

A special meeting of the Astoria Common Council was held at the above place at the hour of 10:00 am.

Councilors Present: Brownson, Herman, Rocka, West, and Mayor Jones attended via Zoom.

Councilors Excused: None

Staff Present: City Manager Estes, Parks and Recreation Director Dart-McLean, and Finance Director Brooks. The meeting was recorded and livestreamed, and will be transcribed by ABC Transcription Services, Inc.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

Item 3(a): Amendment to Parks Janitorial contract and Update to Recology Garbage Collection Services

The scope of work for this year's restroom cleaning contract was much smaller than previous years due to a large increase in the cost to procure a cleaner to carry out the work. Currently the contract has the Downtown and Doughboy restrooms being cleaned three times per week. Parks has received feedback that this frequency is inadequate to keep up with the volume of uncleanness generated at those sites, a perspective that has been shared by citizens, members of the Astoria Downtown Historic District Association, and vendors from the Sunday Market.

The State of Oregon has announced a reimbursement program for services or actions enacted that help mitigate or lessen the spread of COVID 19 and additional janitorial services has been identified as an eligible activity. To this end, staff has obtained an updated cost for the janitorial contractor, Associated Cleaning Services, to increase the frequency of services from three days per week to five at both locations starting in September and ending on December 31st, 2020. The State funds are only available through the end of 2020, hence the services returning to three times per week in January 2021. The additional cost of these extra visits totals \$11,258 and would bring the total contract amount with ACS from \$46,439.25 to \$57,697.25. The cleaning contract with ACS will expire on June 30, 2020.

Another recent issue that has been raised related to sanitary conditions is that the higher amount of to-go and take-out food being purchased at local restaurants has led to garbage cans along the Riverwalk and the Downtown area being filled to capacity at a higher rate. After sharing these concerns with Recology (they empty these receptacles via the franchise agreement the City has in place with them), they have generously offered to increase their frequency of services at no extra charge. In addition to their regular routes being carried out, they will be adding trash removal services on Tuesdays and Thursdays to the cans on the Riverwalk from the Riverwalk Inn east to the Safeway trolley stop. Currently, the Riverwalk receptacles are emptied four times per week: Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday. The City Attorney has approved the contract amendment to form.

It is recommended that Council approve Amendment #1 to the contract with ACS to increase the frequency of services from three to five per week September 1 - December 31, 2020.

City Manager Estes explained that the additional scope of work would end on December 31st because of the commensurate State reimbursement program. Staff will reassess the situation in December to see whether the State will extend the program. If the Council wants additional restroom cleaning for the rest of the fiscal year, Staff hopes to have a better understanding of where resource revenues from transient lodging taxes will be by that time.

Councilor Rocka asked if Staff was satisfied with this new contractor's work. Director Dart-McLean replied yes and explained that ACS had received a contract with the City the first year the Parks Department starting contracting out janitorial services in 2017. They also cleaned the recreation center a few years ago and have been very good to work with. The company is based out of Newport, but hires local cleaners. He had not heard any complaints since their contract began.

Councilor West asked if the State reimbursement funding is applied for as a grant and then distributed in mid-September. City Manager Estes responded that the City had already received some of the funding for COVID issues. Director Brooks added that the City's contract with the State goes through the end of the year. The City has been drawing down funds from the program for the last couple of months for wages and benefits related to ~~planning and response to COVID and expenses related to the emergency childcare services.~~ The City has been able to buy a couple of laptops for telecommuting and get the remainder amounts for upgrades for the Zoom meetings. The funding also covers personal protective equipment. It has been difficult for Staff to keep up with all of the changes. New information is sent out on a regular basis from the League of Oregon Cities and the State. However, the State has made this program very easy and has published a portal that the City can put their drawdowns into. This opportunity for enhanced cleaning for public health is one of the categories under the treasury guidelines that the City can draw down on, but it must be above and beyond the City's budget. The City had already budgeted for restroom services, but because of COVID and the constraints that put on the number of times cleaning could be done during the week, this is above and beyond what was budgeted. Staff hoped the program would be extended beyond the end of the year.

City Manager Estes asked if budgeted funds must be spent first. Director Brooks said the City already has a contract for the budgeted amount through Promote Astoria for the regular cleaning. The amount to be reimbursed is above that and would be drawn down immediately.

City Council Action: Motion by Mayor Jones, second by Councilor Brownson, to Amendment #1 to the contract with ACS to increase the frequency of services from three to five per week September 1 - December 31, 2020. Motion passed unanimously. Ayes: Mayor Jones, Councilors West, Herman, Rocka, and Brownson. Nays: None.

Councilor Brownson said he appreciated Recology offering to pick up more garbage. At the Sunday Market, he noticed the overflow of garbage cans, so this was really timely. He recommended that additional garbage cans be placed downtown for the summer. He asked for an update on the portable restrooms. Director Dart-McLean noted that the garbage cans on the Riverwalk would now be emptied six days a week, up from four days a week. Recology has been a tremendous community partner. The Public Works garbage cans near the Riverwalk on the sidewalks downtown will be emptied an additional day each week as well. He added that garbage cans downtown have a smaller orifice, so larger items block the orifice making the can look over full even though the can might be empty. Placing more cans will not stop that issue.

City Manager Estes stated that the City had applied for a grant to fund the Portland Loos and the grant program has been put on hold.

Director Dart-McLean added that the grant funds were tied to lottery revenues. When lottery machines were shut down, the State focused on making sure they had enough funds for the current grantees. The State does not yet know when the program would start up again. The City had submitted an application prior to COVID, but the presentation portion of the application process and all subsequent steps would be rescheduled. As far as he knew, the City would not have to reapply.

NEW BUSINESS, MISCELLANEOUS, PUBLIC COMMENTS

Councilor Rocka said he had received a couple of calls from people asked if changes had taken place at the post office. They have reported that mail has been slower than usual and they are concerned about the election. He asked if the Council could get some information from the local post office about if and how their operations have changed. He also wanted to know if the County planned to make extra drop boxes available.

Mayor Jones stated he could call the local postmaster, but he believed the postmaster would be reluctant to say anything and would refer him to the public affairs officer in Washington D.C. He had not noticed any changes with local mail and had not received any comments indicating local mail was being delayed. He did not believe the County had planned on more drop boxes, nor did he believe Astoria needed more drop boxes.

Councilor Rocka said it would be useful for people to have guidance about what they should do to make sure their ballot is counted.

Councilor Brownson believed the State should be taking the lead on this issue. He agreed that there were plenty of drop boxes that were conveniently located.


Mayor Jones added that Councilors could encourage people on social media or by writing a letter the editor of the newspaper to vote early.

City Manager Estes noted a special City Council work session had been scheduled for August 31st at 1:00 pm.

ADJOURNMENT

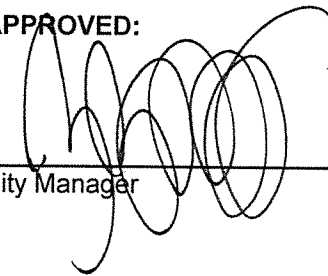
There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:25 am.

ATTEST:



Finance Director

APPROVED:



City Manager

