

NEWBERG CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
SPECIAL SESSION
APRIL 6, 2016, 6:00 PM
CITY HALL First Floor Conference Room
414 East First Street

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Andrews called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:	Mayor Bob Andrews	Scott Essin	Stephen McKinney
	Lesley Woodruff	Denise Bacon	Mike Corey

Staff Present:	Stephen Rhodes, City Manager Pro Tem	Truman Stone, City Attorney
	Sue Ryan, City Recorder	

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Andrews called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. There was a discussion on the interview process.

INTERVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES FOR DISTRICT 4:

Mayor Andrews asked Suzanne Meenahan, Council candidate, to talk about her background.

Ms. Meenahan shared her background. She moved here from Michigan to the Oak Knoll subdivision. It was a beautiful City and State. She had two children, a son and a daughter. She volunteered at Edwards Elementary as a SMART volunteer where her daughter was a teacher. She was interested in seeing Newberg grow and prosper. She was a pastry chef at a restaurant in downtown Portland. She was busy but not too busy to bring her volunteerism up to a higher level.

Councilor Corey asked why she was interested in serving as a Councilor. Ms. Meenahan said she had been reading in the newspaper about the issues the City had been going through in the last few years. She was especially interested in the Water Department and was excited to see all of the things happening in the downtown area. She wanted to be a part of that to see it grow and add more events. Her background in Michigan was putting on public events for school districts.

Councilor McKinney asked what her interest was in the Water Department. She said she had read in the newspaper about the non-potable water and wanted to see more businesses using it. The more you talked about it and planned for it the more companies could get involved. She would like to see it added to be used in neighborhoods as well.

Councilor Woodruff asked what other volunteer opportunities she had been involved in. Ms. Meenahan said she had volunteered at the Cultural Center and at Providence Hospital.

Councilor Essin asked what she felt the most crucial issue was facing Newberg today. She said how they were managing the Bypass and how it would affect the community. She went to some of the meetings when they were first talking about it and there had been many changes. She was interested in why so many of the changes had taken place. No matter what your socioeconomic level was everyone should have a good feel for the City. Everyone should have a nice landscape, amenities to go forward with, and a lot of parks that were super nice for all the kids.

Councilor McKinney asked what she thought should be done in the neighborhoods that did not keep up their property. She said there were some that did not and shared the issues in her neighborhood where there were six to eight homes in her subdivision that weren't part of the HOA and didn't keep up appearances. She suggested allocating money to certain neighborhoods and researching grants and HUD funding to help renovate lower socioeconomic areas. When people lived in harmony and the surroundings were calm and kept up, everyone would get along better.

Councilor Bacon asked her what the most positive attribute of the City was. Ms. Meenahan said it was the friendliness of the community. She said the Police and Fire Departments were forthcoming and intermingled with the community.

Councilor McKinney asked what she thought about the most recent decisions of the City Council. Ms. Meenahan said the recent decisions with the recreational and medical marijuana were thoughtful and the City Council was keeping all the options open. Councilor McKinney asked a follow on as to how her friends and neighbors felt about how the City dealt with the marijuana issue. She said they were hoping for the 3% tax for recreational and no tax on medical marijuana. She understood the revenues from the State were based on population and number of dispensaries and the revenue could be used for many things. Councilor McKinney said he was not a big advocate of that option and there were more liberal voices on the Council. When the Council decided to stay with the current ordinance and wait and see what happened, what was her take on that decision? She wondered if by delaying making a decision it would negate any revenues coming in to the City. She was watching the news and they said in Portland there were going to be weed mobiles where people could consume marijuana on buses for tourism. Her friends were a mix of people interested or not interested. It could be another revenue stream.

Mayor Andrews asked if she understood the time commitment needed to serve on the Council and if she could meet the requirements. Ms. Meenahan said yes, she understood they met twice a month and there were subcommittee meetings and other community events to attend. She was up for it and did not think it would conflict with her work in Portland. Mayor Andrews explained the Council's schedule this month. She thought she could adapt to the schedule.

Councilor McKinney said the time commitment often was a surprise to new Councilors. It could affect family time, was she prepared for that? Ms. Meenahan believed she was.

Mayor Andrews asked what questions she had for the Council. Ms. Meenahan asked how many City events the Council was expected to attend. Mayor Andrews explained they were representing the citizens of Newberg, but they did not need to attend every event other than those relating to the work of the Council. He listed the activities that Council typically attended.

Council President Bacon explained she would get invited to every event in the City and would have to decide which ones to attend.

Ms. Meenahan asked about civic education among youth. CP Bacon said the Council did go to schools when invited and students and scout troops occasionally attended Council meetings. Mayor Andrews discussed the If I Were Mayor Contest. Ms. Meenahan asked City Attorney Stone about what marijuana taxes could be used for. CA Stone said it was supposed to be used for public safety. Ms. Meenahan asked if it could be used for programs at schools regarding the dangers of marijuana? CA Stone did not know. Ms. Meenahan asked about tourism money, could any be used for paving the parking lot? CA Stone said it was a complicated question. A portion of the transient lodging tax went to the General Fund that could be used for any purpose, and an amount was designated for tourism promotion or facilities which did not include parking lots or infrastructure. Ms. Meenahan asked if the money could be used for businesses to keep up their appearance along Highway 99E? CA Stone thought it would be difficult to say those stores catered to tourism. Councilor McKinney said there were a number of prescribed formulas that established how tourism money could be used.

There was a brief recess.

Mayor Andrews asked Patrick Johnson, Council candidate, to describe himself. Mr. Johnson said he was a dad with two daughters and had been married for about 20 years. He went to High School in Newberg and graduated from George Fox University in Communications. He had worked in newspapers and was currently working in communications. He had a decade's worth of experience in volunteering for government. He had served as a Councilor in Canby for several years.

Councilor Corey asked why he was interested in serving on the Council? Mr. Johnson had intended to serve just at the Planning Commission and Budget Committee levels. When he watched how Council handled the Wilsonville Road issue, he was impressed and was interested in serving on the Council because of its excellent performance on a tough issue.

Councilor Woodruff asked what other volunteer opportunities had he been involved in? Mr. Johnson said he had served on the Budget Committee, Planning Commission, and went to events with his kids. He considered his job as public service as the Oregon Lottery supported parks, schools, and watersheds.

Councilor Essin asked what he thought was the most crucial issue facing the City. Mr. Johnson replied budget issues such as where to get funding to fix roads, fix the library, funding for the Fire Department, water bills, utility fees, and services provided to citizens.

Councilor Bacon asked what he thought was the most positive attribute of the City? Mr. Johnson said it was the responsiveness and communication. He told a story about his van getting hit, but the person who hit him was not cited. The police officer took the time to explain why, and he appreciated that. If people had questions or issues, they were answered.

Councilor McKinney asked for his assessment of any recent decisions made by the Council. Mr. Johnson said the TVF&R trial was a good example of the Council handling an issue well with communication, discussion, and negotiation.

Councilor McKinney asked a follow on. Was there a time he thought the Council could have handled something differently. Mr. Johnson said he did not think they should tax medical marijuana.

Mayor Andrews asked about being able to meet the time commitment. Mr. Johnson thought the Council probably attended four to five meetings per month on average. He would not be here if he could not meet the time commitment. He said late August until after school began in the fall he would be very busy with his job, but a lot of the events happened on the weekend.

Mayor Andrews asked if he had any questions for the Council. Mr. Johnson asked about the relationship they had with their public employee union associations. Mayor Andrews said they were policy setters and not involved in labor negotiations. The Council approved labor contracts that came from the management team. It was valuable to have some labor background to understand the information that they received.

Mr. Johnson asked how well they worked with the Chamber. Councilor Bacon said she worked closely with them. Councilor Corey had sat in on some of the Chamber Board meetings. Councilor Essin had worked with the Chamber Director quite a bit. Councilor McKinney said the Chamber Director was interested in discussing things with the Council. Regarding the relationship with unions, the City had always had a good relationship with them and the Council could provide input during the process. Councilor Woodruff did not have too much contact with the Chamber, but they were always responsive to questions and good to work with. Mayor Andrews thought there was a good partnership between the City and the Chamber.

Mr. Johnson said the City needed economic development and the Chamber was an important part of attracting businesses. Councilor McKinney said the relationship was a partnership. The Downtown Coalition was the biggest stakeholder as far as what happened downtown. It was more important to establish the partnership so it never deteriorated into an adversarial relationship.

Mr. Johnson stated he worked for the Oregon Lottery and there was some question since the City received economic development money from the State and some OLCC licenses were tied to lottery retailers. He got an Oregon Ethics Commission opinion that it was not a conflict since he did not receive a financial benefit from any decision the Council would make. If he saw a potential controversy, he would abstain from those decisions.

There was a brief recess.

Mayor Andrews asked for comments. Councilor Bacon thought both candidates were very committed and passionate about the community. Councilor Corey said both were great candidates, but Mr. Johnson had more experience. Councilor Essin said there were two great candidates and felt that both understood the responsibilities and time commitment. Councilor Woodruff said both had good questions for Council. She thought Mr. Johnson had more direct experience and was already involved by being on a City Committee, but Ms. Meenahan would bring a new voice to the City organization and would balance the Council by gender. Councilor McKinney was glad the applicants seemed to be aware of what was going on in the City. Mr. Johnson had more experience being a Councilor in Canby and a Newberg City Committee member.

Mayor Andrews thanked both candidates for being here. He asked the candidates if they were not successful, would they want their application to remain active and possibly serve on other advisory committees to the Council. Mr. Johnson said he would remain on the Planning Commission. Ms. Meenahan would be willing to serve on another committee.

MOTION: Bacon/Essin moved to nominate Patrick Johnson as a Councilor to fill the vacant Council seat in District 4 to serve a term until December 31, 2018. Motion carried (6-0).

MOTION: McKinney/Corey moved to close nominations and have a unanimous ballot for Patrick Johnson. Motion carried (6-0).

City Recorder Sue Ryan administered the oath of office to Patrick Johnson.

Mayor Andrews explained the upcoming schedule for the Council and discussed how Mr. Johnson could get set up to receive information. There was a delegation coming to Newberg from Poysdorf, Austria, in July.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

ADOPTED by the Newberg City Council this 2nd day of May, 2016.


Sue Ryan, City Recorder

ATTESTED by the Mayor this 9th day of May, 2016.

 Bob Andrews, Mayor