

Monday, 6:00 p.m.

March 13, 2000

CITY COUNCIL RETREAT
MINUTES

Wastewater Treatment Plant

Newberg, Oregon

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Charles Cox at 6:15 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

City Council Members Present:

Mayor Charles Cox

Roger Currier

Donna McCain

Robert Weaver

Lisa Helikson

Brett Veatch

Council Member Absent: Noelle Wilson

Department Heads Present:

Leah Griffith, Library Director

Robert Tardiff, Police Chief

Michael Sherman, Fire Chief

Terrence D. Mahr, City Attorney

Mike Soderquist, Community Development Director

Debbie Smith-Wagar, Assistant Finance Director

Robert Nipper, PSU Intern

The Council reviewed the items on the attached memo "2000 Directions". Some of the items were discussed by the Council.

Under Community Development, the group talked about adding urban reserve area issues to the list of items being explored by Community Development. The Manager reminded the Council that this is not on the priority list provided by the Planning Commission at the recent joint City Council/Planning Commission meeting. It was, however, added to the list as a potential issue with Yamhill County. The Manager reported that the water strategic plan implementation was moving forward. City staff had met during the day with Marion County officials in a pre-application meeting for the new well. The Manager reported that the application was expected to be completed by Mid-April. It appeared that the County would require the 150 days to process the application and the well may not come on line until 2001.

Transportation projects were discussed. The Brutscher to Main project was identified as an issue in April. There will be a discussion of the design, timing and dollar participation by the City. The Northside Road group will be meeting on Thursday of this week. This project will get restarted at that time.

Mayor Cox gave a report on the Newberg/Dundee Parkway. He indicated that when he was in Washington, D.C. he met with FHWA Environmental Section as well as Representatives Blumenauer and Wu and Senators Wyden and Smith. He said that Newberg has a chance to be a pilot for the environmental streamlining process which is a new process. He also indicated that it would be good to have just one alternative to study for this process. The next step is to visit with ODOT and to keep the project alive.

The Villa Road over-crossing was identified as a project which needs to be completed. It is scheduled to be out to bid this Spring and under construction during the Summer. The Manager reported that the Springbrook Oaks Specific Area Plan is about ready to move forward with the public improvements. The money will be received this Spring from the developer and the public improvements will be installed at that time. Development of the property will take a number of years with significant development not being on the property until 2002 or 2003. The Council discussed the relationship with Dundee and the DEQ has mandated a study of hooking Dundee sewer to Newberg. This would be cheaper than building a treatment plant in Dundee along the river and there are limited funds for these facilities which are primarily funded by the local government either through grants or loans. This could lead to lower costs for Newberg sewer users and of course, the Rate Review Committee would need to come together to recalculate Newberg's rate if Dundee decides to join the system. Riverfront development was also discussed and the County has agreed to seek a joint grant with the City to fund a further study of this area.

Budget issues were mentioned briefly and the November election was considered. Mayor Cox, Council members Currier, Helikson and Wilson will be up for election in November. The filing date for the election is mid-August. There was a discussion of the consolidation of 9-1-1 radio systems. Council talked about the radio frequency issue and further linkages with Washington County. The Manager indicated that there may be an opportunity to strengthen the relationship with Yamhill County through the Animal Shelter project. The County's shelter is also in need of repair and perhaps, replacement. It may be possible to link both of these facilities together. There is an independent committee working on this issue and it could only be possible if they choose to take that direction.

There was a discussion of the Library District and that this is scheduled for May, 2002. The Council requested that any movement on this issue come to the Council first before discussion and consideration. The Library Director indicated that that would be the direction. There was further discussion about the CCRLS increase and that staff is hopeful that the increase in the cost will roll up over five years.

The Council then reviewed the survey results. Under by-pass, transportation and pedestrian sidewalks, the Council held a discussion regarding the curb/sidewalk policy. By consensus, staff is to look at the sidewalk replacement policy and see if there is a way to assist property owners who live on existing City streets with the construction or replacement of old sidewalks. Specific areas

mentioned include: Sierra Vista, Villa Road from 99W north to Fulton Street, and North Main along the Buckley's addition. Staff was encouraged to look at the sidewalk issues and bring a policy and program back to the Council at a later date.

The Council then turned to a discussion of improving public feedback. There were a number of items that the Manager identified which could be done to improve public contact. Specifically, the City Manager's office could meet with neighborhood groups to get feedback and disseminate information. There could be greater linkages developed with the High School and Middle Schools providing information and access to classroom situations. There was a discussion regarding identifying successes in the City service, particularly by placing them in weekly updates. There was a discussion of editing the Council meetings for TV which would provide a program which focuses on important information and action items. This would not replace the full content of the Council meetings, but would provide a 30 minute to one hour show which would summarize the Council's action. This would provide the residents with a time to tune in to see what the City was up to without having to watch the full 2-3 hour meeting tape. Other cities in Oregon provide this service for their residents and it is successful and helps keep the community informed.

The City Council was encouraged to have more and better public exposure including reporting on significant issues over the cable. This is done in some other communities in which the staff assists the Council member with preparing the dialog and then the issue is discussed by the Council member on TV. Community forums, roundtables, open houses, charettes, and focus groups were mentioned as a possibility. Quite often these need to be facilitated in order to maintain direction with the group. The Manager talked about including the Council to develop advocacy group support. An award for employee of the month on the Cable TV was discussed and this could include an employee profile or volunteer profile segment.

Finally, it was emphasized that the Council should highlight their collaborative efforts with other government agencies. This is perceived to be a positive development by community members.

Everyone was encouraged to use the media to tell the City's stories, emphasize public service philosophies to subordinates, and develop a reward system for exemplary service, cost savings and suggestions. It was further suggested that perhaps an activity for all ages could be arranged. But with the Farmer's Market being developed in the City that this might be an opportunity to link with that and provide a City type of fair. This could include health services information, bake sales, raffles, drawings and entertainment.

The Department Heads were encouraged to disseminate information personally to neighborhood groups, schools, special events with an emphasis on future goals and report information about successes to the City Manager.

The Council then took a fifteen minute break.

The Mayor called the meeting back to order at 7:45 p.m.

Council member Weaver began the discussion by indicating that he had a conversation with the School Board Chairman regarding meeting procedures. The School Board Chairman had indicated that the best way to proceed is to announce clearly the rules that were going to be followed in the meeting. Council member Weaver indicated that there is a time for a public comment during the meeting and also a time for the elected officials, as representatives of the people, to get the work done for which they were elected to do. Mayor Cox indicated that he liked to take testimony up front except for land use, raising taxes or changing the Charter or some other items that require and need public input. His idea would be to allow people to speak during a certain section up front of the meeting and then conduct the business of the City among the Council. Council member Helikson indicated that she was not necessarily in favor of shorter meetings, but she wanted the meetings to be more productive. The open podium, she felt, actually may deter others from attending City Council meetings because by the time they get to their issue it is quite late in the evening.

Council member Currier indicated that the agenda would need to be changed in order to accomplish these things and that public participation in the meeting was positive aspect of serving on the City Council. He also expressed concern that items were sent out late to the Council and that the public did not have an opportunity to review the items in detail. There was a discussion about locking up the agenda ten days in advance and a concern that the public may be right about being surprised by late additions to the Council agenda. The staff made a commitment to do a better job of locking the agenda in as much as possible ten days in advance of the meeting.

Council President Weaver said that he was pleased with the Council and that the discussion with people at the table had pretty much stopped. The Council is no longer challenging and arguing with people who come to the podium. The Council talked about items which they are not comfortable with to make sure that they would pull the items if they wished to not discuss them during the Council session.

Mayor Cox said that he would like to see a big board with the rules on it, that would be positive in content and provide people guidance on how to speak to the Council. City Attorney Mahr said that the Council agenda could be reorganized so the public hearings and public comments could be held up front and the business of the Council would follow. There was further discussion about redirecting the speakers back to the issue and supporting staff if the speaker physically attacks the staff. There was discussion of the fine line between constructive criticism and petitioning for action and criticism of the staff. Mayor Cox indicated that he was concerned that people have freedom to petition the Council and express their concerns, but that they do so in a manner that is respectful and not demeaning of other people.

Council member Veatch said that blatant statements without proof need to be controlled and Council member Weaver agreed that deviation from the specific topic which they place on their request to speak form should not be allowed.

Council member Veatch indicated that communications from the floor should occur up front and should be an open period for the residents to talk to the Council. The rules should be clearly stated by the Mayor or Manager at the start of the meeting in a brief statement so that everybody understands what is appropriate communication to the Council. Finally, any items on the agenda should be spoken to from the audience at the very first of the meeting so that the Council has time to deliberate and take action on the items which are the City's business. If the Council wishes additional input on those agenda items they can request that the person speak at that time. Council should keep in mind that they can extend the time for speaking if they so desire. Council member Weaver indicated support for this proposal, as did Mayor Cox and several other Council members, however, no decision was made. City Attorney Mahr indicated that this would not apply to quasi-judicial issues.

The City Manager summed up the instructions he felt the Council was making at the meeting. These included changing the order of the Council agenda, writing up some clear rules and regulations for participation, placing public comment and communications from the floor early on the agenda and bringing this package to the Council on April 3.

There being no further input the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

ADOPTED by the Newberg City Council on this 3rd day of April, 2000.


Duane R. Cole, City Recorder

ATTEST by the Mayor this 7 day of April, 2000.


Charles B. Cox, Mayor