



WORK SESSION

AGENDA

City Commission of the City of Warrenton

Tuesday, August 24, 2021 – 5:30 P.M.

Warrenton City Commission Chambers

225 South Main Avenue

Warrenton, OR 97146

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Mid-Year Progress Update on City Commission Goals**
- 4. Adjourn**

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POLICE

“Critical Staffing”

- Fill the 12th Sworn Officer Position – it has been vacant since 10/01/2018 and has added to several staffing issues, increased OT, not being able to staff some events, and the ability to use the OT grants we are awarded.
- Increase 2nd clerk position to full-time. We did add 5 additional hours to the parttime position to help.
- 2nd sergeant position, this was added in the budget for this year. Now I need to determine the best time to start this process as compared to other needs.

As for paying for personnel, there are limited options for sworn officer positions. We currently have a local option levy helping pay for personnel and that could be increased, but we have to rely on the voters to approve any increase. We could also apply for another COPS grant, but again it essentially only pays for the first two years and then the City is obligated to maintain the position for a minimum of two more years (4-years total) and beyond. With all of the reporting obligations and extra burden on myself/finance department, I am not sure if this process pencils out.

“Staffing” to Address Issues

- I Agree that we need a dedicated position to respond to and address “code violations” and “nuisance issues.”
- I also agree that this position could be under the Police Department and share duties with Building & Planning for certain code violations.
- I do not agree that this position would be filled in lieu of a police officer position, nor do I believe it should be filled by a sworn police officer as that would not be the best use of a trained officer for that position when they are needed elsewhere.
- I envision a Code Compliance position that would be handle:
 - Nuisance complaints
 - Parking complaints
 - RV-Camping complaints
 - Animal complaints
 - Non-Building Inspector code violation, or at least help facilitate the process up to issuing a citation
 - Assist with traffic control at crash or incident scenes
 - Etc.

Other Goal Thoughts:

- Aggressively pursue revenue opportunities.
 - Raised several of the fees and fines for various police services to be more in-line with what other agencies charge for the same services.
 - Looking at other fines for ordinance violations that have not been changed or increased for many years.
 - Looking at creating a permit fee for RV use in the City.
- Improve internal-external communications
 - Have tried to be more diligent in using our social media pages to get out information to the community.
- Finish unfinished projects
 - Nothing to add to this.

PUBLIC WORKS

Aggressively pursue revenue opportunities

- a. Parks Board has presented revenue ideas to commission
- b. Sanitation rate increase has been presented and we will continue to ask commission to support an increase to our commercial rates, plus reclassification of rates
- c. Public Works has applied for many grants and seen many recent successes (SRTS, Community Paths, Community Projects)
- d. Working with local jurisdictions to determine the treatment of organic materials in Clatsop County. There may also be an opportunity to include improvements at the Warrenton WWTP to treat these materials and charge for this service.

Improve internal-external communications

- e. Water meter leak alert letters – we send letters out to first time (vs ongoing) leak alert customers notifying them of the leak alert and what that means. This is to provide clearer communication to those customers who may not live full time at their residence or who may have not received the door hanger notifying them. Some customers autopay their bill and don't realize when their bill has gone up due to increased usage or a leak.
- f. Public Works will include an article in the Columbia Press a couple times each year. Articles will include information about public works and public works projects.

Finish unfinished projects

- g. Submitted application for federal money to complete the Hammond Waterline.
- h. Received SRTS grant to construct sidewalk on S Main Avenue from SW 9th Street to SW 10th Street, this project will include the completion of the SW 9th Street/S Main Avenue intersection.
- i. Received Federal Money to complete a sidewalk from 11th Street to the High School on South Main.
- j. Food Court Pod is scheduled to be paved (fully or partially) this summer. This will include sidewalks and utility improvements.
- k. Completed many pump station and sewer improvements

CITY RECORDER

Critical Staffing:

- Dedicated HR person, to stay on top of policy and law changes; to review and update all job descriptions; to have a point person for staff access
- Additional (part time?) clerk/tech for Planning Dept.

Improve Internal/External communications:

- Increasing the number of records in the webdrawer for public access to information.
- Improving Facebook messaging response w/ auto reply to city private messages.
- Add ORMS access to key staff to facilitate better access to documents.

FINANCE

Critical Staffing: I agree that we could use some human resource staffing. As the City continues to grow the burden on department heads increases. There is no way that all department heads can keep up with all the current laws and new employee related laws that seem to come at us each year. They can't be expected to be experts at everything and HR has many facets and nuances. The City is at risk for huge penalties and possible legal fees if we are not in compliance. I think this position would have to be funded by overhead and all funds and departments would need to contribute. Dawne and Jessica could also be freed up to focus on more City Recorder and Accountant duties!

As the City grows, the accounting workload increases. More invoices, more payroll, more customers, etc. I have been at the City 19 years and when I started working here I think we had about 35 employees and 3 finance department employees (besides the Finance Director). We are pushing 60 employees now and have only added one part-time person in the finance department. We are not always able to have segregation of duties, which is an important internal control. We try to do a lot of cross training, but it is still very difficult when one person is out for more than a few days. Everyone has a full workload and there just isn't any extra time in the day to work on special projects. GASB continues to issue new accounting rules that have to be implemented and there is little time to focus on forecasting, updating policies, education and training, etc. when our day to day workloads are so heavy. It would be helpful if the Accounting Clerk position were a full-time position, and if we had room, another person would be helpful. I've also thought perhaps a Data Entry Clerk could share the space with the part-time Accounting Clerk and work 20 hours a week just entering data such as AP, Payroll, journal entries, check payments, etc. The current Finance Department Staff is well educated and skilled and could make better use of their time than doing data entry. They could prepare the documents and review the work of the Data Entry Clerk, which would also free up a lot of my time spent reviewing day to day work. A part-time Data Entry Clerk would not be a highly paid position, but would need to come from overhead that would be paid by all operating funds and departments.

Building Maintenance is also a huge need. I think it would be best as an employee that would probably need to be an overhead position as well. Alternatively, it's possible that it could be set up as an Internal Service Fund, like the Engineer Internal Service Fund. It is like Building Maintenance would be its own little business. We would have to determine an hourly rate that would cover all costs, including materials and services. The Building Maintenance ISF would keep track of time spent and for which building/department they were doing the work. They would then "bill" each department accordingly each month, then those funds would need to budget a building maintenance line in materials and services and "pay" the fund for the services they received. This billing and payment would happen through a journal entry. I would need to run this by the auditors, but I am fairly certain it would work and would more accurately distribute the costs. Maybe something we can look at next budget year. I would need to do more research! Work performed on City Hall would still come out of overhead, but I think work in the Police Department or Fire Department may need to be paid directly by those departments, I'm not sure.

Aggressively pursue revenue opportunities: This is tough. Melora really works hard to seek out and notify those businesses that we believe are doing in business in the City without a business license. She sends them a letter to try to gain compliance. Unfortunately, we don't have a lot of teeth and there is only so much finance can do to gain compliance. Department Heads can help by making sure that when they engage someone to do work for the City that they have a business license or that they get one before they engage them, sign a contract, or ask for a PO. Gina keeps an eye out for possible vacation rentals/homestay on websites to make sure they are permitted and paying transient room tax. Another side of pursuing revenue, is to try to reduce expenses and inefficiencies, where possible. Increasing the purchase order and petty cash limit can help with this as well as freeing up staff time.

Improve internal-external communications: We rolled out the new Budget-in-Brief this year, which I think is a great communication tool to try to help simplify and explain the budget to our citizens and our employees. I hope to continue to make improvements to that document each year. We are looking at rolling out a new Auto Pay Online program soon that will not only make paying bills easier for citizens, but has a lot of automatic email notifications that will be sent out when appropriate to those who sign up. I think we have been much better recently in putting out information on the City's Facebook Page and we could do even more of that. I would also like to continue adding to the FAQ's on our website and think it would be a good idea for all departments to add FAQ's to their page, if they haven't already.

Finish unfinished projects: So many...I haven't made a lot of progress because there seems to be new projects coming at us all the time, such as the CRF and ARPA Funds and other Grants. I am working on Auto Pay Online and Civic Pay Pads (to simplify taking credit card payments). There are some ordinances that need to be updated. We updated the water ordinance several years ago in conjunction with Public Works and the Sewer ordinance was supposed to be next. I am not sure where we are on that. The TRT ordinance could use some updating as well. Our fiscal policies have not been updated in many years and I have started reviewing those policies and searching for best practices, examples and recommendations so that I can put together something for a work session (after audit)!

BUILDING

I think one of the main staffing issues that we should consider addressing is the Community Services/Code Enforcement Officer position. If we have a defined process for citations, the position could be funded through the revenue from citations. Added to the cost savings associated with having a Planning Director versus a Community Development Director may help.

I don't know that it will completely offset the cost of a full-time staff person, but with violations occurring from zoning violations (Planning), illegal discharges and illegal connections (PW) minor penal code violations (PD) it could be a position shared across multiple department budgets. If we find a person that possesses a code enforcement officer background, as well as an inspection (whether building or public works) background, part of the cost could be from the Building and PW budgets.

As far as revenue generating, I think that looking into a PPP (Public Private Partnership) to develop amenities at the marinas could provide some revenue. Making these facilities a "destination" for locals and visitors, not just for commercial fishing and sportfishing, and having restaurants, coffee bars, and shops would be a nice addition to all that the city can offer.

I think we are on the right track with the improvement of internal and external communication, and we will continue to work on improving those processes.

City of Warrenton Marinas 2021-2022 Marina Goals

July 23, 2021

Critical Staffing Issues

- Marinas are to fill the Marina Foreman Position – I am currently working on this issue.
- An HR Position to free up the City Managers and the Assistant to The City Managers time.

Warrenton

Pier Rehab – Phase 1 or (all)

E - Dock Replace Failed Piling

Inner Basin Lighting

Revamp Ramp Restrooms

Possibility of Dyke Road Improvements

Dry Storage Striping

Possibility of Dyke Road Improvements

Become OSMB Clean Marina

Hammond

Dredging – Phase 2

Investigate Possible Improvements to Overnight Area

Dry Storage Area Clean Up

Aggressively Pursue Funding & Grant Opportunities

Become OSMB Clean Marina

Marina Advisory Committee

Prioritize Capital Improvements

Develop 10 year Replacement/Rebuild Plan & Goals

Employees stay

When they are first and foremost, paid well



PAID WELL



MENTORED

CHALLENGED



PROMOTED



INCLUDED



APPRECIATED



TRUSTED



EMPOWERED



VALUED

Current staffing at the library includes the Library Director FTE, the Library Administrative Assistant @25 hours a week and the Library Assistant Youth Coordinator @ 25 hours a week (as of July 1, 2021).

For a great deal of time during the pandemic, we did not have a Library Assistant Youth Coordinator, but after reworking the job description, bumping up the pay rate and the hours from 18 to 25, we finally addressed an on-going critical staffing issue at the library and was able to fill a much needed position.

To address critical staffing at the library we first had to rework the job description for the Library Assistant Youth Coordinator to reflect both working hours behind the circulation desk as well as planning and executing children and teen programming.

[Click here to view the original job description](#)
[Click here to view the current job description](#)

We also increased the hours and the pay to include benefits for the 2021-2022 fiscal year in order to retain quality staff. As noted in the visual above, employees stay when they are first and foremost, paid well. This position started at \$12/hour with too many responsibilities for that pay rate. When hiring our current Library Assistant Youth Coordinator, I was able to preface the \$12/hour with the good possibility of a pay increase and benefits starting in July, showing the new employee that we value their position and their time they are putting in for the library and the City of Warrenton.

Other ways to address critical staffing issues within the library and the city are listed in the graphic above. Being paid well is always a good way to retain valuable staff.

As a newer employee within the City of Warrenton, (November 2019) I can say that having a mentor, being appreciated and trusted are areas where the City of Warrenton could work on demonstrating to the staff in order to retain quality employees. When I started appreciating the Library Administrative Assistant and trusting that she could take on higher level tasks, her job performance improved as did her attitude.

