

COUNCILMEMBERS

- Position No.
1. Tod Gunther
 2. John Kelly
 3. Tony Belot
 4. John Williams
 5. Gregg Bradshaw
 6. Greg Hogan
 7. Scott Drennen



ORTING CITY COUNCIL

Study Session Meeting Minutes
104 Bridge St S. Orting, WA 98360
October 20th, 2021
6:00 p.m.

Deputy Mayor Hogan, Chair

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, AND ROLL CALL.

Deputy Mayor Hogan made the following statement:

**The City utilized remote attendance for Councilmembers and City employees. Please note: OPMA rules regarding provision for the public in a space were suspended by proclamation of the Governor. The meeting was available to the public by a computer link or by phone.*

Deputy Mayor Hogan called the meeting to order at 6:01pm. Councilmember Kelly led the pledge of allegiance, and then roll call was taken.

Councilmembers Present: Deputy Mayor Greg Hogan, Councilmembers Tod Gunther, John Williams, Scott Drennen, John Kelly, Tony Belot, and Gregg Bradshaw.

Elected Official: Mayor Josh Penner.

Staff Present: Finance Director Gretchen Russo, Engineer JC Hungerford, City Clerk Kim Agfalvi, City Planner Emily Adams, Police Chief Chris Gard, City Engineer Maryanne Zukowski, Public Works Director Greg Reed. Virtual: Attorney Charlotte Archer.

2. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Public Works - CM Drennan & CM Bradshaw

Councilmembers Drennan and Bradshaw briefed on the following topics discussed at the last public works meeting:

- Nothing to report.

Public Safety - CM Belot & CM Gunther

Councilmembers Belot and Gunther briefed on the following topics discussed at the last public safety meeting:

- Nothing to report.

Community and Government Affairs - CM Kelly & CM Williams

Councilmembers Kelly and Williams briefed on the following topics discussed at the last Community and Government Affairs meeting:

- Clock tower update.
- Golf Cart fee.
- Daffodil storage.
- Interlocal agreements that the committee reviewed.
- Reviewed swing sets that are on the agenda.

3. STAFF REPORTS

Public Works

Public Works Director Greg Reed briefed on the following:

- Winter preparation.
- Crack sealing has been completed.

Councilmember Drennan asked about Voight's Creek and possible flooding. Public Works Director Greg Reed stated Pierce County came out and did some clearing already. They removed debris but did not take major log, as they would rather have it come down than collect next to the trestle.

Councilmember Williams asked about the vandalism that has been going on in the City. He asked if there are any ideas for solutions. Public Works Director Greg Reed stated the City is looking into wireless cameras that will help the City to identify the individuals that are vandalizing property around the City. Greg Reed stated that the posts around the barbeque pit had to be repainted and the bricks in the pit also were damaged and had to be replaced.

Councilmember Kelly and Williams asked questions about cameras, and the types of cameras that would work. Cameras that are able to be mounted to street lights were one of the types that were mentioned. Councilmember Kelly stated that he saw a demonstration for the cameras, and that they are extremely versatile, and the City of Buckley has been very happy with those same cameras that they purchased. He stated he would like to see us include them in the budget.

Finance

Finance Director Gretchen Russo briefed on the following:

- Staff report – two new staff members have been hired. Activities and Events Coordinator and also the HR/Payroll position has been filled.
- Jury trial for court has been cancelled.

City Planner

City Planner Emily Adams briefed on the following:

- Working on parks plan for November discussion at Study session.

City Engineer

City Engineer Maryanne Zukowski briefed on the following:

- Interest in development and plats.
- Transportation funding.

City Clerk

Kim Agfalvi, City Clerk briefed on the following:

- Updated on conference attended.
- Update on Parks and Rec programs that are going on – dance and soccer.

Executive – Mayor

Mayor Penner briefed on the following:

- The City of Orting hosted Pierce County Public Safety Committee on Monday
- Met with Representative Wilcox to discuss legislative priorities and to go over the bridge funding and funding for the Waste Water Resource Recovery Facility. They also discussed police reform laws that were passed in 2021.

Police

Chris Gard, Chief of Police briefed on the following:

- Updated on vandalism happening around the City.
- Hiring process – lateral candidate and process is almost complete.
- Oral boards will be happening on this coming Friday.
- Body camera order has been placed, but may be delayed due to delays in supply chain.
- Police Department will hold trick or treat event on Halloween for kids with games and candy.

4. AGENDA ITEMS

A. AB21-90 – 2022 Draft Budget Update.

Finance Director Gretchen Russo briefed on the budget update. One of the items updated was property taxes, which was entered at the highest lawful levy amount. Council discretionary funds were increased to \$21,000.00 and grants to outside agencies was increased to \$40,000.00.

Councilmember Kelly stated that the request for four new public works workers seems like a large increase. He stated that he would like to see some information from the Public Works department supporting the need for the large increase in staff. He asked questions about the storm pond mowing not being done by Public Works.

Director of Public Works Greg Reed stated there has been a large increase in work orders, and the average amount of days before work orders are complete is 128 days. For wastewater, the City has two new employees, and there is a need for an additional wastewater employee needed for training on new equipment being installed. He stated the new water employee will have increased technical skills and certifications. Greg Reed also stated we have had 4 leaks on the asbestos line in the last 6 months, which takes a lot of staff time. He stated his biggest concern is to become more proactive, and not reactive, and additional staff is needed. In the last twenty years the City has added one employee, with almost doubling infrastructure.

Councilmember Belot asked about restroom building maintenance. Director of Public Works Greg Reed stated bathrooms are needing extra cleaning due to vandalism and increased messes in the facility. He also asked about streets vegetation removal and Greg Reed explained the maintenance involved in the process of removing it. Councilmember Belot asked about contracting out that process, and Greg Reed explained a lot of times it is more expensive to contract out items over hiring an in-house employee.

Councilmember Williams commended the department of the work they do. He also stated that four employees seem like a lot. He would prefer to see one or two of the key positions filled, and then possibly readjust next year. He would like to see extra funds be put into cameras, or extra police patrols to help mitigate the vandalism. Greg Reed stated he will come up with more information to support the need for more workers to present back to Council.

Councilmember Drennan stated the City has come a long way, and the report presented does not give a true picture of the need in the department. He stated items missing are the cost figures and number of hours spent on each work order is not being presented in the report. He stated a weekly performance of how the crew is performing would be helpful to determine the need for additional employees.

Councilmember Gunther added his compliments to Director of Public Works Greg Reed.

Finance Director asked the Council what they would like her to present in the next budget, in the number of workers for the Public Works department.

Councilmember Bradshaw asked if Public Works can move forward positively with two new workers. Greg Reed stated that hiring of two would vastly improve the department and the ability to provide good service.

Mayor Penner asked if Council would be okay holding off decision while Public Works comes up with more data and Council was agreeable.

B. AB21-91 – 2022 Property Tax Levy

Finance Director Gretchen Russo presented a power point presentation on Property Tax Levy. She briefed on property tax basics, and how they are calculated. She briefed on statutory rate limits, and property tax limits. Finance Director Russo shared how property taxes will impact the homeowners in the City of Orting. She stated we are asking for the highest lawful levy and that the estimated annual increase for the average homeowner is \$24.14 and that the property tax would be 1.9734% higher than last year.

Councilmember Bradshaw stated he is at a loss as to when the value of the home goes up, why we have to increase the tax on the homeowner. Finance Director Russo briefed on the rules in regards to property tax increases, and what is allowed to be asked for and what is not allowed to be asked for. Councilmember Bradshaw stated the City may need to put together education for its citizens on the property taxes and how they work, so citizens have a better idea of where their money is going.

Councilmember Kelly stated property taxes are a sore subject with everyone. He said what surprised him was that citizens voted pretty overwhelmingly for a fire benefit charge, as well as the last school levy. He stated citizens have said they are willing to support things they believe in, and he stated he thinks we don't have a choice to raise them to keep our parks and police department in the best shape it can be.

Councilmember Belot stated a visual way of explaining things would be best to help educate citizens.

Councilmember Williams asked for clarification on the tax rate. He stated that if the total bill for a homeowner will stay the same, the piece of the taxes the City would receive would be different with the raised increase and asked for clarification on the subject.

Councilmember Belot asked what the City can do to raise money without raising taxes. Finance Director Russo stated she will do some more research and get back to the Council with the other way's money can be raised.

Councilmember Drennan stated that the City has looked into different benefit districts, and it has been hard to sell to citizens. It would decrease the amount the City can tax in other ways.

Action: Move forward to October 27th meeting for a public hearing on property taxes and capital projects.

C. AB21- 88 - Daycare Code Amendments.

City Planner Emily Adams briefed on daycare code amendments. She stated the amendments will ensure the same terminology for the two types of daycare facilities (centers and family home) will be used throughout the code. The second amendment will add in specific code for daycare centers that wish to serve more than 12 kids in residence. The code amends the definition of a "daycare center" to be allowed in residences. If an in-home daycare wants to serve more than 12 kids, it would require a conditional use permit.

Mayor Penner asked about preschools, and whether any other daycares have gone through the process. City Planner Emily Adams stated that a preschool in town has gone through this process and went before a hearing examiner.

Action: Closed record decision for November 10, 2021 meeting.

D. AB21-89 – Landscape Code Amendments.

City Planner Emily Adams briefed on the proposed landscape code amendments, which would require applicants to select street trees off a pre-approved list. The amendments also include code revisions for clarification purposes regarding landscaping for residential developments and the intent of this section of the code and the requirements are not changing. Council discussion followed.

Action: Amend the language of the amendment in regards to buffers and bring to CGA committee on November 4th, 2021.

E. AB 21-81 – Whitehawk Blvd. Extension Additional Design Costs.

City Engineer Maryanne Zukowski briefed that the agenda item has been modified, due to a phone call from the Washington State Department of Transportation. She stated we need to confirm the City Council wants a roundabout design at two locations. The original project had a grant for \$346,000.00 federal dollars. Contract for Parametrix design was for \$697,954.00. She briefed on what the additional costs will pay for. The request presented is for approval of a roundabout at State Route 162 and Calistoga which will increase design cost task of environmental already completed for the Biological Assessment (BA) and Geotech draft reports and adds \$47,000.00 on work that has already been done to Parametrix contract. Staff will need to look for additional funding for the design and the project will move to a hold pattern.

Councilmember Williams stated normally he is for roundabouts, because they do push traffic through smoothly. He questioned whether this project is in the best interest with the property we have to acquire and the impact to property citizens own.

Councilmember Bradshaw asked if the state is taking responsibility of the increased costs per their decision to require a roundabout, and they have declined and are not able to help with design because their staffing levels have decreased. City Engineer Maryanne Zukowski stated the state is willing to write a letter of support in seeking grants, but that they do not have the capacity to help us with any other items.

Councilmember Gunther stated he is not for the roundabouts, and the citizens of Orting were previously polled and stated they were not for the roundabouts as they wanted to preserve the old town feel.

Councilmember Kelly stated the roundabout design has some really large splitters. He stated the ones in Lacey do not have the splitters and that he wants a roundabout that is right, and that will move traffic efficiently. Engineer Zukowski stated the design is designed for the large amounts of trucks that go through the area and that it is the smallest compact one lane design roundabout for the design manual.

Councilmember Drennan stated that the outer lines in the drawing are not actually the road, and are temporary construction easements to look at maximum impacts for construction that is temporary.

Councilmember Bradshaw asked about if we decide to have a traffic signal, will it affect the relationship with the Department of Transportation. Engineer Zukowski stated that it is up to the City to determine

whether we have a traffic signal or roundabout, and would only impact the City and maintenance of the signal.

Director of Public Works Greg Reed stated there is more opportunity for funding with a traffic roundabout.

Councilmember Belot stated that ripping up yards and turning around garages seems like a lot to ask of citizens.

Mayor Penner stated that he ran for council ten years ago and that he was that he was against this project. He stated we have the opportunity to gut check and ask if we really want to have this project at all.

Councilmember Kelly stated we are a long way into this design, and we first talked about moving the Puget Sound Energy substation. Moving the substation is not the most expensive, and acquiring houses would be more expensive. He stated we should bring the road in closer to the end of Kansas.

Councilmember Drennan stated that coming from a historical perspective, in 1993 the county came to the City and wanted our input on bypass options. The alignment options are not available now due to development of subdivisions, which is how we ended up with no options other than the design presented.

Council discussion followed on the decision between a roundabout and a traffic light.

Action: Move item forward to meeting on October 27th for a decision on whether to approve a contract amendment on additional design for a roundabout at Calistoga.

F. AB21-82 – Developing Public Involvement Plans – Whitehawk Boulevard Extension De Minimis.

City Engineer Maryanne Zukowski briefed on 2022 construction impacts to citizens when the Calistoga project begins versus other projects. She proposed to take it through committee on each aspect of public involvement and then bring it to Council. Engineer Zukowski briefed on DeMinimis impact determination.

Action: For informational purposes only.

G. AB21-83 – Right of Way Remediation Costs – 703 Kansas St SW.

Engineer Zukowski briefed on the right of way remediation costs for the property at 703 Kansas St SW. She stated she was asking for approval from council for remediation costs in the amount of \$43,442.86. The costs cover price differential, incidental expenses, mortgage interest differential payments, and moving expenses.

Action: Move forward as standalone item for October 27th meeting.

H. AB21-74 - Sidewalk Health and Safety Regulations.

Councilmember Belot briefed the Council on activities they would like to prohibit on sidewalks, specifically activities that cause obstruction of sidewalks. The ordinance would prohibit these activities in the City's business core, roughly from Safeway to City Hall.

Councilmember Kelly stated he would like to have the provision for permits for organizations that are not for profit stricken from the ordinance. Councilmember Belot stated he would be amenable to adding that language to the ordinance, as long as the activity is not for profit.

Councilmember Williams stated his concern is that he has seen people sleeping on the benches in town. He would like to prohibit anyone from sleeping on benches in the public right away.

Finance Director Russo stated we have language in the code that prohibits sleeping or camping in the parks in Orting Municipal Code already.

Councilmember Bradshaw asked for clarifications on what is the right away and what is City owned property.

Action: Move forward as standalone item to October 27th meeting after amending permit clause for activities that are not generating revenue.

I. AB21-80 - Fee Schedule.

City Clerk Kim Agfalvi briefed on the fee schedule changes. City Planner Emily Adams briefed on the level of service plan and our park impact fee formula. By changing the level of service, we change the park impact fee, which has to be changed as part of the annual budget process. It would increase park impact fee from \$830 to \$1400 with the change in the level of service plan.

Public Works Director Greg Reed addressed increasing the fee for cutting off the lock that is placed on a water meter from \$35 to \$100 to account for materials and staff time.

Action: Move forward as a standalone item to October 27th with updated parks impact fee of \$1400 and lock cut off fee of \$100.

J. AB21-78 – Golf Cart Fees.

City Clerk Kim Agfalvi briefed on the ordinance to remove the golf cart fee from the fee schedule and the ordinance presented would eliminate the fee for golf cart registrations from the City code.

Council discussion followed.

Action: Move to consent agenda on October 27th meeting.

K. AB 21-84 – Grant Policy.

City Clerk Kim Agfalvi briefed on the grant policy of the City of Orting.

Councilmember Williams briefed the Council that the policy should be run through council, as some of the organizations are growing, and the amount of funds received should be diminishing each year. He stated this year they have gone up substantially, and the CGA committee wanted council to review the amounts and re-look at the policy.

Mayor Penner briefed that the policy was set as incentive to collect revenue and the amount was set to diminish over time. He stated that in order to maintain the eligibility, they would have to be better at raising money, without needing grant money from the City.

Finance Director Gretchen Russo stated if the goal was to slowly reduce the grants, we would need to re-work the grant policy, and that direction from the Council was needed.

Mayor Penner stated there is nothing that commits the council to give the money to anyone, and that it was more of a ceiling than a floor.

Councilmember Kelly stated he was surprised that it was not based on a diminishing amount each year, not on the income they generate, unless they can provide a real need for an increase in funds and Councilmember Drennan stated he would like to see us incentivize organizations to use money for expanded services.

Mayor Penner stated that this is the people's money, that these organizations that need it should be able to reach out to citizens directly. His general opinion that taking this money and spending it on grants is an opportunity cost that can be used somewhere else.

Action: Bring back to CGA committee for review.

L. AB 21-85 – Grant Applications.

City Clerk Kim Agfalvi briefed on the grant applications received for 2022. She stated the City reached out to the Orting Valley Farmers Market with a request for additional financial information, and that they had not responded.

Action: Move forward to October 27th meeting as standalone item with staff recommendations.

M. AB 21-79 – Parking Strip Ordinance.

Mayor Penner briefed on the proposed ordinance, and what will be omitted from the municipal code. The owners of property abutting upon streets and avenues shall no longer be able to plant shrubbery, trees, or otherwise and by seeding for lawn services. It also states that the property owner will maintain abutting parking strips for public use as permitted in the OMC, including but not limited to the short-term parking of licensed vehicles.

Councilmember Drennan stated concerns over defining what licensed vehicles are, and Councilmember Gunther stated concerns about RV and boat parking in the parking strip areas.

Action: Move to consent agenda for October 27th meeting.

N. AB21-86 – Pipeline Video Camera Bids.

Greg Reed briefed on pipe line inspection camera. He briefed on bids received, and is seeking authorization to spend \$1515.00 that is over budget from what was approved.

Action: Move to consent agenda for October 27th meeting.

O. AB21-87 – Swing Sets.

Councilmember Kelly asked to pull the item from the agenda and to send it to the Parks Advisory Board for recommendation on where we should install the swing sets.

Action: Have parks advisory board review item at their next meeting.

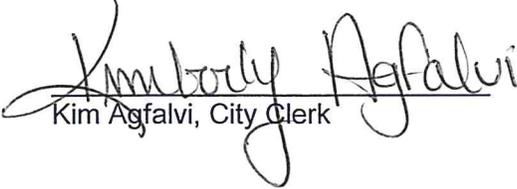
5. EXECUTIVE SESSION

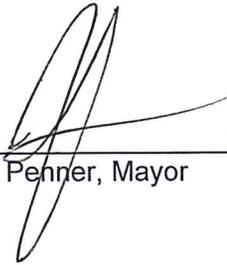
No executive session.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Deputy Mayor Hogan adjourned the meeting at 9:37pm.

ATTEST:


Kim Agfalvi, City Clerk


Joshua Penner, Mayor