

ORTING CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

July 16, 2008

Mayor Cheryl Temple called the meeting to order with the flag salute at 7:00 pm in the Orting Multi-Purpose Center. Roll call found in attendance Councilmembers Scott Drennen, George Wilson, Dick Ford, Nicola McDonald, and Guy S. Colorossi. Councilmember David Inge arrived at 7:25 pm.

ATTENDANCE:

City Employees City Administrator Mark Bethune, Finance Director/City Clerk Susan Davis, Administrative Assistant Roxanne Pollard.

Professional
Representatives Kenyon Disend Attorney Chris Bacha.

Visitors David Kiesig, Shirley Sigafoos, Carolyn VanHook, Bill VanHook, Bob Chute, Kelly Hayden, Louise Bray, Lynne Griffith, Jesse Mitchell, Brinn Wells, Lisa Johnson, Doug Silvernail, Kristina Rivera, Shelly Potter, George Potter, Cindy Sills, William Hash, Michelle Converse, Dwight Dickerson, Ellen Myers, Christina Warner, Daryl Flood, Charlotte Stielow, Edward Higgins, Steve Goodwin.

TRANSIT MEETING:

Welcome Mayor Temple and City Administrator Bethune welcomed the audience and gave a brief overview of the topic. Congestion is getting worse on State Route 162, State Route 410 and State Route 167. The Sounder Train offers a viable alternative to commuters traveling from Orting north to King County. However, there is a lack of parking at the Sumner Sounder Station. Several Orting residents have commented that they would utilize a bus from Orting to the Sounder Station. Currently a portion of the sales tax that is collected in Orting funds Pierce Transit.

Introduction &
Special Guests Mayor Temple introduced Dave Enslow, Pierce Transit Chairman and Small Cities and Towns Representative, and Lynne Griffith, Pierce Transit Chief Executive Officer. Also in attendance to represent Pierce Transit were Louise Bray, Vice-President of Policy, Planning and Public Affairs and Kelly Hayden, Director of Planning.

Public Hearing

Mayor Temple asked the Council to comment.

Councilmember Wilson asked what taxes that Pierce Transit is funded by. Pierce Transit is funded by a portion of the sales tax. He also reported that he attended a recent meeting in Sumner about a potential new parking location for the Sounder. During the meeting, he noticed approximately five to ten buses pass the building. Orting citizens also pay a portion of the sales tax used to fund Pierce Transit and should receive proportional services from them in return.

Councilmember Colorossi asked, “What is the bottom line to bring buses service to Orting?” The representative from Pierce Transit responded that service is often based on density. Residents do have access to the Orting loop, which runs Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, by 24-hour advanced reservation, from Orting to the South Hill Mall transfer station.

Councilmember McDonald reported that she had recently heard from a family living in Tacoma that they often take Pierce Transit to get to bike riding location. They are currently unable to get to Orting via the bus. Not having bus service also affects people who would like to get to Orting.

Councilmember Pestinger asked about the possibility of getting mini-buses and another van share program in Orting. With the high price of gasoline he thinks that more people will utilize public transit.

Councilmember Colorossi commented that in 1993 Orting voted to be a part of the Pierce Transit taxing district.

City Administrator Bethune asked what the cost to operate a bus is and what the cost to ride the bus is. The cost to operate the bus is \$100 per hour. The cost to the consumer is \$1.50 each way.

Mayor Temple opened the hearing for public comment at 7:40 pm.

Lisa Johnson asked if the potential ridership for an Orting based bus route is based on the ridership of the Orting Loop. Using the Orting Loop as a basis for how many residents would use the bus is a bit like serving dinner at 2 pm and wondering why no one shows up for dinner. The public has come forward and requested service. Service to Orting should be provided at a

time that is convenient for people commuting to jobs in King County.

Doug Silvernail, commented that many people from Orting drop of friends and family to catch the Sounder Train because there is not enough parking in Sumner. There are also Sounder riders from Graham and South Prairie that would benefit from a bus service from Orting to Sumner.

Shelly Potter presented the representatives from Pierce Transit with about 70 signatures of citizens who would use bus service if it were offered.

Kristina Rivera suggested better notification of the meeting and more ways to communicate to Pierce Transit and the City via the internet. She also suggested that the Orting loop should run five days per week.

Christina Warner commented that there many people who work in Sumner and live in Orting who could also benefit from a transit route between the two cities.

Ellen Meyers, reported that she moved here from the Portland area and was surprised at the lack of transit in the area. She relies on her bike for most of her transportation. The Orting Loop does not work. It is often running late and is unreliable.

John Wells commented that the Pierce Transit weekend pass is a great deal and he wishes that it could be used in Orting. He also suggested a fee schedule that is based on ridership like the one that Metro uses.

Jesse Mitchell commented that people want to use mass transit, but difficulty parking is turning a lot of them away.

Scott Requiem reported that he had contacted Sound Transit to inquire about additional parking in Sumner. He was directed to drive to Bonney Lake and catch the express bus there to get to the station.

Dwight Dickson asked if it would be possible for the City to set-up its own bus service.

Scott Drennen commented that Sound Transit has been a huge success. It might be possible to raise funds by linking transit projects to the impact fees that are already charged for

transportation.

Edward Higgins, a civil engineer provided the City with a copy of *Synthesis 53*, a federal transit board report. He also suggested traffic could be improved if all traffic signals were synchronized to give workforce transit the first priority.

Councilmember Ford commented that the City should be proactive and start bus service to see if it works.

Adjourn Councilmember Pestinger moved to adjourn at 8:10 pm. Councilmember Inge seconded the motion and it carried.

FIRE AGREEMENT:

Call to Order Mayor Temple reconvened the City Council Meeting. The Pierce County Fire Protection District No. 18 Board of Commissioners was present and held a concurrent meeting.

Contract Discussion City Administrator Bethune provided the Council with an overview of the recent changes made to the proposed Fire Consolidation Agreement.

Public Hearing Mayor Temple and Chairman West opened the public hearing at 9:40 pm.

Jesse Mitchell commented that these contracts are written to encourage annexation. He also encouraged both agencies to make sure that the language in the contract carries over to any contracting agency.

Bob Shute informed the Council that there is no legal entity named “Orting Valley Fire and Rescue.” Currently the City is getting the benefit of a fire chief, battalion chief, administrative assistant and training officer for only \$48,000 per year. The District currently pays \$250,000 per year for these staff members. Mr. Shute concluded that he is not opposed to a consolidation agreement, but an agreement should be done in a way that is fair and legal. There should also be a process in the agreement to allow both parties to fine tune the agreement if changes need to be made.

Darrell Flannigan stated that he is a built proponent of consolidation and reminded the Council that the fire department is there to serve the citizens and in fact, everything in the fire department belongs to the citizens.

David Kiesig, a representative from the Fire District 18 Citizens Advisory Committee, commented that he was glad to see both groups at the same table making progress towards the consolidation.

Charlotte Stielow asked how long annexation takes and if annexation were to occur will, the levy rates for district residents and city residents are the same?

Bill Hash, a City of Orting Firefighter, commented that the Orting Fire Department has made tremendous improvements since he was hired. Staffing levels have increased and he is no longer the only firefighter on duty.

Hearing no further comment the hearing was closed at 10:00 pm.

Staff for both organizations will continue to meet to work on the agreement.

ADJOURN:

Councilmember Colorossi moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:13 pm. Councilmember Pestinger seconded the motion and it carried.

ATTEST:

Finance Director/City Clerk Susan J. Davis

Mayor Cheryl M. Temple