

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

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

Councilors Absent: Brownson

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, Assistant City Engineer Moore, Library Director Pearson, and City Attorney Henningsgaard. The meeting was live streamed and recorded, and will be transcribed by ABC Transcription Services, LLC.

PRESENTATIONS

Item 3(a): Waterfront Bridges Replacement Project – DJC Top Projects Award

Director Harrington provided background information on the Waterfront Bridges Replacement Project, which involved replacing and repairing the street ends between 6th and 11th Streets. The project was primarily funded by State and Federal grants. He commended Staff all of their hard work and time spent on the project.

Assistant City Engineer Moore announced that the Waterfront Bridges Replacement Project won the Daily Journal of Commerce (DJC) Top Projects Award. In June 2021, the DJC recognized the most outstanding projects completed in the region in 2020. There were 17 categories and the top three projects in each category were recognized at their awards ceremony. Over 100 projects were submitted for each category. Astoria's Waterfront Bridges Replacement Project was awarded first place in the infrastructure category. She displayed on the screen a snapshot of the DJC's article on the project, which listed the design team members, consultants, contractors and subcontractors. Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and Astoria Staff were not listed, but every City Department participated in the project, including the library. There were challenges and a lot of permitting was necessary, but she was proud of the project and proud of everyone who worked on, supported, and endured the project. She presented the Mayor and City Council with the 2021 DJC Top Project First Place Award in the Infrastructure Category for the City of Astoria Waterfront Bridges Replacement Project.

Mayor Jones said the project was remarkable and the City and residents should be proud to have such a talented Public Works Department. The project deserved this recognition. Several businesses were affected and, in some cases, negatively during the construction. The contractors and Staff remained flexible to accommodate the businesses as much as possible, but in the long run all of the businesses will benefit from the work.

REPORTS OF COUNCILORS

Item 4(a): Councilor Hilton stated that he had a quiet holiday other than the ice storm. He thanked Public Works, Clatsop County, and ODOT for keeping the roads safe so people could travel. He also thanked the service workers and everyone who worked during the holiday season who had to commute through the weather to provide services to the region. He had coffee with people in his neighborhood and listened to their concerns and optimism about the future of the community.

Item 4(b): Councilor Herman recognized Engineer Moore for leading the project to shore up the six waterfront bridges, which was a complex, \$15 million project. It was amazing that the City was able to get all six bridges funded so that Astoria taxpayers only had to pay about 10 percent of the costs. She was very appreciative that the waterfront access for those six bridges had been maintained for the foreseeable future. She thanked Public Works for working through the night to plow and sand the roads during the unusual snowstorm.

Item 4(c): Councilor Rocka reported that he appreciated Public Works, Director Harrington, Engineer Moore and everyone who worked on the waterfront bridges project.

Item 4(d): Mayor Jones thanked Public Works, Fire Department and Police Department for helping out during significant weather. He noted that the City Council had a full year ahead and a work session would be held to prioritize goals. Major projects for 2022 include continued work on the Port Waterfront Master Plan project, moving forward on the Library Renovation Project, and the redevelopment of Heritage Square. There is an election in November so there could be changes to the Council in 2023. However, this Council will continue to fulfill its roles and responsibilities throughout the year. He announced that the Council would be reviewing the product from the recent Planning Commission meeting at the first City Council meeting in February, which has to do with the redevelopment of Heritage Square. Over the last few days, commentary on social media has been interesting. People seem to struggle to find out what the City Council is working on. He encouraged people to talk to their neighbors about what is happening with the City. He recently posted on social media that the City Council meetings are always the first and third Mondays of every month at 7:00 pm. If Monday is a holiday, the meeting is on Tuesday. Any citizen can go online and look at the meeting agenda a few days before each meeting and can attend meetings virtually or in person. Links to the recordings and transcripts of every meeting are posted on his Facebook page and the City's website. There is also a sign-up list if people want to be informed about meetings of any of the boards and commission. It was interesting to see a few comments indicating no one knew that housing was being considered for Heritage Square even though it has been a City Council goal since January 2017. Every year for the last five years, each City Council has reaffirmed the redevelopment of Heritage Square with housing as a top priority. The topic has been in the Daily Astorian on numerous occasions as well.

CHANGES TO AGENDA

No changes.

CONSENT CALENDAR

The following items were presented on the Consent Calendar:

- 6(a) City Council Meeting Minutes of December 6, 2021
- 6(b) Commission Meeting Minutes for Review

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

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

Item 7(a): Second Reading and Consideration of Adoption of Ordinance Regarding Proposed Ward Redistricting

The Council held public hearings regarding the proposed Ward redistricting at the December 6th and 20th Council meetings and held the first reading of the ordinance to adjust the Ward Boundaries at the December 20th meeting. As reviewed at those Council meetings, the City of Astoria Charter, Chapter III, Section 3.3 states, in part, the following:

“In order to provide more equal representation, the City Council may, by ordinance, from time to time, change the ward boundaries.” At a minimum redistricting is normally completed after each census. With the completion of the 2020 census, it is necessary to review the voter population by Ward and determine appropriate distribution to comply with the City Charter and to follow general Guideline of the State of Oregon.

General guidelines in the State of Oregon consider voting districts to be in equal representation when the voter count is within +/- 10 percent of the average. For the purposes of the City of Astoria this average would be 2,504 voters per Ward with an upper count of 2,754 and a lower count of 2,254. Based on this information, a review of the voter population by Ward was conducted with Portland State University Population Research Center to determine a redistricting plan which would have the least impact on the Ward boundaries while achieving equal representation.

It would be in order to conduct the second reading and consider adopting the proposed ordinance.

Director Brooks conducted the second reading of the ordinance.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Rocka, seconded by Councilor Hilton, to adopt the ordinance to adjust the Ward Boundaries. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Herman, Rocka, Hilton, and Mayor Jones; Nays: None.

Item 7(b): Public Hearing and Consideration of First Reading of Ordinance Readopting Certain State Statutes to Reflect Changes Made by the 2021 Legislature

The 2021 legislation passed by the Oregon Legislature, for the most part, became effective on January 1, 2022. Many of our City ordinances refer to or incorporate State statutes. Every year, the City routinely re-adopts all referenced ORS sections to pick up any changes made by the legislature. This is done by a "global re-adoption", which is the technique recommended by the League of Oregon Cities. The City is legally unable to prospectively adopt Oregon legislative changes, that is, we cannot adopt a state statute "as it now exists and is from time to time amended." It is recommended that Council conduct the public hearing and hold a first reading of the proposed ordinance.

Mayor Jones opened the public hearing at 7:26 pm and called for public comments. Hearing none, he closed the public hearing at 7:26 pm.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Herman, seconded by Councilor Hilton, to hold a first reading of the ordinance readopting certain State Statutes to reflect changes made by the 2021 Legislature. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Herman, Rocka, Hilton, and Mayor Jones; Nays: None.

Director Brooks conducted the first reading of the ordinance.

Item 7(c): Public Hearing and Consideration of First Reading of Ordinance Amending the Astoria City Code Section 8.045-8.045.18 Concerning the Imposition and Collection of Transient Room Taxes

The City of Astoria has determined that an amendment of the provisions of City of Astoria Code Section 8.045 concerning the imposition and collection of Transient Room Taxes and adding provisions will result in uniformity with the ordinances of other Cities and Oregon Revised Statutes and Administrative Rules regarding transient lodging tax. This will aid the public's understanding of these code sections, help foster compliance with the code and simplify the City's collection of the tax. It is recommended that the City Council hold a public hearing and conduct the first reading of Astoria City Code Section 8.045 concerning the imposition and collection of Transient Room Taxes.

Mayor Jones opened the public hearing at 7:29 pm and called for public comments. Hearing none, he closed the public hearing at 7:29 pm.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Hilton, seconded by Councilor Herman to hold a first reading of the ordinance amending Astoria City Code Section 8.045-8.045.18 concerning the Imposition and Collection of Transient Room Taxes. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Herman, Rocka, Hilton, and Mayor Jones; Nays: None.

Director Brooks conducted the first reading of the ordinance.

Item 7(d): Consideration of Salary Resolution for Negotiated Contract and Resolution: Wage Adjustments

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 collective bargaining

agreement and associated management adjustments per Resolution 21-02 effective January 1, 2022. It is recommended that Council adopt the Salary Resolution as presented.

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

Item 7(e): Public Hearing and Consideration of Resolution for Supplemental Budget – Custodial Fund #415

The current budget for Custodial Fund # 415 did not anticipate expenditures associated with the State of Oregon pass through grant funds for the Buoy/Bowline waterline infrastructure project in the current fiscal year. The current budget anticipated the completion of the project prior to fiscal year ending June 30, 2021. The project was completed in the current fiscal year and the current budget requires adjustment to recognize additional beginning fund balance resources and expenditures for the project completion in fiscal year 2021-2022.

ORS 294.473 provides guidance for a municipality to hold a public hearing on a supplemental budget to adjust for changes which could not reasonably be foreseen when preparing the original budget. The process requires advertisement of a supplemental budget not less than 5 days before a Council meeting. There will be a public hearing for consideration of the supplemental budget being presented on January 3, 2022. Council may consider a resolution to adopt the supplemental budgets as advertised.

Staff is presenting a resolution for a supplemental budget to recognize \$100,000 increase in the beginning fund balance and increase to materials and services expense in the amount of \$100,000.

Mayor Jones opened the public hearing at 7:34 pm and called for public comments. Hearing none, he closed the public hearing at 7:35 pm.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Herman, seconded by Councilor Hilton, to approve the supplemental budget for Custodial Fund #415. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Herman, Rocka, Hilton, and Mayor Jones; Nays: None.

Item 7(f): Consideration to Extend COVID-19 Emergency Declaration

At the March 16, 2020 City Council Meeting, Council adopted a declaration of local emergency in the City of Astoria in response to the COVID -19 coronavirus outbreak. The declaration was extended to December 31, 2021 to coincide with the Governor's extension of the State of Emergency. Mayor Jones has asked this item to be brought to Council for consideration of another extension commensurate with the State of Oregon's recent extension in support of recovery efforts and access to Federal Recovery assistance and support through June 30, 2022.

It is recommended that City Council consider extending the state of emergency in the City of Astoria to the next City Council meeting following the Governor's extension on July 5, 2022.

Councilor Rocka said he believed it was important to extend the emergency declaration.

Councilor Herman said she agreed and added that the declaration makes the City eligible to apply for federal relief funds.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Hilton, seconded by Councilor Herman, to extend the state of emergency in the City of Astoria to the next City Council meeting following the Governor's extension on July 5, 2022. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Herman, Rocka, Hilton, and Mayor Jones; Nays: None.

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

Councilor Herman said a discussion had been going on social media regarding Heritage Square and the Planning Commission's approval at their last meeting of Code changes that will make multi-family housing an outright allowed use at Heritage Square, which she fully supported. The changes will be considered by the Council at their first meeting in February. The property is public and owned by all Astorians. Normally, Code changes require that all affected landowners be notified. The City has been abiding by the law and numerous meetings have been held to discuss the idea of what should be done with Heritage Square. She wanted to discuss the idea of doing a citywide mailing to inform the community about the upcoming decision on whether to approve the Planning Commission's Code changes.

City Manager Estes noted that a citywide mailing would cost thousands of dollars.

Mayor Jones said he could understand potentially mailing to adjoining property owners, but a mailing to the entire city begs the question: What are the criteria by which the City decides to do mailings to every citizen in Astoria? The City Council's agenda over the last two years has included many issues that had significant impacts, for example the Riverfront Vision Plan Code changes. The City did not do citywide mailings to any of those issues, yet they affected everyone. It is more important to get the word out to the public about what the public process is by posting in the newspaper, on social media, on the City's website, and on the radio. He was leery of doing a mailing on this topic to all residents because of the can of worms it opens for every other topic of any importance.

Councilor Rocka said he agreed with Mayor Jones. He asked how the City got the word out?

Mayor Jones stated that every City Council meeting is publicly announced, noting the date and time of the meeting. A link is sent out with the agenda and that is always publicly available. He had seen upcoming public meetings published in the newspaper and on KMUN. There is a well-established process whereby the City publishes agendas to public meeting in advance and then publicly notices those meetings.

City Manager Estes added that for this specific case, there had been multiple City Council meetings over the past few months where the need for Code amendments had been discussed. The City Council initiated the Code amendments that are being considered by the Planning Commission. This topic has had more discussion at the City Council level in terms of initiating a set of Code amendments. Perhaps some of the difference is when there is a large planning process, like the Port Waterfront Masterplan. There is a lot of discussion going into making a master plan and then Code amendments come after that. In this case, just a set of Code amendments are being brought forward. The City Council has had other Code amendments in the past that the Council directed Planning Staff to work on, dealing with accessory dwelling units and affordable housing. There are differences in processes. If there is a set of Code amendments that has a citywide impact, there is a Ballot Measure 56 Notice that is required and has more of a larger reach. This Code amendment does not have the Ballot Measure 56 Notice implications because it is applicable to a specific area. There were conversations at City Council, specifically where the Council initiated the amendments, they wanted the Planning Commission to work on.

Councilor Rocka said there is quite a bit of interest around the city on what would happen to the old Safeway site. The City will be considering some steps forward in what will happen on the site at the meeting in February. Code amendments can make the mind go numb, but if people know the Council is talking about the future of that site, then perhaps releases could be sent out to the media to make sure people are aware that the City would be moving forward on that.

Mayor Jones agreed that the meeting announcements are dry and a narrative could be added. A link could specify what is on the agenda.

Councilor Herman said if there was a way to highlight when one of the meetings is going to be discussing specifically Heritage Square, that might help make a meeting announcement less dry. She was glad that Astorians continued to demonstrate how invested they feel in the community with spirited discussions on social media. She encouraged people to bring the discussion to the City Council meeting.

Councilor Hilton stated that a sign should be posted on the land making people aware of exactly when the meeting is scheduled. The City already does that when there are public hearings on other issues. He also believed the involvement came down to the citizens. The City cannot continue to notify citizens of every single thing. Citizens have to become involved also and pay attention to what is going on in the community. And

involvement cannot be after the fact. The City can do the best it can to inform people, but the agenda is discussed on KAST every Monday morning and it is in the newspaper. The City gives people a fair amount of information already and it is up to the citizens to become involved in what is going on.

Mayor Jones agreed and said it should be simple to put up a laminated meeting notice on the chain link fence by the hole in the ground. He also agreed that communication was a two-way street. It is frustrating when he tells people that something has been in the newspaper for the last three months and they say they do not get the paper. He noted people could read the paper at the library.

City Manager Estes asked if the Council wanted any specific language on the sign.

Mayor Jones said the sign just needed to note that there was a City Council meeting in February to discuss future potential changes related to the use of Heritage Square.

City Manager Estes stated he would have the Community Development Department put together a sign.

Lisa DeCicco 1135 Grand Ave., Astoria, said she was concerned about changing the name of Heritage Square to The Block. Originally, when the slab was there, the community was asked not to call it The Slab, and there was a long process to name it. To her, Heritage Square represents that process. Getting rid of the name Heritage Square is throwing away 10 years of process. She had talked to people on the street and a lot of people seem to think it is an issue of housing. It is not about for or against housing, it is about putting housing at Heritage Square.

Mayor Jones responded that he had read comments on social media about renaming Heritage Square to The Block. He watched the recording of the Planning Commission meeting but did not read all of the proposed Code change language. He asked if it was accurate that part of the Code language being proposed officially abolishes the term Heritage Square. Director Leatherman answered no, but she believed that came out of a discussion that happened at the Planning Commission meeting. The Code language does not include anything specific to abolishing the name Heritage Square.

Mayor Jones said he got the impression the discussion was using laymen's terminology saying that Heritage Square was now just a block. Director Leatherman added that nothing has been set in stone. Staff appreciated the feedback and comments, and the City Council can take those into consideration when they review the request in February.

Mayor Jones noted that the City Council could adopt what is presented in February, send it back, or change it on the spot.

Ms. DeCicco stated she also took issue with changing from multi-use housing to housing outright. She was not sure if people understood what that meant. It meant no commercial spaces down below.

Mayor Jones clarified that the change to allowing housing outright just meant that housing would be allowed on Heritage Square without a variance. City Manager Estes added that currently, housing on Heritage Square would require a Conditional Use Permit from the Planning Commission. The proposed change would allow housing without the permit.

Mayor Jones also stated that proposed change would not prohibit commercial or retail on the ground floor.

Ms. DeCicco responded that was what the Code said now, that there needs to be commercial. Also, the C-4 zone does not allow for additional parking and the City will take away all of the parking and not add any.

Mayor Jones suggested that parking be kept separate.

City Manager Estes believed that Ms. DeCicco was referring to the existing requirement to have commercial on the ground floor in that zone. The proposed Code amendments initiated by the City Council and recommended by the Planning Commission would not require ground floor commercial uses any longer.

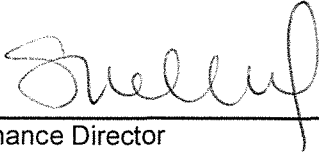
Ms. DeCicco stated that commercial on the ground floor is not an option when the City says housing outright, which gets rid of the requirement for commercial.

Mayor Jones explained that commercial would no longer be required, but that did not mean there would not be commercial on the ground floor. The Planning Commission's recommendation would be published in advance for everyone to read and the public meeting would provide plenty of opportunity for input.

ADJOURNMENT

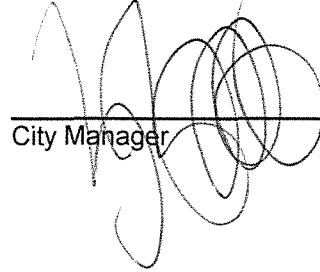
There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:54 pm.

ATTEST:



Finance Director

APPROVED:



City Manager

