

A regular meeting of the Astoria Common Council was held at the above place at the hour of 7:00 pm.

Councilors Present: Nemlowill, Jones, Price, Brownson, and Mayor LaMear.

Councilors Excused: None

Staff Present: City Manager Estes, Community Development Director Cronin, Parks and Recreation Director Cosby, Finance Director Brooks, Fire Chief Ames, Police Chief Spalding, City Engineer Harrington, Library Director Pearson, and City Attorney Henningsgaard. The meeting is recorded and will be transcribed by ABC Transcription Services, Inc.

## REPORTS OF COUNCILORS

**Item 3(a):** Councilor Jones reported that he participated in a plaque exchange on the Ruby Princess cruise ship. The 950-foot ship is relatively new from Italy and had about 3,000 people, who had great things to say about the volunteers who manned the docks and streets to welcome visitors. He was glad to see the visitors get off the boat, visit Astoria's businesses, spend money, and help the economy.

**Item 3(b):** Councilor Price reported that City Council just returned from a League of Oregon Cities conference in Portland. She recommended the book "*Shoot Like a Girl*" by Major Mary Jennings Hegar, who was the keynote speaker at the conference and an Air Force helicopter pilot. She spoke about how to be a woman in a man's world. Instead of complaining about discrimination, she just kept getting better until she was the best. She also attended an interesting seminar by Paul Blackburn, Mayor of Hood River, about housing. The seminar provided some models that Astoria could consider when they discuss housing and short-term rentals.

**Item 3(c):** Councilor Brownson reported that he had a good time at the League of Oregon Cities conference because it was a great opportunity to get an education on some statewide issues and interact with councilors, mayors, and staff from all over the state. All Oregon communities are in a similar situation when it comes to running cities in Oregon. It was helpful to discuss these issues and work towards clarity. He and Mayor LaMear went on board the Emerald Princess cruise ship to receive a plaque. The captain said he liked that Astoria felt genuine. This was a great remark by someone who stops at many towns. In the coming years, the cruise ship fleet will shift to include ships that carry up to 5,000 people. This will have both good and bad impacts on Astoria. Astoria received plaques from these two ships because they had not stopped in Astoria before. He believed more cruise ships had stopped in Astoria this year than in any previous year.

**Item 3(d):** Councilor Nemlowill reported that she attended the League of Oregon Cities conference and said it was great to see Director Cronin, Director Pearson, and City Manager Estes attend as well. She thanked the City Manager's Office for coordinating Council and Staff's attendance at the conference. She believed her fellow Councilors and Mayor LaMear made an excellent team. She attended classes and tours related to visioning and strategic planning because she strongly believed that Astoria needs to articulate a long-term vision for the city. She also attended a tour of a new mountain biking park created by the City of Portland. City leaders from many small cities in the state would like to build similar amenities. Even though Astoria's Parks and Recreation Department is trying to maintain priorities, she believed the urban forest had a lot of untapped potential. One day, she would like to see the Trails Master Plan implemented.

**Item 3(e):** Mayor LaMear reported that she continued to be amazed at the number of new facilities opening up. Patriot Hall looks like something out of the next century, the cancer center will have their grand opening next week, and the renovation of the Riviera building is exciting. She was gratified with the new facilities for drug abuse treatment. North Coast Recovery recently opened near the Police/Fire Station. The Jordan's Hope for Recovery rally, at the Astoria High School, was in honor of Jordan Strickland, a young man who died of an overdose. The rally included a walk around the track and many other activities. She was proud to have all five Council members at the League of Oregon Cities conference, which is unusual. Most cities just send the Mayor and maybe one Councilor. Each Council member went to different sessions so they could each

bring back different ideas. City Engineer Jeff Harrington and others took her to see the chair wells, which was much better than just looking at a diagram.

#### CHANGES TO AGENDA

There were none.

#### CONSENT CALENDAR

The following items were presented on the Consent Calendar:

- 5(a) City Council Minutes of 8/7/2017 and 8/23/2017
- 5(b) Addition of Job Title for Schedule A Salary Resolution 17-28 (Finance)
- 5(c) Creation of New Recreation Manager Position (Parks)
- 5(d) **Agreement for First Right of Refusal and Insurance with Riverfront Trolley Association (Finance)**

Councilor Brownson requested Item 5(d) be removed for further discussion.

**City Council Action:** Motion made by Councilor Jones, seconded by Councilor Nemlowill, to approve Items 5(a), (b), and (c) of the Consent Calendar. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Price, Jones, Nemlowill, Brownson, and Mayor LaMear; Nays: None.

#### **Item 5(d): Agreement for First Right of Refusal and Insurance with Riverfront Trolley Association (Finance)**

Councilor Brownson said the agreement gives the City 15 days notice of their first right of refusal on the sale of the trolley. He recommended the agreement specify 15 business days to give Council adequate time to consider a proposition.

City Attorney Henningsgaard confirmed there would be no problem amending the agreement as recommended.

**City Council Action:** Motion made by Councilor Brownson, seconded by Councilor Price, to amend the agreement for First Right of Refusal and Insurance with the Riverfront Trolley Association as follows:

- Section 1, Item 1.C. – City shall have 15 **business** days from the date that City receives the Notice and a copy of the Offer to notify RTA whether City elects to purchase pursuant to the terms of the Offer.

Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Price, Jones, Nemlowill, Brownson, and Mayor LaMear; Nays: None.

**City Council Action:** Motion made by Councilor Jones, seconded by Councilor Brownson, to approve Item 5(d) of the Consent Calendar, as amended. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Price, Jones, Nemlowill, Brownson, and Mayor LaMear; Nays: None.

#### REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

#### **Item 6(a): License to Occupy a Portion of the 9<sup>th</sup> Street Right-of-Way Adjacent to 912 Kensington (Public Work)**

The City has received a request from Jim and Sylvia Spence to occupy a 55 by 15 foot portion of the 9th Street right-of-way adjacent to their properties at 912 and 938 Kensington Avenue in order to construct a retaining wall. The retaining wall will facilitate access to the rear portion of 938 Kensington Ave. (Lots 1 & 2, Block 119, McClures).

City staff has reviewed the specifics of the request and are in support of the Spence's request with conditions.

Mr. Spence is aware of and in agreement with the conditions.

It is recommended that City Council approve a license to occupy a 55 foot by 15-foot portion of the 9th Street right-of-way adjacent to 912 and 938 Kensington for the purpose of constructing and maintaining a retaining wall.

Chris Farrar, 3023 Harrison Avenue, Astoria, asked if the wall would encroach on to the existing paved street.

City Engineer Harrington confirmed the wall would be located on the vegetative portion of the property.

**City Council Action:** Motion made by Councilor Jones, seconded by Councilor Nemlowill, to approve a license to occupy a 55 foot by 15 foot portion of the 9th Street right-of-way adjacent to 912 and 938 Kensington for the purpose of constructing and maintaining a retaining wall. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Price, Jones, Nemlowill, Brownson, and Mayor LaMear; Nays: None.

#### **Item 6(b): Parks Marketing Plan (Parks)**

The Parks and Recreation Department has never completed a marketing plan to support and grow its services and does not include a marketing division. The Department has seen increased use of its infant and child care programming due to the community's need for quality and affordable care, but no formal and organized methods have been used to support other programming that it offers such as sports, fitness, and the Aquatic Center. Roughly fifty-two percent of the Department's budget is generated directly from user fees; as such, strong marketing efforts will help increase participation and revenue to the Department's budget.

This document will serve as a guideline and reference point to begin increased marketing and communications efforts for Astoria Parks and Recreation; with the idea that this document will be updated annually and fluid and changing as we identify the customer market and the creation of additional programming. Inside you will find a comprehensive review of our current marketing and communications practices, and ways we can improve and maximize these efforts. In collaboration with our marketing contractor, we carefully crafted sales promotions for each of our revenue generating facilities as a marketing technique to incentivize customers to walk through our doors and build the Department's brand awareness. The promotions typically last for a set period of time and are used to achieve a specific purpose: such as purchasing a land/water pass, registering for child care, or encouraging patrons to attend our facilities. Last December, the Department implemented its first marketed special, which City Councilors recommended should be included in a formal marketing plan. If executed properly, special, discounts, and giveaways offer an easy way to generate interest with minimal investment and ultimately increasing revenue. Discounts or giveaways are also useful tools to assist partnering agencies while increasing our marketing efforts as the Parks and Recreation Department receives countless requests for donated items from community organizations each year providing an opportunity to assist our community in addition to prompting our services. The goal for this marketing plan is to offer a detailed guide for staff on marketing and communications implementation and improvements we as a department need to make to ensure that our customers continue to receive the information they need to make informed decisions and develop brand loyalty for the services that we provide. Having a plan written down that our staff can refer to, will be of great help as we amp up our efforts to increase department revenue.

It is recommended that City Council review the marketing plan and authorize the discounts and giveaways included in section five of the plan for the 2017 – 2018 fiscal year.

Director Cosby explained that an annual Marketing Plan was recommended in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The Marketing Plan was presented to the Park Board in June. She gave an outline of the plan and noted that it would be updated annually. The plan is intended to provide direction to Staff, but she wanted Council's approval on the discounts and giveaways identified in the plan. The discounts are a strategic effort to encourage more business and encourage Astorians to be more active and healthy.

Councilor Nemlowill said she was glad the Parks Department was investing in marketing because it was important to citizens during the master planning process. The plan will let locals and tourists know about parks and facilities that they might not be aware of while supporting revenue generation.

Mayor LaMear noted the following correction -

- Page 11, Business & Community Outreach, Number 1: Astoria/Warrenton Chamber of Commerce – Last ~~Wednesday~~ **Tuesday** of every month at the Wet Dog Café

Mayor LaMear confirmed the estimated costs listed on Page 19 were per year and asked if the Parks Department had Staff dedicated to marketing.

Director Cosby noted that Staff would not spend the full amount. The estimated budget just provides options and the chart on Page 21 provides Staff with guidance about how to prioritize tasks. If Staff ends up in a situation where it can invest more in marketing, the lower prioritized items could be implemented. Staff also explained that the Parks Department used to have a Communications Coordinator, but those services are currently being contracted out to a marketing consultant.

**City Council Action:** Motion made by Councilor Nemlowill, seconded by Councilor Brownson, to approve the Parks Marketing Plan for the 2017 – 2018 fiscal year, authorize the discounts and giveaways included in section five, and amend the plan as recommended by Mayor LaMear. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Price, Jones, Nemlowill, Brownson, and Mayor LaMear; Nays: None.

**Item 6(c): Irving at 33<sup>rd</sup> Bridge Replacement Project – ODOT Local Bridge Program Funding Application (Public Works)**

The Irving Avenue Bridge at 33rd Street is a timber girder structure with a concrete deck that was built in 1951. This bridge serves as part of an alternate route for Highway 30 and provides access to downtown for residents on the east side of Astoria. The bridge is showing signs of significant deterioration and is load-limited. Roadway width and railing on the Irving Ave. Bridge at 33rd St. do not meet current standards.

Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) has invited the City to submit a project application for the 2022-2024 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) under the Local Bridge Program (LBP). The Irving Avenue at 33rd St. Bridge is the last remaining bridge to be replaced within the Astoria City limits.

The bridge replacement cost is estimated at \$6,586,000. The City would be responsible for a 10.27% match, or an estimated \$670,000. Engineering staff has been working with the Finance Department to develop viable funding options to provide this future match. In the event the bridge is selected for LBP funding, the options for providing the City match will be presented to Council for consideration prior to accepting the funding.

According to the invitation to apply, a preliminary list of funded projects will be released in February 2018 and a final recommended list of funded projects will be issued in early 2019. If the Irving Ave. at 33rd St. Bridge is selected to receive this funding, construction could begin in 2023 or 2024.

It is recommended that Council authorize staff to submit an application to ODOT for funding in the 2022-2024 STIP through the Highway Bridge Program for the Irving Avenue at 33rd Street Bridge Replacement Project.

City Manager Estes explained that the bridge had deteriorated to the point that Staff must monitor the structure and reduce the allowed axle weights accordingly.

Councilor Nemlowill asked if bridges that were up to seismic standards could withstand a 9.0 earthquake.

City Engineer Harrington said no and explained that a 9.0 earthquake would likely induce never before seen forces, as well as landslides and tsunamis. ODOT seismic standards imposed on the Cascadia Subduction Zone are intended to get people off bridges safely. The bridges are designed to remain standing, but not necessarily remain usable after an earthquake.

Councilor Nemlowill said she was impressed with the Public Works Department's engineering and the Finance Department's work to get all of Astoria's bridges upgraded.

Mayor LaMear said she was concerned because the bridge is already significantly deteriorated and load limited, but the work would not begin for six years. She asked if the bridge was safe to drive across.

City Engineer Harrington said ODOT inspects the bridges annually and gives the City a list of necessary repairs. ODOT has recommended this bridge be repaired with new decking and rails, but the City has decided not to make these repairs because they are cost prohibitive. However, other repairs were more cost effective. City Manager Estes added that the waterfront bridges, which already have funding for repairs, are at a lower load rating. The Irving Avenue bridge is still rated at three tons, which is a sport utility vehicle.

**City Council Action:** Motion made by Councilor Jones, seconded by Councilor Brownson to authorize staff to submit an application to ODOT for funding in the 2022-2024 STIP through the Highway Bridge Program for the Irving Avenue at 33rd Street Bridge Replacement Project. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Price, Jones, Nemlowill, Brownson, and Mayor LaMear; Nays: None.

#### **NEW BUSINESS & MISCELLANEOUS, PUBLIC COMMENTS (NON-AGENDA)**

Robyn Koustik, 1636 Exchange Street, Astoria, Community Director for the Astoria Armory, said the Armory was having a huge problem with the homeless population. For two years, she has worked with homeless people, dedicated resources, provided meals and clothing, and opened the Armory up to other agencies that provide resources. However, the Armory is being terrorized by property destruction and break ins. She has to clean up human feces, drug paraphernalia, sleeping bags, and furniture left as trash around the entire exterior of the building. She is the Armory's only employee and she is often very frightened to walk into the building because there have been so many break-ins. She has called the police three times in ten days. She asked City Council to develop a game plan for protecting business owners and the community while working with the homeless population. The city needs leadership and communication between both sides. She is on both sides, but is giving up on helping the homeless while maintaining safety. She did not have an answer, but the entire neighborhood was working together to protect properties. No one is holding the homeless accountable and no one is helping the business owners. Employees are desperate for help with the homeless population right now.

Chief Spalding said he would like to speak with Ms. Coustic about the crime related issues so that the Police Department could deal with them separately. The homeless issue is a much larger issue and a social issue with many facets. He believed this was one of the biggest problems in Astoria and he has been directed by City Manager Estes to look into and assess the situation. He is aware of how the problem impacts businesses and tourism, but also that people are in need of services. He wanted to make people feel safer.

Mayor LaMear added that the League of Oregon Cities had many sessions on homelessness and affordable housing. Every community in the state is facing the same problems and it takes a lot of money to get a handle on the homeless issues.

Councilor Jones thanked Ms. Coustic for working with the homeless at the Armory over the last several years. The Friends of the Astoria Armory provided a venue for a variety of resources, including meals for the homeless provided seven days a week. After almost a year, the meals became an unsupportable program. Then, Riverfolk provided lunch for the homeless every Sunday until that became unsupportable as well. The safety and security issues that arose were too much for the volunteers to handle.

Councilor Price said it was alarming to hear Ms. Coustic speak about the homeless in this way because she worked hard for the homeless population. She noticed that the alcoves at the Merwyn are now tent cities and she would like to see this addressed.

City Manager Estes said Staff reached out to the property owner about the situation.

Councilor Nemlowill encouraged Ms. Coustic to let the City know if she had any ideas for solutions. The police have spent so much time with individuals who commit misdemeanor crimes, but fail to pay their fines. They have no address and are matrixed out if they do something bad enough to go to jail. She had no idea how address the problems.

Sean Fitzpatrick, 1046 Grand Avenue, Astoria, said he ran into a tenant on his way to the City Council meeting who asked him to speak about the homeless shelter that used to be in the neighborhood. This tenant had previously written a letter to Mayor LaMear in favor of the shelter staying in the neighborhood, but has since changed her mind.

City Manager Estes confirmed that the appeal period for the conditional use permit had not yet ended.

Mr. Fitzpatrick said he understood and noted that this tenant encouraged City Council to think about the precedent it was setting for allowed uses in certain types of neighborhoods. We all have to think about what we want Astoria to be like.

The City Council recessed into Executive Session at 7:42 pm [42:04].

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

### Item 8(a): ORS192.660 (3) – Labor Negotiations

The City Council will meet in executive session to discuss labor negotiations.

The City Council reconvened the regular session at 8:10 PM.

City Manager Estes presented Council with a two-year contract with the Parks General Employees Union and a three-year contract with the Public Works Department Union. If Council approved the collective bargaining agreement with the Parks General Employees Union, the GIS Specialists position should be included.


**City Council Action:** Motion made by Councilor Brownson, seconded by Councilor Price to accept the collective bargaining agreement between the City of Astoria and the Parks General Employees Union to include the new position of GIS Specialist. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Price, Jones, Nemlowill, Brownson, and Mayor LaMear; Nays: None.

**City Council Action:** Motion made by Councilor Jones, seconded by Councilor Price to accept the collective bargaining agreement between the City of Astoria and the Public Works Department Union. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Price, Jones, Nemlowill, Brownson, and Mayor LaMear; Nays: None.

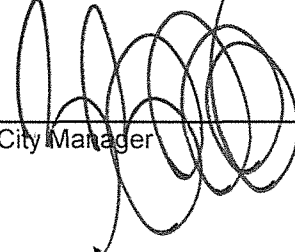
## ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:12 pm.

### ATTEST:

  
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Finance Director

### APPROVED:

  
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City Manager