

# City Council Meeting Minutes

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THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 2013

CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS

CITY OF COLUMBIA CITY, COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGON

## AGENDA ITEM 1

### CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL:

#### CONVENED:

Mayor Cheryl A. Young called the regular meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Harold Olsen delivered the invocation and Mayor Young led the flag salute.

#### COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mayor Cheryl A. Young  
Councilor Josh Fromm  
Councilor Sally Ann Marson  
Councilor Casey Wheeler

#### COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT:

Councilor Shannon Fitzgibbons

#### ALSO PRESENT:

Leahnette Rivers, City Administrator/Recorder

#### ATTORNEY PRESENT:

None

A quorum was present and due notice had been published.

## AGENDA ITEM 2

### PUBLIC HEARINGS:

**2.1 Public Hearing: To gather public testimony relating to a proposal to adjust water and sewer rates. It is anticipated that the new rates will generate additional revenue equal to 3 percent.**

Public Hearing opened.

Leahnette explained the proposed rate adjustment is in keeping with the recommendations contained in the April 2013 Water and Wastewater Rate Analysis Summary Report prepared by Shaun Pigott Associates, LLC.

Leahnette said the Report recommended the City increase water and sewer rates by 3 percent annually during the next five years in order to support costs associated with water and sewer system operations, capital construction, and debt requirements and meet the loan requirements associated with the debt. She said the report also recommended the City consider make adjustments to the water rate structure to even out the gaps between the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> rate tiers. She said the proposal includes a slight shift in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> rate tiers to begin to bridge the gap, and a slight reduction in the minimum base rate. She said this proposal is for rate adjustments effective July 1, 2013. She said the result is not a 3 percent across-the-board water rate increase, but it should generate an average of 3 percent in additional revenue. She said the proposal varies for commercial and industrial

accounts, but unless someone has questions about commercial or industrial rates, she'll reserve discussion until later during the meeting.

Leahnette said the proposal includes a 3 percent across-the-board increase in sewer rates.

Joe Turner of Columbia City said since he moved to Columbia City, he has replaced his faucet, showerhead and toilet with low-flow fixtures. He said they have an energy efficient washer, and they use the least amount of water as possible, and he has not been able to lower his water bill. He said he has requested an itemized bill several times. He said the rates are out of balance. He said even with low water usage, the rates are so high. He said a household of two pays almost the same as a family of five or six. He said the more you use, the more you should pay. He said when they lived in Pendleton, they paid \$0.04107 per cubic foot. He said in Columbia City, on usage between 101 and 500 cubic feet, you only pay \$0.0050 now, and \$0.0150 under the proposal per cubic foot.

Mayor Young said in Pendleton there are a lot of commercial and industrial businesses that are helping to pay for the water and sewer systems. In Columbia City, we are drawing primarily from a residential base.

Joe said in Columbia City we are not bringing in any businesses to help pay the rates. He said when they need to shop or want to go out for dinner, they have to leave town.

Leahnette said Joe makes a very good point. She said the lack of a commercial and industrial base is part of the reason Columbia City's water and sewer rates are so high. She said the residential customers are required to pay a high minimum charge in order to generate enough revenue to make the annual loan payments and operate the systems. She said the City Council recently established a Comprehensive Plan Review Committee, and the Committee is currently considering the possibility of rezoning certain areas within the City to encourage the development of a "downtown." She said the Port of St. Helens is also currently investing a lot of money to develop a Strategic Business Plan for the Port's property within Columbia City, and the City is working closely with the Port on that project. She said the Business Plan will identify the types of industry that are best suited for the Port's property and Columbia City. She said all of these projects are targeted at attracting business and industry to Columbia City.

Joe suggested the first tier should be twice as high as the proposal.

Leahnette agreed with Joe. However, she said when we shift the design of our rate structure, we place a large burden on a small segment of the population. She said the proposed rates make a smaller shift in that same direction.

Joe said 3 percent increases for a period of five years is a lot of money, and that money can only be used for sewer and water uses.

Leahnette said the need to implement another 3 percent increase during each of the remaining four years will be revisited each year.

Public Hearing closed.

**AGENDA ITEM 3**

**CITIZEN INPUT:**

None.

**AGENDA ITEM 7**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**7.10 Application for Structure within the Unimproved Right-of-Way: Application for Structure within the Unimproved Right-of-Way as submitted by Robert Anderson of 1950 First Street.**

The Mayor and Council reviewed a request from Robert Anderson to place two temporary structures within the undeveloped right-of-way on "H" Street adjacent to his home at 1950 First Street.

Robert Anderson spoke to staff and Council about the request at length. He said he will be removing the motor home from the right-of-way.

Leahnette asked the Council for clarification on the permit fee - would the Council require a separate permit and fee for each structure, or would the Council issue a single permit for the two structures.

MOVED (MARSON), SECONDED (WHEELER) AND CARRIED TO APPROVE THE TWO STRUCTURES UNDER ONE RECORDED PERMIT FOR \$150.00 PROVIDED THEY ARE MOVED BACK FROM THE PAVEMENT A MINIMUM OF SIX (6) FEET FOR VISION CLEARANCE PURPOSES. Councilor Fromm abstained from voting.

**7.3 Request to Pass-Through Tipping Fee Increase: Request to pass-through recent tipping fee increase submitted by Ernie Martin, Site Manager for Hudson Garbage Service.**

The Mayor and Council reviewed a request dated May 21, 2013, from Ernie Martin for approval of a pass-through rate increase for Hudson Garbage Service effective July 1, 2013. The request explained that the Columbia County Transfer Station has adopted a 2.1 percent increase in disposal fees effective July 1, 2013. No objections were heard from the Council.

Ernie Martin reported that during the recent Spring Clean Up event they removed 3,460 pounds of garbage, 60 yards of yard debris, 15 yards of metal, and about 20 tires. He said it seemed like it was a rather slow day.

Councilor Marson said the events have contributed to cleaning things up around town. Leahnette said the first year a lot of junk was dropped off, but each year the amount of activity seems to decline.

Leahnette will prepare a Resolution approving the pass through increase for the Council's consideration during their next meeting.

**AGENDA ITEM 4**

**COUNCIL REPORTS:**

**4.1 Parks Committee:** In the absence of Chair Fitzgibbons, Mayor Young said the roses along the hillside at the entrance sign site look beautiful.

Councilor Marson said the veterans group at the Elks Lodge and the American Legion members at the Moose Lodge are promoting brick sales for our veteran's park.

Micah said our park volunteer team is growing rapidly. Leahnette said we've had seven citizens sign up as park volunteers during the past 45 days.

Leahnette reported that five members of the Garden Club have signed up to maintain the Veterans Park.

Leahnette noted that the public hearing for the off-leash dog park will be held at 7:00 p.m. at the Planning Commission meeting next Tuesday.

**4.2 Water Source and Development Committee:** Leahnette reported that a Request for Proposals for Water Meter Installation Services was recently distributed. She said the Public Works Crew has identified each of the service lines that need to be disconnected from the 4" water main and connected to the 10" water main. She said Kennedy Jenks has completed approximately 90 percent of the design work for the pressure reducing valve (PRV) project.

Micah said he's in the process of reviewing the draft design plans for the PRV project, and the engineers have been out conducting field work for the project during the past few days.

Leahnette said we are prepared to order the water meters and the meter reading equipment from HD Supply, the sole source vendor, on July 1, 2013, after the new budget goes into effect.

**4.3 Street Committee:** Chair Wheeler said the streets will be torn up a bit this summer.

Leahnette said the utility cuts on Sixth Street should be repaired this season following the line abandonment work, but the cuts associated with the PRV work may not be repaired until next spring.

Micah said they plan to ask the PRV contractor to put in temporary cold patch to carry us through the winter months.

**4.4 Sewer Committee:** Leahnette suggested we may want to consider appointing some members to the Sewer Committee since we have several planned projects coming up. She said one citizen suggested we consider combining the water and sewer committees. Councilor Fromm suggested Councilor Marson might take over sewer and water and he could serve on a Code Enforcement Committee. Council will give these ideas some consideration.

**4.5 Audit Committee:** Secretary Wheeler said the Audit Committee will meet on Monday at 10:00 a.m.

**4.6 Hazard Mitigation Planning Group:** Member Wheeler said the group will meet on Monday at 6:00 p.m.

**4.7 Other Reports:** Councilor Marson said she took a trip to Boardman last Friday and Saturday to tour the PGE Plant, visit the Port of Morrow, and attend the SAGE Center dedication. She said the dedication ceremony was actually the focal point of the trip. She said the SAGE Center is a sustainable agriculture and energy center. She said the SAGE Center is housed in a very large building, and current or prospective business owners can visit the Center to obtain a lot of the information they need in order to make decisions about whether or not they want to locate their business in Boardman. She said the event was well attended and the SAGE Center is an extremely attractive, interactive and informative visitor's center.

Councilor Marson said she had an opportunity to visit with the Port of Morrow Commissioners, and she asked them what was most challenging in their efforts to attract business growth to their district. She said the Commissioners said rezoning and expanding their airport were the two greatest hurdles they faced during the process. She said there were a lot of similarities between the Port of Morrow and the Port of St. Helens, although the Port of Morrow has access to two interstates and an airport. She said in recent years the Port of Morrow has attracted many businesses - such as Tillamook Cheese, who found the site particularly attractive because there were so many cattle and dairy farms and agricultural opportunities in the area.

Councilor Marson said the SAGE Center has many interactive features. For example, she said you can push a button associated with a specific business to see where their products are distributed. She said Con Agra Foods distributes potato products all over the world, and is the number 2 supplier of frozen potatoes in all of Asia. She said another area in the Center features all of the local products, such as onions, Full Sail Beer, Krusteaz, onions, trees, and many more. She said they are able to show movies about any of the local business sites a person might be interested in. She said one of the businesses there is the tire recycling company that St. Helens turned away a few years ago. She said they spent about 3 hours in the PGE Plant, which employs about 120 people, and she was impressed

with how clean the site was. She said the plant needs to phase out the use of coal fuel by the year 2020, and they are currently experimenting with using agricultural waste to fuel the plant.

Councilor Marson said you can take a tour of the port property on a simulated hot air balloon ride within the SAGE Center. She said the Center is open to all visitors, and it is very interesting and educational. She noted that one barge is equal to 35 railcars or 120 trucks, and one tow (four barges) is equal to 140 railcars or 480 trucks.

Councilor Marson said the Port of Morrow was established in 1950, and they have a brand new office building that has conference rooms and can be used as a conference center in conjunction with a hotel that is located next door on Port property.

Councilor Marson shared photos of the trip with the Mayor, Council and staff.

**AGENDA ITEM 5**

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**5.1 Bills paid with check numbers 17285 through 17342 during the month of May, 2013.**

**5.2 Minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting of May 16, 2013.**

**5.3 ~~Activities report for the month of April 2013 from the Public Works Superintendent.~~**

**5.4 Activities report from the City Administrator/Recorder.**

**5.5 Appointment of Larry G. Preston, Theodore Burns, and Monica Burns to the Parks Committee.**

Item 5.3 was removed from the consent agenda.

MOVED (WHEELER), SECONDED (FROMM), AND CARRIED BY ROLL CALL VOTE TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS AMENDED.

**AGENDA ITEM 6**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

None.

**AGENDA ITEM 7**

**NEW BUSINESS (continued):**

**7.1 Council Bill No. 13-676; Resolution No. 13-1082-R: A Resolution extending the City of Columbia City's Workers' Compensation Coverage to volunteers of the City of Columbia City, Oregon, during the fiscal year 2013-14.**

MOVED (WHEELER), SECONDED (FROMM) AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADOPT COUNCIL BILL NO. 13-676.

**7.2 Council Bill No. 13-677; Resolution no. 13-1083-R: A Resolution authorizing application under the Special City Allotment Program.**

MOVED (MARSON), SECONDED (WHEELER) AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADOPT COUNCIL BILL NO. 13-677.

**7.4 Performance and Maintenance Agreement: Performance and Maintenance Agreement between Wayne Weigandt and the City of Columbia City.**

MOVED (WHEELER), SECONDED (FROMM) AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY TO AUTHORIZE SIGNATURE TO THE PERFORMANCE AND MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT.

**7.5 Council Bill No. 13-678; Resolution No. 13-1084-R: A Resolution of the City of Columbia City accepting improvements associated with the Canyon Creek Partition Project as requested by Wayne Weigandt.**

MOVED (FROMM), SECONDED (MARSON) AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADOPT COUNCIL BILL NO. 13-678.

**7.6 Citizen Satisfaction Survey Results: Review results of Citizen Satisfaction Survey dated May 31, 2013.**

The Mayor and Council reviewed the results, which were included in the packet, and Leahnette shared the results of one additional response that was received.

**7.7 Backflow Testing Proposals: Review proposals received for Backflow Testing Services.**

The Mayor and Council reviewed the proposal received from Olson LLC for backflow testing services. Leahnette said the Request for Proposal was sent to four backflow testing companies, but only one responded.

MOVED (WHEELER), SECONDED (MARSON) AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSAL FROM OLSON LLC FOR BACKFLOW TESTING SERVICES.

**7.8 Water and Sewer Rate Proposal: Review and discuss water and sewer rates proposed for July 1, 2013.**

Councilor Fromm said we have some old infrastructure that needs to be replaced, and he understands that people get frustrated about the rates, but we have to fix things or it will cost us all a whole lot more at a later date.

Leahnette asked the Council for feedback on the proposed rate structure, noting that the proposed increase for sewer is an across-the-board 3 percent increase, but the proposed changes to the water rate structure for 3/4-inch and 5/8-inch meters will generate an estimated 3 percent increase in revenue, but will shift some of the tiers so the percentage will vary somewhat between customers.

Leahnette asked the Council for feedback on the proposal to move to a flow-factor equivalence charge for larger commercial and industrial meters as recommended by the April 2013 Water and Wastewater Rate Analysis Summary Report. She reviewed the impact of the structure change on the base rates for larger meters. She suggested that if we decide to implement the recommendation contained in the Report, we should phase it in over a period of five years.

It was the consensus of the Council that we proceed with the proposed rate structures and phase in the change for the larger commercial and industrial meters rate structure over a five-year period.

**7.9 Weed Abatement: Request for Council authorization to abate weeds on property located at 2455 Sixth Street, Columbia City, Oregon, described as Tax Lot 5128-BA-01905.**

MOVED (WHEELER), SECONDED (MARSON) AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY TO AUTHORIZE THE ABATEMENT OF WEEDS ON PROPERTY LOCATED AT 2455 SIXTH STREET.

**AGENDA ITEM 8**

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

**Attorney Report:** Harold reported that he was recently about 35 miles northeast of Pendleton on the South Fork of the Umatilla River, and he saw a bull moose. He said it walked up and stood about 30 feet from his trailer and looked in the window at him and posed for photos. He said it was the first moose he has ever seen in Oregon.

Joe Turner said about six or seven head live near Tollgate where he used to live.

Harold noted that they ate dinner at the River Lodge and Grill at the Port of Morrow in Boardman, and it was a really neat place with a beautiful view. Leahnette agreed that it is a great place to stop and stay or eat.

**Police Update:** Chief McGlothlin said Officer Cowen is on board and has made some quality arrests for narcotics, domestic assault, and theft II. He said Officer Cowen is scheduled for the motor carrier course during the week of June 17 to June 21, and Officer Greisen will attend the same course in September. He said it's a busy time of year, his kids are about ready to get out of school for the summer, and he's getting ready to go on vacation. He said during his absence, Sergeant Mansheim will be handling internal departmental supervisory issues and responsibilities, and Undersheriff Moyer and Lieutenant Hald from the Sheriff's office will provide backup supervisory assistance with any major incidents that arise as needed.

**Credit Union Banking Services:** Leahnette said she is currently investigating municipal banking service opportunities now that the local credit unions are able to handle public funds.

**Fee for Permit in Unimproved Right-of-Way:** Leahnette asked the Council for direction with regard to the \$150.00 application fee for an Exception Permit for RV, Boat or Trailer Storage in ROW in the event that the permit is denied by the Council. It was the consensus of the Council that a \$25.00 processing fee be retained, and \$125.00 be refunded in the event that the permit is denied. It was the consensus of the Council that once a permit was issued, no refunds will be made, even when the use is discontinued.

**Town Hall Meeting:** The Town Hall Meeting for the proposed City Charter will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 13, 2013.

**AGENDA ITEM 9**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

APPROVED:

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Cheryl A. Young  
Mayor

ATTEST:

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Leahnette Rivers  
City Administrator/Recorder