

MINUTES  
Warrenton City Commission  
Work Session – January 23, 2019  
9:00 a.m.  
Warrenton City Hall - Commission Chambers  
225 S. Main  
Warrenton, OR 97146

Mayor Balensifer called the work session to order at 9:00 a.m.

Commissioners Present: Mayor Balensifer, Rick Newton, and Pam Ackley

Excused: Tom Dyer and Mark Baldwin

Staff Present: City Manager Linda Engbretson, Community Development Director Kevin Cronin, Building Official Bob Johnston, Finance Director April Clark, Fire Chief Tim Demers, Police Chief Mathew Workman, Public Works Director Collin Stelzig, Harbormaster Jane Sweet, Library Site Manager Nettie-Lee Calog, and City Recorder Dawne Shaw

City Manager, Linda Engbretson noted the purpose of this meeting is for the Commission members to hear from the department heads regarding their achievements, challenges, and goals.

Police Chief Mathew Workman reviewed the Police Department's Community Building and Emergency Preparedness goals. He stated that aside from the regular officer duties, they are also assisting with Community Building-having a positive presence in the community. He presented the 2019 Priorities; stating he never gets a full staff for long and a huge priority will be police staffing, retention, and training. The conversation continued. He noted we have outgrown our facility; however, a new facility would be a huge undertaking that we cannot currently afford. He continued to say the department is looking into options for reconfiguring the space they currently have, as well as ideas to obtain more space in the future. He noted the increase in the homeless population- trying to figure out the best way to deal with the issue. The conversation continued on the matter. Chief Workman shared information he learned from the IACP conference. He stated we need to get more involved with getting people the resources they need. Mayor Balensifer asked how the Respite Center has been, in terms of call volume; Chief Workman reported the volunteer program is not working as intended. He stated that this has not been a help to the Police Officers because it does not serve as a drop-in or secured site. The discussion continued. Community Development Director, Kevin Cronin, stated that there is a bigger issue at hand, and a discussion of where a drop in center is going to go needs to be a discussion. He continued to note that someone is going to have to bear that burden, we have enough of a homeless population that there needs to be a drop in facility and it needs to be a policy discussion at the Mayoral level. The discussion continued. Mayor Balensifer noted the call volume increase, and asked for suggestions towards creating some sort of call volume tax that could be applied to businesses that we know will have high volume; or some sort of fee that will offset the cost for increased calls associated with the incoming developments. Ms. Engbretson suggested putting this on our goals list for further exploration. The conversation continued. Chief Workman noted he would like to allocate officers towards minimizing the

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current drug issues. Commissioner Newton offered his assistance to the Police Department. He stated he could potentially help secure additional space/storage and give a homeless report to the Commission and County Commissioners at a later date.

Fire Chief Tim Demers reviewed the presentation and handouts given to the Commission. He noted the record high calls the department experienced for the 2018 year. He stated the Fire Department is trying to trim down the calls and has passively been advising to not call the fire department with non-emergent calls, but to instead call Medix direct for transport. Mayor Balensifer asked if there is an ordinance we can pass to fine those entities, similar as to what we do for false alarms. The conversation continued. Chief Demers reviewed the Fire Department challenges as outlined in the agenda packet material. He highlighted the demands of the Fire Department Training, especially pertaining to the volunteer training. He noted that they recently lost five personnel due to the cost of living in this community, including one FEMA certified employee. He reported the department is currently completely out of space. He noted there is no more room for anything; including quarters for team bonding and doing shift work. He continued to explain that the Fire Department is at its capacity and everything is currently growing faster than the Fire Department; the advancements in the buildings, the technology-MDT, and we are buried. The conversation continued on the limitations of the volunteer fire fighters and MDT technology. Chief Demers noted the challenge of keeping the community safe from a tsunami. The conversation continued. He reviewed the department's many accomplishments as outlined in the agenda packet material. Noting the department provided fire presentations to the entire Warrenton Grade School, over 600 children; provided Fire Truck rides to 20 winning students at the Warrenton Grade School; participated in the Warrenton CERT preparedness drill; and were able to send an engine and crew out as part of the Clatsop County Wildland Taskforce to wildland conflagrations to help other communities. He stated they were able to win a \$333,000.00 Assistance to Firefighters Grant for a new Water Tender. He continued to report they have a cell phone based active 911 system to help respond to calls more effectively, have secured 6 sirens to provide early disaster warnings, and have secured a grant with the county to mount 2 sirens. He presented the 2019 visions for the Fire Department as outlined in the agenda packet material; noting priority will be looking for quarters to facilitate 24 hour personnel, and are looking into expanding the current facility to help facilitate other visions for 2019. He explained he would like to expand our technology, moreover, continue fine tuning the disaster plan. He noted taking advantage of other opportunities to secure several satellite phones, a portable water desalination unit for disaster operations, develop a procedure for crossing our rivers without bridges in a disaster, and continue to partner with the industrial park big box stores to shelter disaster refugees. The discussion continued. Chief Demers again noted that finding quarters for 24 hour personnel would eliminate some of the current problems. Mayor Balensifer suggested having a registry of AED equipment so the community and Emergency Responders know where they are located in the case of an emergency.

Library Site Manager Nettie-Lee Calog presented the challenges of the Library. She stated their biggest challenge of the year was space and storage. She noted they are trying get a shed at the Library's current location to gain space inside the building. She mentioned that the school board has not been responding to emails concerning the building issues. The conversation continued on the matter. She noted repairs that need to be done and have been done in the Library-

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highlighting the surrounding landscape looks neglected. She stated another big challenge has been not having enough paid staff, however, they just hired an additional staff member that will work 11.5 hours a week; this helps lift some of the burden. She also stated automation has been a big challenge. Ms. Calog noted that aside from their challenges the department has had great success. She reported they have a participant in the Easter Seals Program who works 24 hours per week, a Summer Reading Program, the passing of the levy, and the success of the Mayors' corner. Furthermore, many community members gave compliments on the hanging baskets. She reported they held a volunteer recruitment drive and have several new volunteers. She continued to report that a grant was awarded to automate. The automation has started, and although very challenging; it is expected to go live on February 10<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Calog announced her retirement - October 31<sup>st</sup>, and briefly discussed the process of finding a replacement. She discussed the 2019-2020 goals as: hooking into the city's computer system in the near future, to purchase two new computers, and more programs for children and adults are needed. She stated several grants have been pursued to make this happen. The Tuesday morning toddler story times and a middle school book club needs to continue. Discussion ensued on hooking into Seaside's Friend's Group, Ms. Calog reported no action has been taken, but it has been added to the list. She would also like to see free summer lunches for children at the Library, more hanging baskets, and the landscaping maintained on a regular basis.

Community Development Director Kevin Cronin reviewed the presentation as outlined in the agenda packet material. He stated he did not report on challenges because he would like to focus on the future. He reported first on livability; housing has done ADU amendments which was required by the State, the mayor served on the County Housing Taskforce, we got a body of work that will feed into our DLCD funded housing needs assessment, and will go to the Planning Commission on February 14<sup>th</sup>. He Continued to state we have over \$2.5 million residential value permits for 2018 and will rerun those numbers for the housing needs assessments. Ms. Engbretson noted that the numbers do not match. The conversation continued. Mr. Cronin continued reporting on Nuisance Abatement, noting that we are clearly making amazing progress with nuisances. He noted that he will be presenting the Derelict Building Ordinance as a discussion item at the first meeting of February. He began to report on the 2019 Traffic and Transportation per the agenda packet, noting they have made much progress and are really scrutinizing traffic studies as well as new developments. He stated he would like to work with Mr. Stelzig on getting a traffic engineer on call. Further discussion ensued regarding Economic Development. Mr. Cronin highlighted that great strides have been made with Homestay Lodging through the adoption of Ordinance No. 1224. He noted the RDI group has an active community driven volunteer group that Commissioner Ackley has been leading. He stated he is really focused on working with owners of the Downtown buildings to gain tenants. He highlighted some successes; Arnie's Café, Warrenton Builders Supply and Sandridge Construction. He reported the Goals and Projects; WURA substantial amendment and initiate redevelopment planning for the Peterson property, to develop a feasibility study for a master plan of "Forest Rim" Park, and in the future he would like the commission to consider a "Cap & Trade" policy for new mini storage units. He stated he would like to get in the community and focus on an event for Warrenton - create a signature, family friendly event - suggesting Sunday Streets in summer 2020!

Public Works Director Collin Stelzig noted that Public Works biggest improvement has been the staff. He reported everyone has had a great attitude and have become very involved. The conversation continued. Mr. Stelzig noted that Bob Bingham is going to retire and that's going to be a challenge. He noted we will need someone to replace him that has technical expertise of how to go in and run the treatment plant. Conversation ensued on the water fund. Mr. Stelzig noted that based off the master plan, there are a few changes that need to be made. He explained there are pipes that run a block with 40 customers and pipes that are a mile long that only have two customers on it. The conversation continued. Mayor Balensifer suggested potentially adding a surcharge to customers that are in remote locations. Mr. Stelzig agreed and noted it would be worth the time to figure out what the cost of providing service to the remote customers is. Mr. Stelzig presented the future projects; updating the levee emergency plan, noting if we had a levee breach, failure, or something we have never dealt with before it could go poorly. He continued to say that going with the theme of emergency preparedness he would like to plan this project for the summer so the department is better prepared. He presented the department achievements per the handout in the agenda packet. He stated that another challenge was hiring a local engineer, noting the problem is finding an affordable and qualified applicant. Therefore they have been hiring out consultants for the time being. He stated that priorities are figuring out the funding of the projects. He continued to explain that another treatment plant is going to cost \$4.5 million in the next couple of years, stressing the importance of needing to figure out how we will fund the project. The conversation continued on funding and future projects per the handout in the agenda packet.

Building Official Bob Johnston discussed Community Building. He stated he has been working with stakeholders through informal meetings to discuss customer service expectations and improvement strategies. He noted the department has begun streamlining checklists for commercial and residential projects to establish consistency and facilitate better customer service. He discussed Tiny Homes and Cluster Communities. Mr. Cronin stated that these need a housing needs assessment first. He also stated we have to work out our policy/regulations and then bring coding back for consideration. Mr. Johnston also noted the Visioning Update: He is looking to fund and develop the building department staff into a fully qualified team of two FTE inspectors, potentially a third that is half day and to continue to provide Janice training for certified Permit Tech through OPTA or ICC. He Stated there are still a few things that need to be included in our city ordinance, pertaining to fire code ; building information for site, CO2 strobes that will let outside responders know that there is a problem inside, and key boxes. Mr. Johnston discussed Downtown Improvements: Continue to work with Community Development Department (CDD) to accommodate downtown improvements that will help provide opportunities to streamline the review/permitting process, and E-Permitting will help with an easier path to provide access to permits and inspection results. He reviewed Emergency Preparedness; Complete update of Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) by September for submittal and approval by the Commission and incorporate into County EOP, he would like to continue with training to get certification as level 3 logistics section chief; continue to support local Emergency Preparedness and Awareness education, and lastly; work to further City/County in partnership for disaster preparedness.

Harbormaster Jane Sweet noted that her biggest issue is the aging dock system and finance issues. She provided the Commission with a sample of a newsletter her department would like to issue quarterly- reporting on updates. Ms. Sweet noted they have lost a lot of slips and are having to deal with years of neglect.

City Recorder Dawne Shaw reported Ms. Engbretson was appointed as City Manager as a big accomplishment. She noted that on the other hand the promotion left us short staffed. She stated she serves on the Records Management Committee (RMC). It really helps stay on top of records management issues. She noted the RMC completed updating disaster preparedness and recovery manual. She would like to implement an electronic records management system. Ms. Engbretson noted that our system is very antiquated and we have put this off for years, and this will be efficient and emergency records retrieval. Ms. Shawe noted we got the City Facebook page up and running. Ms. Engbretson noted that we will be adding a personal profile of an employee each month. Another challenge is the storage unit where we store records at. We would like to get a larger unit and combine the two smaller ones.


Finance Director April Clark discussed accomplishments for the year. She stated she has a hard working dependable staff- they are amazing. She noted all the departments she was able to help through the process of receiving Grants, as well as updating the water ordinance rates, and she also reported that the overall teamwork between departments has been an improvement. She continued to report that her department was able to add frequently asked questions pertaining to the finance department, which is intended to help customers have a better experience. The finance department has all their NIMS courses required. They have been trying to be more active within the community; involved in the tailgate party at the high school, also the department has been wearing their Warrenton High T-shirts in support of the School every Friday during the season. Commissioner Newton noted what a great idea he thought that was. Ms. Clark reported on Goals and challenges, stating many projects have been getting pushed aside from lack of funding. One of those projects has been the sewer ordinance-they would like to go through it, as well as the language in other ordinances to improve clarification. Conversation continued. She would like to find an alternative to bank card charges and taking payments over the phone. She noted that Springbook is working on additional functionality to take automatic payments which could be an option for the future. She stated her goal would be to increase efficiency and decrease costs by setting a policy that states what payments we accept. Conversation continued on different approaches. She stated she would like staff to have more training, reducing turn over, and groom them to take over positions as older employees step out towards retirement. She noted it's time to update Springbrook. The discussion continued. She noted many other updates and upgrades that need to be done- technology improvements including the phone system.

Ms. Engbretson noted all the positive changes we have going on and noted all the challenging choices that have to be made each year in regards to budget cuts. She continued to state that we keep getting further and further behind.

There being no further business, Mayor Balensifer adjourned the work session at 11:34 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Lindsay Duarte, Deputy City Recorder

APPROVED:



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Henry A. Balensifer III, Mayor

ATTEST:



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Dawne Shaw, City Recorder