

# City Council Meeting Minutes

---

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2016

CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS

CITY OF COLUMBIA CITY, COLUMBIA COUNTY, OREGON

**AGENDA ITEM 1**      **CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL:**

**CONVENED:**

Mayor Young called the regular meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and led the flag salute.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mayor Cheryl A. Young  
Councilor Josh Fromm  
Councilor Nell Harrison  
Councilor Sally Ann Marson  
Councilor Gordon Thistle

**COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT:**

None

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Stacey Goldstein, City Planner  
Bob Johnston, City Building Official  
Michael S. McGlothlin, Chief of Police  
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 hear testimony about a proposed forgivable loan in the amount of \$20,000 from the Safe Drinking Water Loan Program for water system improvements consisting of water system mapping and asset management.**

Public Hearing opened.

Joe Turner of Columbia City asked for further clarification.

Leahnette explained that this loan will not need to be paid back so long as we complete the project in accordance with the contract. She said it is similar to a grant.

Russ Thackery of Columbia City asked if any of the contract requirements will be difficult to meet.

Leahnette expressed no concerns about meeting the contract requirements.

Joe asked if this project is a result of the recent water improvements that were completed.

Leahnette said this project is not related to the recent project. She said it will provide us with more detailed water system maps in a GIS format along with an asset management system.

Public Hearing closed.

**2.2 Public Hearing: To take written and oral testimony about proposed amendments to the vision clearance areas and the addition of an accessory buildings and structures chapter to the Columbia City Development Code.**

Public Hearing opened.

Stacey explained that some of the amendments relate to accessory buildings were originally suggested by City staff because the existing regulations are somewhat confusing making them difficult to administer. She said during the Planning Commission's discussion, members expressed concerns about the lack of design standards for accessory structures to protect the residential character of the neighborhoods. Some members felt some accessory structures are unsightly and others are too large. She said a new chapter for accessory buildings was developed that includes new and updated definitions and creates three sets of standards based upon the size of the building footprint. She said standards apply to structures that are up to 200 square feet, 200-600 square feet, and over 600 square feet. She said the larger the accessory structure is, the more criteria there is that will need to be met.

Stacey said the amendments also include changes to the vision clearance area standards. She said under the current code, the vision clearance triangle is measured differently than most current codes, so some changes are proposed, and the Planning Commission also wanted to see some changes to include vision clearance requirements for driveways.

Leahnette said currently the vision clearance is measured from the property line, and under the proposal the vision clearance area will be measured from the edge of the pavement. She asked what will happen when the pavement is widened and the vision clearance area is moved back, creating some new "obstructions" within the vision clearance area.

Stacey said in those cases, the "obstructions" would be grandfathered in. She said they could not be expanded or replaced and would eventually be phased out.

Leahnette asked if it will be up to the individual property owners, then, to prove that their "obstruction" existed prior to the code amendment if a complaint is received in the future.

Stacey confirmed that will be the case. She said the City will not need to track what is grandfathered in - the property owners will bear that responsibility.

Leahnette noted that the proposed changes will prohibit portable canvas and vinyl structures.

Stacey said that is the case. She said this was a very tough topic for the Planning Commission Members to work through. She said there were concerns raised about these types of structures becoming unsightly over time, and sometimes pieces of the structures fly off and end up in the yards of their neighbors. She said the Planning Commission felt that membrane structures were more temporary in nature and should not be considered permanent. She said the Commission wanted to see roofing materials that were more permanent. As a result, the Commission came to the conclusion that the canvas and vinyl structures should no longer be allowed as accessory structures. She said at the same time the Commission recognized that if this provision becomes problematic, we may need to revisit it again in the future. Stacy said the existing canvas and vinyl structures will be grandfathered in, but they will not be allowed to replace them in the future.

Councilor Fromm questioned whether or not the ones with metal roofing materials would be allowed under the proposal.

Stacey said structures with metal roofing materials would still be allowed.

The Council discussed this topic at length with staff.

Councilor Marson asked if written comments had been received for this hearing.

Stacey said there were no written comments received about this matter, but they did hear both sides of the issue through verbal comments at the Planning Commission level.

Russ Thackery of Columbia City said he has no problem with grandfathering in the existing structures that have canvas or vinyl roofs, but he asked if we could include maintenance requirements for them so they cannot allow them to just rot away and fall apart.

Stacey said code compliance issues are typically complaint driven.

Joan Thackery of Columbia City questioned the enforcement of these regulations. She said she has spotted several structures around town that don't meet the current code.

Leahnette said one of the Council's City-wide goals involves code enforcement. She said as a result, the City has selected several different topics over the past few years and has dedicated resources to those particular enforcement efforts. She said accessory structures were considered as a focus area, but we knew we were going to consider making some changes to the code and we wanted to wait until those changes were effective before we started our enforcement efforts.

Joe Turner of Columbia City received some clarification about the application of the proposed regulations under various circumstances.

Public Hearing closed.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 7**

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **7.3 First reading of Council Bill No. 16-801: An Ordinance amending Ordinance No. 03-586-O, the Columbia City Development Code.**

The Council completed the first reading of Council Bill No. 16-801.

Mayor Young and Councilor Marson said they are generally in agreement with the proposed changes, but they each expressed some reservations about the prohibition on canvass and vinyl structures.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 3**

#### **CITIZEN INPUT:**

Bob requested the City Council's permission to move forward with a proposed adjustment to the City's building permit fees, which would result in an average increase of 5%. He said the City's last fee increase occurred in 2014. He said this fee increase would standardize the fees between the City of Columbia City and City of St. Helens. He said Columbia City generally charges lower fees in this area than other cities of similar size, which results in a shortage of funding for building code administration and enforcement.

Bob provided the Council with a spreadsheet showing the City's current fees and the fees proposed under this adjustment, noting that in some areas the fees will drop, while in others they will increase. Bob said the City of Scappoose and Columbia County recently implemented fee increases, and their current fees are very similar to these proposed fees.

Bob said the first step will be to provide the Building Codes Division with 45 days notice of the proposed fee adjustment.

MOVED (THISTLE), SECONDED (MARSON) AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY TO AUTHORIZE BOB TO PROCEED WITH THE FEE INCREASE.

Bob recommended Columbia City move forward with utilizing the State of Oregon's ePermitting system. He said there will be some staff time involved and it will take some time to implement. He said a meeting about the system will be held in St. Helens in early December. Leahnette said staff will attend the meeting in December to learn more about the system.

**AGENDA ITEM 4      COUNCIL REPORTS:**

**4.1      Parks Committee:** No report.

**4.2      Water and Sewer Committee:** No report.

**4.3      Street Committee:** Leahnette said the new storm system at K and Sixth Streets is complete.

**4.4      Audit Committee:** No report.

**4.5      Hazard Mitigation Planning Group:** Chief McGlothlin said the Group will meet again on the fourth Monday in January 2017.

**4.6      Other Reports:** Mayor Young said she will be a speaker during the upcoming Oregon Young Marines Ball.

Councilor Marson said several young writers from Columbia City are currently in the running to win in the VFW essay contests.

**AGENDA ITEM 5      CONSENT AGENDA:**

**5.1      Minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting on October 20, 2016.**

**5.2      Bills paid with check numbers 19797 through 19870 during the month of October 2016.**

**5.3      Activities report of the Public Works Superintendent.**

Item 5.3 was removed from the Consent Agenda.

MOVED (MARSON), SECONDED (HARRISON) AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA AS AMENDED.

**AGENDA ITEM 6      UNFINISHED BUISNESS:**

**6.1      Second reading of Council Bill No. 16-799; Ordinance No. 16-697-O: An Ordinance granting a franchise to CenturyTel of Oregon D/B/A CenturyLink on behalf of itself and its operating affiliates ("CenturyLink") to operate and maintain a telecommunications system ("the System") in the City of Columbia City, Oregon, ("the City").**

MOVED (MARSON), SECONDED (HARRISON) AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADOPT COUNCIL BILL NO. 16-799.

**AGENDA ITEM 7      NEW BUSINESS (continued):**

**7.1      Engineering Work for FEMA Benefit-Cost Analysis: Ratify FEMA Benefit-Cost Analysis for Reservoir Seismic Upgrades in the amount of \$10,750 as proposed by Kennedy/Jenks Consultants.**

MOVED (MARSON), SECONDED (FROMM) AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY TO RATIFY THE FEMA BENEFIT-COST ANALYSIS WORK FOR RESERVOIR SEISMIC UPGRADES IN THE AMOUNT OF \$10,750.

**7.2 Council Bill No. 16-800; Resolution No. 16-1178-R: A Resolution of the City of Columbia City authorizing a forgivable loan from the Safe Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund by entering into a financing contract with the Oregon Infrastructure Finance Authority.**

MOVED (THISTLE), SECONDED (FROMM) AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADOPT COUNCIL BILL NO. 16-800.

**AGENDA ITEM 8**

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

**Police Update:** Chief McGlothlin said Officer Goodwin is rapidly completing her field training as a result of her past experience as a fully certified officer. He said the Department distributed candy during Halloween, and things seemed to go very well in the City.

Councilor Marson said they had about 300 trick-or-treaters in their cul-de-sac.

**Letter of Support for CCCC Grant:** Leahnette said the Library has requested a letter of support for an application to the Columbia County Cultural Coalition Grant for an after school puppet program.

MOVED (MARSON), SECONDED (HARRISON) AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY TO AUTHORIZE A LETTER OF SUPPORT THE LIBRARY'S GRANT APPLICATION FOR A PUPPET PROGRAM.

**Sewer Pump Maintenance:** Joan Thackery said the City-maintained pump associated with their sewer connection recently failed which resulted in sewer backing up. She said the City's crew did a fantastic job of responding to the incident and dealing with it quickly. However, she said she learned during the process that the City does not routinely maintain these City-owned pumps, and she expressed concern about the lack of routine maintenance.

Leahnette said this topic came up in recent years and a maintenance program was supposed to have been established and implemented. She said she will follow-up and make sure it occurs, and she thanked Joan for bringing the matter to the City's attention.

**AGENDA ITEM 9**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

APPROVED:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cheryl A. Young  
Mayor

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Leahnette Rivers  
City Administrator/Recorder