people because there was an election and that's when people were held accountable.

Councilor Wells thanked Superintendent Stoops for attending the meeting and noted that the Council's decision was not an easy one, and the SRO had also been discussed by the Public Safety Committee. He continued that the City had struggled for a while with the Police Department being understaffed. Even with the recent hire of three new officers, the department was still at a minimum, until the new officers could be fully trained. In the long run, the Council had to do what was right for the citizens of the City and also what was right for the Police Department. Being short staffed caused overtime and burnout and they did not want to lose officers just as they were making progress. Once they got through this year, the force would be in a better position.

Mayor Ficek stated that she allowed time for discussion on this, as it was such an important item. She continued that speaking for herself, she felt that if the Police Chief thought that the JCPD could cover having an officer in the schools and still protect the citizens, they should believe him, as he would know best because that was his job. She said that their children were the future and she felt strongly, especially with what was going on in the United States right now, that they needed to protect them. She added that the officer would not be at the school 24/7 and could be pulled from the school if needed. She expressed appreciation to Superintendent Stoops for coming to the meeting.

6. ODOT Projects Update

Brennan Burbank, Project Manager for the ODOT (Oregon Department of Transportation) ADA Project, distributed a Power Point document and provided an update on the ADA project in town. All the ADA ramps would be replaced in town from 1st Street to 17th Street, and the work would occur from October through April. They would minimize impacts by working into multiple seasons, closing a single lane, and/or working at night.

Councilor Washburne asked if they would be striping crosswalks. Mr. Burbank responded that he would look into that and provide a response to the Council.

Councilor Wells asked if there would be a patchwork of uneven areas that should be paved on Ivy, after this work was completed. Mr. Burbank responded that after the ADA ramps were constructed, maintenance staff would schedule a paving job afterwards to go through town and at that point would address any large issues with the roadway.

Mr. Burbank added that ODOT would be updating TripCheck weekly and that would identify what corners they would be working on.

7. Fire District Report

Fire Chief Brandon Nicol provided an update from the Fire District: Reminded everyone that the fire danger was currently extreme and would remain so for the next couple of weeks; they had provided assistance to the Oakridge area; year to date had 1500 calls for service, and 81% was for EMS (Emergency Medical Services), so were very busy; and they appreciated the support for the levy that passed in May, which would keep them on a good path for the next five years.

8. JCHS Noise Parade Street Closure Request

Director Kaping presented the request to close City streets for the annual Junction City High School Noise Parade. The Community Development Committee reviewed on September 7, 2022 and recommended approval.

MOTION: Councilor Washburne made a motion to approve the street closure request for the JCHS Homecoming Noise Parade on October 5, 2022 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., as conditioned in Attachment B. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wells and passed by unanimous vote of the Council.

9. Audit Arrangement Letter

Director Crocker presented the audit arrangement letter with Isler CPAs to do the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 financial audit.

MOTION: Councilor Wells made a motion to direct the City Administrator to sign the audit arrangement letter with Isler CPAs for Fiscal Year 2021-2022. The motion was seconded by Councilor Leach and passed by unanimous vote of the Council.

10. Springfield Jail Contract

Chief Morris presented the renewal contract for jail services with the City of Springfield. The Public Safety Committee reviewed on August 25, 2022 and recommended approval.

MOTION: Councilor Washburne made a motion to approve the Springfield Jail contract and to authorize the Police Chief to sign the necessary documents. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wells and passed by unanimous vote of the Council.

11. Scandinavian Festival Contract Discussion

Director Kaping reviewed that the Scandinavian Festival Association (SFA) had submitted a letter of request to change some language in the conditions of approval contract for the annual festival. Changes included removing the requirement for SFA to get a signature from affected businesses, when contacting them with festival information.

MOTION: Councilor Leach made a motion to approve the proposed changes as written to the Scandinavian Festival contract with the City of Junction City. The motion was seconded by Councilor Washburne and passed by unanimous vote of the Council.

12. Revolving Loan Fund Committee Appointment

Mayor Ficek appointed Randy Fletcher to fill the public at large position.

MOTION: Councilor made a motion to approve the Mayor's appointment to the Revolving Loan Fund Committee. The motion was seconded by Councilor and passed by unanimous vote of the Council.

13. Radar Trailer Purchase Request

Administrator Knope presented the request to purchase two radar trailers for the Police Department to let people know how fast they were traveling, as well as to collect data on number of vehicles/speeds in certain areas. Funding would come from Police Capital Reserve Fund, Capital Expenditure Line which has \$250,000 allocated.

MOTION: Councilor Washburne made a motion to authorize the purchase of two radar trailers in the amount of \$18,100. The motion was seconded by Councilor Ceniga and passed by unanimous vote of the Council.

14. Council Agenda Forecaster

Administrator Knope presented the forecaster. Council goals were added under Future Business items. The Water System Discussion was scheduled for the September 27, 2022 Work Session.

15. Committee Reports

Community Development Committee. (September 7, 2022). Councilor Ceniga reported:

- Discussed JCHS Noise Parade request and Welcome signs.

Public Safety Committee. (August 25, 2022). Councilor Gambie reported:

- Police Department monthly call log included 50 pages, with 15 to 20 calls per page, so Police Department was very busy.

16. Staff Reports

Director Crocker reported: Very focused on new Tyler Software conversion. Would stop using Springbrook software for Finance tomorrow. Received the second ARPA grant payment of around \$670,000; this was the second of two payments that went into the Water Capital Fund.

Director Kaping reported: Would be getting a bid from a sign company for welcome signs. Initial estimates were \$10,000 per sign for steel post and \$5,000 for wooden posts. Could hang plaques underneath for Festival, Function 4 Junction, etc. Public Works continued to replace sewer lines from the Master Plan Project and did a lot of work getting the new City Hall ready to be moved. Deal Street repaving would start Monday, September 19th.

Chief Morris reported: The three new recruits were working out well and had been going through policy review and training; they also had been interacting with community members and were slated for the academy in December but hoped openings would occur in October or November. Received a mutual aid request from the City of Oakridge to assist with evacuating people over the weekend and received good feedback from citizens. Had Burgers with Bob event with around 1400 people and gave out 200 bicycle helmets, free gun locks, child identification kits and had bicycle repair on site and a helicopter fly in from North Bend.

Administrator Knope reported: Wolf House Movers were on site and hoped to have the new City Hall moved next week. Everything was in place for the 150th Celebration for City staff obligations. Katy Trotter, Senior Center Aide, had submitted her resignation, and Administrator Knope would be bringing back the idea of having a Community Services Aide position, which would serve all the Community Services Departments.

17. Previous Month's Expenditures.

None.

18. Councilor Comments/Questions

Councilor Wells asked if the City ever sent Council members to the League of Oregon Cities conference. Administrator Knope responded that it depended on the topics and there were funds in the budget if a Council member wanted to attend.

Councilor Wells asked if there was a plan in place to fix the Police Department building structure problem on the south wall where water went into the facility when it rained. Administrator Knope responded staff was working on solutions and would be taking through Committee.

Councilor Wells noted that he had received several good citizen comments on the Burgers for Bob event, and he wanted to pass that along to Chief Morris and thank the department for this event. He continued that Mayor Ficek had been working hard on the 150th Birthday Celebration, and he appreciated the website created for the event and the information. He thanked Mayor Ficek and the Junction City Sesquicentennial Advisory Committee for all their hard work.

Mayor Ficek thanked Councilor Wells for his comments and expressed appreciation to Committee members, Scandinavian Festival Association, School District, and to the many others who had stepped up to plan the event.

Councilor Leach thanked the Council for their work. She noted that they made a tough decision on the SRO, but they were here for the citizens of Junction City and did not want their

officers to be overworked and burn out. She asked when the Council would meet the new officers. Chief Morris responded at the next regular Council meeting.

Councilor Leach asked about the status of the pigs and chickens complaints that had been voiced at a Council meeting. Chief Morris responded that both the pigs and chickens had been removed from the properties.

Councilor Leach expressed appreciation to all staff.

Councilor Washburne thanked everyone for attending the meeting and providing comments. He added that if they did not hear from citizens, they did not know what the community wanted.

Councilor Thomas echoed Councilor Washburne's comments and thanked staff. She continued that she felt they needed to have the City Attorney attend the meetings in person instead of virtually, as that did not feel as approachable and it would be nice to have them back in person.

19. Mayor's Comments

Mayor Ficek thanked everyone for attending the meeting and expressed appreciation to citizens for voicing comments. She reminded the Council of the activities for the four day 150th Birthday Celebration and asked them to please participate in the festivities. She added that she hoped to have good representation from the Council, which would be a good way to interact with citizens and hopefully make citizens feel more comfortable in coming to the Council with problems or praise.

20. Adjournment

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Kitty Vodrup, City Recorder

Beverly A. Ficek, Mayor