

A regular meeting of the Astoria Common Council was held at the above place at the hour of 7:05 pm.

Councilors Present: Brownson, Rocka, Herman, Hilton, and Mayor Jones.

Councilors Excused: None

Staff Present: City Manager Estes, Parks and Recreation Director Dart-McLean, Community Development Director Leatherman, Finance Director Brooks, Fire Chief Crutchfield, Police Chief Spalding, Public Works Director Harrington, City Engineer Crater, City Forester Hayes, Library Director Pearson, and City Attorney Henningsgaard. The meeting was live streamed and recorded, and will be transcribed by ABC Transcription Services, LLC.

REPORTS OF COUNCILORS

Item 4(a): Councilor Rocka reported that he spoke with several people at his Meet the Councilor event, which was well attended. Discussion topics included homelessness, the City's permitting process, vacant and dilapidated houses, and public amenities in neighborhoods. He reported that Oregon began reporting more daily COVID infections than during the pandemic. Clatsop County had been reported more cases in a day than they used to report in a month. He encouraged people to get vaccinated and wear masks.

Item 4(b): Councilor Hilton reported that he attended the National Night Out event at Emerald Heights, which included live music and food. He visited with people in his neighborhood who are concerned about traffic and COVID. He reported that businesses were looking for employees and restaurants were having a hard time filling vacancies.

Item 4(c): Councilor Brownson reported that he attended the League of Oregon Cities Small Cities meeting to hear updates on the most recent legislative session. He also attended a meeting with Representative Bonamici. He was in the Regatta boat parade and there were more people on the river front than he had ever seen. He reported that last week there were 171 cases of COVID in Clatsop County. He believed the Daily Astorian should be publishing facts about COVID.

Item 4(d): Councilor Herman reported that she had a Meet the Councilor event where she discussed the permitting process and a downtown business. She attended the monthly membership meeting of the Astoria Downtown Historic District Association (ADHDA), where a report was given on the restoration of the Rose Briar Mansion. She, Mayor Jones, and Councilor Brownson also attended the meeting with Representative Bonamici, who advocated for the City to get several million dollars in federal infrastructure funds.

Item 4(e): Mayor Jones reported that he attended a meeting with City Manager Estes, Director Harrington, and Representative Bonamici about a grant for landslide mitigation project near 18th and Franklin. Better drainage will prevent the soil from getting too saturated during heavy rainfall. He spoke at the Seaman's Memorial during the Regatta at Maritime Memorial Park. He heard from citizens who tried to get hotel rooms over the weekend that rates at the chain hotels were \$400 to \$550 per night. He was glad to hear hotels were recouping some of the losses they incurred when they were closed last year. He attended the Change of Command at Coast Guard Sector Columbia River.

CHANGES TO AGENDA

No changes.

CONSENT CALENDAR

The following items were presented on the Consent Calendar:

- 5(a) City Council Minutes of July 19, 2021
- 5(b) Maritime Memorial Committee Minutes of July 21, 2021

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Brownson, seconded by Councilor Herman, to approve the Consent Calendar. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Brownson, Herman, Rocka, Hilton, and Mayor Jones; Nays: None.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

Item 6(a): Consider Updates to Public Works Job Descriptions for Improvements to Operations Management Structure

Last fiscal year, the Public Works Department hired John Ostrowski, a public works management consultant, to assist staff in a review of the Public Works Operations Division for the City of Astoria. The goal was to examine ways to streamline the organizational structure and look for ways to be more efficient, improve training opportunities for employees, provide succession planning in key positions, improve employee morale related to workload and to develop a strategy to deal with backlogged projects and maintenance.

Mr. Ostrowski recommended a reconfiguration of the traditional Superintendent Assistant Superintendent structure to a dual management structure which includes a Public Works Internal Operations Manager and a Public Works Field Operations Manager of equal authority and pay range. This structure allows each manager to focus more on their individual responsibilities while still being partners much like the traditional structure. These improvements will allow staff to devote more time to proactive operations to meet critical and ongoing needs of the City.

This fiscal year Mr. Ostrowski will begin work to examine our Engineering Division. The City planned for phased review of operations to provide the opportunity to focus on each division separately and to allow the Engineering Division to refill vacant positions. The second phase will also examine coordinated workflows between the Operations Division and Engineering Division. It is recommended that Council adopt the creation of the Public Works Internal Operations Manager position to replace the Public Works Superintendent position and creation of the Public Works Field Operations Manager position to replace the Public Works Assistant Superintendent position and associated job descriptions as presented.

Director Harrington stated this was consistent with the ongoing City Council Goal to explore options for revenue generation, expense reduction, and streamlining internal processes to allow Staff to focus on priorities. So far, Staff has implemented a permit tracking system, a complaint tracking system, computerized safety data sheet information and standard operating procedures. Mr. Ostrowski evaluated the Department's organizational structure, training opportunities, succession planning, Staff morale, and workloads. He has recommended that the two upper management positions be reorganized for depth, structure, and redundancy. He also recommended work order software, which would allow the Department to document, manage, and report on assets. Another recommendation was to implement the Public Works Management Practices Manual, which includes best practices for managing information. This entire process will build resiliency at a minimal cost.

Mayor Jones called for public comments. There were none.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Rocka, seconded by Councilor Brownson, to adopt the creation of the Public Works Internal Operations Manager position to replace the Public Works Superintendent position and creation of the Public Works Field Operations Manager position to replace the Public Works Assistant Superintendent position and associated job descriptions as presented. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Brownson, Herman, Rocka, Hilton, and Mayor Jones; Nays: None.

Item 6(b): Consideration of Salary Resolution Establishing Basic Compensation Plan: Revision of Positions and Wage Adjustment for Public Works Department

Staff positions and associated compensation are detailed in the "Resolution Establishing a Basic Compensation Plan for the Employees of the City of Astoria and Establishing Regulations for the Placement of Present Employees within the Wage and Salary Schedules Provided". Whenever there are changes in positions, whether a position is being deleted, added or redefined; or whether a change in compensation is proposed; such changes are adopted by resolution.

The proposed resolution implements changes referenced in another item on this City Council agenda. It is proposed the job title for Public Works Superintendent be updated to Public Works Internal Operations Manager which will remain at Range 42 (\$73,599 - \$89,460) In addition, it is proposed the job title and pay range be updated for Public Works Assistant Superintendent from Range 38 (\$66,717 - \$81,095) to Range 42 (\$73,599 - \$89,460) to reflect the equal level of authority for these positions within their area of concentration. It is recommended that Council adopt the Salary Resolution as presented.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Brownson, seconded by Councilor Herman, to adopt the Salary Resolution as presented. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Brownson, Herman, Rocka, Hilton, and Mayor Jones; Nays: None.

Item 6(c): License to Occupy a Portion of the Parker Place and 14th Street Right-of-Way Adjacent to 1390 Jerome Avenue

The City has received a request from Charissa Wiser to occupy a portion of Parker Place and 14th Street right-of-way adjacent to 1390 Jerome Avenue in order to construct a landscape/retaining wall for the purpose of erosion control and landscaping. City staff has reviewed the application and can support issuance of a License to Occupy (LTO) with conditions. It is recommended that City Council approve a license to occupy, subject to the above conditions, for a landscape/retaining wall in the Parker Place and 14th Street right-of-way adjacent to 1390 Jerome Avenue for the purpose of erosion control and landscaping.

Councilor Rocka asked if there was a reason for building the retaining wall in the right-of-way rather than on private property. City Engineer Crater explained that the proposed wall would be located at the back of the existing landscaping for support, to balance the grading in the yard, and contain the landscaping. Putting the wall on the property line would cut out a portion of the yard, which would not be a good fit considering the layout of the property. Director Harrington added that most retaining walls have a footing, which would also be located in the right-of-way. This situation is very common all around town.

Mayor Jones called for public comments. There were none.

Councilor Brownson said he believed that historically, a lot of private property improvements went into rights-of-way. He asked if there was any record of them. He also asked if the City cared about retaining walls that have been located in City rights-of-way for 50 years. Director Harrington said Astoria has every variety of this situation that could be imagined, including situations where the back of a sidewalk is the property line in places where the property line is 50 or 100 feet back, like on Niagara where the straw terraces were built for landscaping. The City's Code requires the property owner to maintain the right-of-way. There are also situations where landslides have moved a home into a right-of-way. The issues are cleaned up by Staff when a property owner applies for a permit to make improvements, but the City is very forgiving about allowing improvements to remain because they were built before the regulations.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Brownson, seconded by Councilor Herman to approve a license to occupy, with conditions, for a landscape/retaining wall in the Parker Place and 14th Street right-of-way adjacent to 1390 Jerome Avenue for the purpose of erosion control and landscaping. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Brownson, Herman, Rocka, Hilton, and Mayor Jones; Nays: None.

Item 6(d): Fire, Police and Public Works Department Vehicle and Equipment Purchases

The Fire, Police and Public Works Departments requested and were allocated budgetary resources to purchase new vehicles and equipment in the approved budget for FY 2021 -2022. The Fire, Police and Public Works Departments solicited quotes for six vehicles and one piece of equipment:

- 2022 Ford Explorer K8A AWD Police Interceptor Utility 3.3L Hybrid including additional emergency response items for the Fire Department at a total cost of \$53,275.32;
- Two 2021 Ford Explorer K8A AWD Police Interceptor Utility 3.3L Hybrids to include vehicle up fitting with emergency response equipment at a total cost of \$64,060.57 each;
- 2022 Ford F-550 with dump body at a total cost of \$53,414.36 for Public Works;
- 2022 Ford F-350 with utility truck body at a total cost of \$64,479.95;

- 2021 Ford Ranger 4x4 Super-Cab at a total cost of \$25,438.59 and Excavator with a Trailer at a total cost of \$99,932.75.

It is recommended that Council authorize the purchases as outlined and authorize the City Manager to sign all pertinent contracts.

Mayor Jones asked for details about the Oregon Department of Administrative Services (DAS) program, how Staff chose a dealership, and how Staff chose a service provider for the upgrades. City Manager Estes explained that City Code allows for cooperative procurements where governmental entities pool resources to make purchases through a State contract. The Oregon DAS cooperative procurement program being used for this purchase is through the Houston Galveston Area Council of Governments. The dealers and vendors are specified by the entities doing the collective buying.

Councilor Brownson asked if the older police vehicles would be decommissioned. He also wanted to know if the equipment in the old vehicles would be reused in the new vehicles. Chief Spalding said Staff tries to reuse as much equipment as possible. The cage that separates the officer from the prisoner cannot be reused because changing the size and shape to fit a new model is not practical. Most of the lighting will change and outdate police radios will be replaced.

Councilor Brownson asked how large the excavator and how many excavators the City already owned. Director Harrington stated the City did not own any excavators. Staff would like to start doing more of its own work because contracting the work is so expensive. There are some large grant funded projects coming up and this excavator will make Staff much more efficient. The excavator is an average size.

Councilor Herman asked if police vehicles were not useful after 100,000 miles. Chief Spalding explained that police vehicles are often driven in adverse conditions. So, in addition to the mileage, there is wear and tear on the vehicles. The vehicles also idle for substantial amounts of time. In many cases, the vehicles are handed down to other departments and continue to be used.

Mayor Jones called for public comments. There were none.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Rocka, seconded by Councilor Hilton to authorize Fire, Police, and Public Works vehicle and equipment purchases as proposed by Staff and authorize the City Manager to sign all pertinent contracts. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Brownson, Herman, Rocka, Hilton, and Mayor Jones; Nays: None.

Item 6(e): 14th Street Park Pier – Authorization to Award Engineering Services Contract

The 14th Street Park Pier is located north of the Riverwalk in the 14th Street right -of-way and provides a great opportunity for viewing the Columbia River and Astoria's waterfront. The structure is only intended for pedestrian use. In 2019 an extensive structural inspection was completed by DOWL, consulting engineers. This effort concluded that significant repairs are needed to ensure it can continue to be utilized safely. DOWL provided a proposal for services that includes design, permitting, and bidding assistance necessary to correct the deficiencies noted in the inspection report. The estimated cost of this design work is \$88,909. Funds for this work were budgeted for this fiscal year (FY21/22) and are available in the Promote Astoria Fund. It is recommended that City Council approve a personal services contract with DOWL for engineering services to support repairs on the 14th Street Park Pier in the amount of \$88,909.

Councilor Herman said she received a comment from a constituent who felt the engineering contract was considerable. She asked why the contract was not awarded to a firm that could handle the design, engineering, and construction work. Director Harrington explained that in a design build contract, the City would award a contract for the construction and the contractor would be in charge of hiring an engineering firm to do the design. The design build method is not used for public improvements because it a problematic way to do a project. Engineer Crater added that DOWL has a lot of experience inspecting this structure. So, they have already collected a lot of information and have a good idea about how to approach the design. The \$88,000 includes more than just the design, like the environmental permitting. It will be better to get the environmental permitting out of the way up front so that the City knows what is needed when soliciting bids from contractors. This will result in more competitive construction bids. The City budgeted about \$350,000 for the entire project. The

construction may not begin until the next fiscal year, but the project timeline will be refined as the design process is completed. Staff anticipated having DOWL available for construction. Construction was not included with this contract because City Staff will be able to do some of the inspection services and construction oversight prior to the next phase, which will save money. Director Harrington noted that the City does not have as much control over the project or the price with a design build contract.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Brownson, seconded by Councilor Herman, to approve a personal services contract with DOWL for engineering services to support repairs on the 14th Street Park Pier in the amount of \$88,909. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Brownson, Herman, Rocka, Hilton, and Mayor Jones; Nays: None.

PRESENTATION

Item 7(a): Forest Resources Management Plan

City Forester Hayes gave a PowerPoint presentation on revisions to the City's watershed Forest Resource Management Plan. His presentation included background information on the Bear Creek Watershed, types of management plans, the City's current plan, proposed revisions, the revision workflow, and next steps. He and Staff also shared information about the watershed's resilience to wildfires, research used to estimate and monitor waterflow from the watershed, and the impact of climate change on forests.

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

Councilor Hilton recommended the Council discuss an alternative truck route from John Day that would keep trucks from driving through downtown.

Mayor Jones responded that a by-pass had been considered by Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and they published a position paper on the topic.

City Manager Estes noted that the ODOT position paper was published as part of the City's Transportation System Plan (TSP) update. The updated plan includes City Council's support of a by-pass, as well as ODOT's opposition to a by-pass. ODOT has indicated they do not have the necessary resources to move forward on a by-pass and that other priorities have taken precedence.

Mayor Jones suggested a work session to review the history of the City's efforts to get a by-pass. Director Harrington added the TSP emphasizes that a by-pass is a priority for Astoria. There is also a video documenting the need for a by-pass. However, Pipeline Road transverses over 40 landslide zones, is very narrow, and has curves and grades that would be dangerous and difficult for trucks. Therefore, any by-pass project would be extremely expensive.

Mayor Jones said that in addition to cost, there were environmental issues and private property ownership issues. It is also important to consider that some communities thrive after getting a by-pass while other communities have died after a by-pass was built, so, the issues are complex.

City Manager Estes noted that a by-pass would be a larger, multijurisdictional project that would also need to include Warrenton and unincorporated Clatsop County.

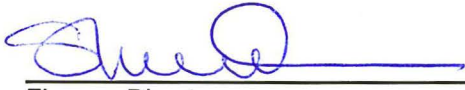
Lisa Morley Astoria, stated she had talked to a lot of people about traffic, but no one has supported a by-pass because it could devastate local businesses. There is another location that designates specific times that truck and delivery traffic is allowed. She believed the City should research more alternative options because a by-pass is not the only way to relieve traffic.

Mayor Jones explained that the City is limited as to what it can mandate on a State highway.

ADJOURNMENT


There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.

ATTEST:



Finance Director

APPROVED:



City Manager