

A regular meeting of the Astoria Common Council was held at the above place at the hour of 7:00 p.m.

Councilors Present: LaMear, Herzig, Warr, Mayor Pro Tem Mellin

Councilors Excused: Mayor Van Dusen

Staff Present: City Manager Benoit, City Engineer Harrington, Planning Director Estes, Fire Chief Ames, Library Director Tucker, Public Works Director Cook and Police Chief Curzon. The meeting is recorded and will be transcribed by ABC Transcription Services, Inc.

Mayor Pro Tem Mellin called for a moment of silence in honor of Duncan Law, who recently passed away. She gave a brief history of his life in Astoria.

REPORTS OF COUNCILORS

Item 3(a): Councilor LaMear said she attended the Save the Performing Arts Center (PAC) meeting, which was a brainstorming session to figure out how to keep the PAC open. The PAC showcases local talent at reasonable prices. She also attended the Parks and Recreation Board meeting to hear the trails presentation as many trails are being repaired and connected within the city.

Item 3(b): Councilor Herzig recalled that Betty Stenick had asked about crosswalk markings on the Astoria Warrenton Bridge traffic circle at the last meeting. He contacted ODOT for more information and learned that the crosswalk markings in this intersection are "continental" style, which is popular in Europe. He had slides depicting crosswalk styles. Staff prepared a handout explaining the different styles of crosswalk markings. He noted the area between any two curbs at the end of a block are legal crosswalks, whether marked or not. Drivers and pedestrians should note that the continental crosswalks are actual crosswalks and will become more common. Tomorrow night he will be hosting a presentation at Astoria High School called Map Your Neighborhood, a program designed to map community resources and bring neighbors together to prepare for emergencies. The presentation will not incur any costs to the City. The County will be providing materials and the presenters are volunteering their time. The event will begin at 7:00 p.m. and is free and open to the public.

Item 3(c): Councilor Warr No report.

Item 3(d): Mayor Pro Tem Mellin stated that she and Councilor LaMear attended a workshop conducted by Michelle Reeves at the Maritime Museum. The workshop was hosted by the Astoria Downtown Historic District Association (ADHDA) and was a very dynamic and successful event.

CHANGES TO AGENDA

City Manager Benoit asked Council to add Item 8(d) 17th Street Pier Rehabilitation Project to the agenda.

PRESENTATIONS

Item 5(a): **OSU Extension Team (Kristin Frost-Albrecht, Renia Ydstie, Jennifer Ramussen, Miki'ala Souza)**

Kristin Frost-Albrecht distributed copies of the presentation to Council and members of the OSU Extension Clatsop County Team introduced themselves. The team briefly described several key programs offered through the OSU Extension Center, including Family Community Health, North Coast Food Web (NCFW), Farmer's Market, Nuevo Greens, and school gardens, and also shared statistics about how these programs benefit people in Clatsop County. Recipe books for kale have been requested. The NCFW website contains a Braised Kale and Apple Cider recipe: www.NorthCoastFoodWeb.org.

Councilor Herzig added one of Council's goals this year is to support the alternative farmer's markets and community gardens. OSU contributes so much to the community by relieving hunger and teaching people how to cook. Studies show that when people learn how to cook basic foods, the health of their entire family is improved for years. He appreciated the work being done by the OSU Extension Team.

Mayor Pro Tem Mellin noted the Parks Department built a fence around the gardens at Gray Elementary School to protect the garden from deer. She recalled a comment heard on NPR, "Land is the new oil. Food is the new gold." She confirmed the farmer's market will be open June 21 through October 3, 2013.

CONSENT CALENDAR

The following items were presented on the Consent Calendar:

- 6(a) City Council Minutes of 02/19/13
- 6(b) City Council/Planning Commission Work Session Minutes of 01/22/13
- 6(c) Boards and Commission Minutes
 - (1) Library Board Meeting of 01/22/13
 - (2) Parks Board Meeting of 1/28/13
 - (3) Planning Commission Meeting of 01/22/13
 - (4) Traffic Safety Committee Meeting of 01/22/13
- 6(d) Dr. Edward Harvey Historic Preservation Award Nominations (Community Development)**
- 6(e) Public Works Project Status Report (Public Works)
- 6(f) Community Development Department Status Report (Community Development)**
- 6(g) Award of Community Development Block Grant for Astoria Senior Center Revitalization Project (City Manager)
- 6(h) Authorization to Award Contract for Spur 12 Timber Sale and Road Improvements 2013 (Public Works)**

There have been no requests from the community to remove any item from the Consent Calendar. Councilor Herzig requested that Items 6(d), (f) and (h) be removed for further discussion.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor LaMear, seconded by Councilor Warr, to approve Items 6(a) through (c), (e) and (g) of the Consent Calendar. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Warr, LaMear, Herzig and Mayor Pro Tem Mellin. Nays: None.

Councilor Herzig announced that the deadline for nominations of the Dr. Edward Harvey Historic Preservation Award is 5:00 p.m. on March 30, 2013. The City's Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) is seeking nominations. The theme for this year's National Historic Preservation Week and the award is "See It, Save It, Celebrate It." He read the purpose of the award and requirements for nomination of a property, noting that he wanted to make sure the public was aware of the award. The awards would be presented by the mayor in May. City Manager Benoit stated an advertisement has been run in *The Daily Astorian* and press releases have been sent to all media to notify the public. Letters have also been mailed to the HLC, neighborhood associations and the Lower Columbia Preservation Society. The City has also posted a notice on the City website.

Councilor Herzig stated a website has been set up to encourage the public to participate in the Astoria Transportation System Plan Update, but the link is difficult to find on the City of Astoria Community Development Department page. He suggested the link be placed on the front page of the City's website for easier access. He noted that ODOT funds have been used to purchase benches, planters, bicycle racks and garbage cans being used in the Downtown District. The benches are not being used because senior citizens say they are too low and do not have backs or arms. The benches were chosen for aesthetic reasons so as not to block sightlines for downtown businesses, but he does not want to spend more money on benches that will not be used.

Councilor Herzig noted the City is making \$200,000 by selling the timber mentioned in Item 6(h), which enables the City to afford some repairs. He commended City Staff for their work on this.

City Manager Benoit confirmed that Items 6(d) and 6(f) are for informational purposes only.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Warr, seconded by Councilor LaMear, to approve Item 6(h) of the Consent Calendar. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Warr, LaMear, Herzig and Mayor Pro Tem Mellin. Nays: None.

OLD BUSINESS

Item 7(a): Amended City Council Goals FY2013-14

Councilor Russ Warr has requested that the City Council Goals for FY2013-14 be amended to include the following language:

"Maintain Advocacy for the Astoria Bypass, for Fishery Issues, and for Business Development/Expansion through the Astoria Downtown Historic District Association Business Development Committee, Columbia Pacific Economic Development District (Col-Pac), and Clatsop Economic Development Resources (CEDR)."

This is for information and comment only. It is anticipated that the proposed Goals for FY2013-14 will be brought to a Council meeting in April for adoption.

Mayor Pro Tem Mellin noted the goals will be brought to City Council in April 2013 for consideration.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

Item 8(a): Acceptance of City Audit Report for FYE 6/30/12 (Finance)

At the February 19, 2013 Council meeting staff handed out the FYE 6/30/12 Audit and SAS 114 letter for the City of Astoria for your review. With the completion of the audit, I am pleased to report that we once again have received an unqualified or "clean" opinion regarding the fair presentation of the City's transactions and financial position. The Governmental Finance Officers Association Best Practices recommend that the Audit be presented to the City Council upon completion. This best practice is designed to ensure that those charged with decision making within a governmental body receive appropriate and timely feedback from the auditors. By accepting this audit report you are not verifying the detailed numbers but rather are acknowledging the conclusion of the auditors and their findings.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Warr, seconded by Councilor LaMear to accept the audit report for Fiscal Year ending 6/30/12 as presented. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors LaMear, Warr, Mellin, Herzig and Mayor Pro Tem Mellin; Nays: None.

Item 8(b): Request to Cut Trees on City Property 690 17th Street (Public Works)

Melissa Yowell of 690 17th Street has submitted an application to cut trees on city property to the east of her property. A permit was issued in 2003 that stated that trees had been had been trimmed on this lot for the previous eight years. Ms. Yowell would now like permission to fall 9 Red Alders and Norway Maple saplings with diameters of approximately 8 inches. The applicant had a certified arborist review the proposed activity. Based on the results of the arborist letter, and from a technical standpoint, staff does not see any reason why the falling should not be allowed.

Ms. Yowell has been unable to obtain signatures of adjoining property owners. One of her neighbors concurred verbally and the other neighbor has not. All adjacent property owners will be notified that this request will be heard by the Council at the March 4th meeting. Should City Council agree to approve this request, staff highly recommends the following conditions:

- 1) Applicant will provide a letter of concurrence from her arborist certifying that the work was completed in strict compliance with all recommendations of the report.
- 2) Applicant shall employ any erosion control measures recommended by her arborist and take measures to stabilize disturbed areas and assure that new growth is established.

It is recommended that City Council authorize staff to approve the tree permit submitted by Melissa Yowell.

Carl Johnson, 674, 17th Street, stated he lives next door to Ms. Yowell and that he would not be opposed to the Applicant's request if she were willing to top her trees, including a 60-foot tall deciduous tree in her yard. The leaves fall onto his property every year in the winter and blocks sunshine to his deck in the summer. The trees also interfere with his satellite reception. He reiterated he would not oppose Ms. Yowell's application if she accommodated his request. He noted that cutting down the trees on city property could cause landslides, adding the land drops off more steadily passed the trees than it appears when looking from up above. He has discussed his concerns with the Applicant, who wants a view of the river, but will not help him get better reception.

Mayor Pro Tem Mellin understood from the Colvin's report [35:26] that the hill would not be undermined. Mr. Johnson responded that trees have been growing there for more than 30 years.

Councilor Herzig stated he was concerned that with one neighbor not concurring and another verbally concurring but not willing to sign, the neighborhood has not come to a consensus on this issue. The arborist stated he is not a geotech engineer when commenting on whether the trees are stabilizing the hill. Councilor Herzig was more concerned about the neighborhood and asked if the City has a facilitator to help with the situation. City Manager Benoit replied that the City does not have any formal facilitation program. Neighborhood issues occur regularly in the city and Staff works to bring neighbors together. Unfortunately, the Applicant is not present; the item could be continued to the next regular meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Mellin acknowledged the discontent that exists.

Mr. Johnson stated the Applicant's trees were 60 to 70 feet tall and he is only asking that 20 feet be cut off the top. He opposed postponing a vote as all of the facts have already been presented. Councilor Herzig explained that Council would not be approving the application, but delaying action until more discussion could occur as they want to be fair to the Applicant.

Councilor LaMear understood that trees were the cause of the landslide on 6th Street as the terrain prevents proper rooting; once one tree falls over, others follow like dominoes, which could be the case on this property.

Councilor Warr noted the Staff report states the Applicant has attempted to receive support from adjacent property owners. The property owner at 674 would not give concurrence and the owner at 1766 Grand concurred verbally but would not sign the application. He did not believe the neighbors support the application. Since the trees are not a hazard, he is inclined to turn down the request.

Mr. Johnson stated the trees will not block the Applicant's view of the river for quite some time. Ms. Yowell is still able to see over the top of the trees from her back porch.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor LaMear, seconded by Councilor Warr to oppose the tree permit request submitted by Melissa Yowell. Motion carried 3 to 0 to 1. Ayes: Councilors LaMear, Warr, and Mayor Pro Tem Mellin; Nays: None; Abstentions: Councilor Herzig.

Councilor Herzig commented that he wishes a better resolution were available, rather than having neighbors opposing one another.

Item 8(c): Authorization to Bid – Columbia River Maritime Museum Storm Drain Pipe Relocation Project (Public Works)

Public Works staff has identified a City storm drainpipe failure immediately adjacent to the Columbia River Maritime Museum (CRMM), near the 18th Street right-of-way. The existing 36-inch diameter pipe runs parallel to the south face of the CRMM for approximately 200 feet. A 25-foot long section of the pipe has collapsed next to a building access and a utility bay door and created a sinkhole that damaged several utilities in the vicinity. The depression and utilities have been temporarily repaired. In addition to the failed section, the remaining length of pipe has evidence of significant deterioration.

Public Works staff evaluated repair methods and determined that relocating the pipe would be the best method because it will greatly reduce the risk of damage to the adjacent structure during construction, provides improved access for future maintenance, and is the most cost effective. The preliminary estimate for this work is \$92,000, which includes a 15% contingency.

City staff coordinated with the CRMM and incorporated their requirements into the contract documents. An easement for the existing storm drain line could not be found; consequently, City staff will record a new easement for the relocated pipe upon completion of construction. It is recommended that the City Council authorize staff to solicit bids for the CRMM Storm Drain Relocation Project. Funds for this project are available in the Public Works Improvement Fund.

City Manager Benoit distributed a color photograph depicting the scope of the project. Councilor LaMear declared for the record that she is a Maritime Museum employee but could vote objectively on this issue.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Herzig, seconded by Councilor Warr to authorize staff to solicit bids for the CRMM Storm Drain Relocation Project. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors LaMear, Warr, Herzig and Mayor Pro Tem Mellin; Nays: None.

Item 8(d): 17th Street Pier Rehabilitation Project (Public Works)

City Manager Benoit stated that the Engineering and Public Works Departments have been working on the rehabilitation of the 17th Street Pier. The City is proposing a contract adjustment with Bergerson Construction to upsize a 300-kilovolt ampere (kva) electrical transformer to a 700-kva transformer. The design for the electrical component of this project was flawed, as it specified the smaller transformer. The larger transformer is absolutely necessary to accommodate the Coast Guard and its two cutters.

This adjustment is estimated to cost \$62,820.78; however 75 percent of the contingency will still remain. Staff is requesting Council authorize Pay Adjustment #4, resulting in a contract increase in the amount of \$62,820.78. This action is critical to the timing of the project and the return of the Coast Guard.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor LaMear, seconded by Councilor Warr, to authorize Pay Adjustment #4 resulting in a contract increase in the amount of \$62,820.78. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Warr, LaMear, Herzig and Mayor Pro Tem Mellin. Nays: None.

Councilor Herzig confirmed the design team has committed to pay \$12,000 towards the cost of materials and staff time, as a result of the mistake. He believed it is important to note that the design team is being held responsible for the error.

NEW BUSINESS & MISCELLANEOUS, PUBLIC COMMENTS

Don McDaniel, 1268 Kensington, Astoria, noted the parking lots on the east and west sides of the American Legion building have been closed as a result of the construction on the Garden of Surging Waves project. The parking lot is closed on the east side of the building without signage, but some cars are parking there. He asked for clarification about parking in the east parking lot. City Manager Benoit explained the east parking lot is being restriped and new spaces are being added. He believed the striping was completed today.

Mr. McDaniel suggested that additional parking restrictions be added to the streets surrounding the construction area, limiting parking to a two- or three-hour limit to allow more people to get in and out of the downtown area. City Manager Benoit replied Staff could consider the issue in house, noting one issue is providing enough parking for employees in the downtown zone. The mixture of timed and unlimited parking accommodates both employees and visitors to prevent parking from intruding into the surrounding neighborhoods. He noted no one is using the parking spaces to the east of City Hall on 11th Street. Staff can see the impact of parking issues and make adjustments as needed.

Mr. McDaniel clarified that his suggestion was to be implemented temporarily while construction was ongoing.

Councilor Herzig noted that parking spaces along Exchange Street, between 10th and 11th Streets, need to be restriped. He asked Staff to measure the width of these spots, as they currently seem too wide. It may be possible to add more parking spaces.

Jim Krettler, 1660 SE 1st Street, Astoria, expressed concern that the City currently has no methods for verifying whether Council's annual goals have been met. In the past, City employees were required to document how each goal would be met. He would like to see statements added to the goals describing how the City plans to

meet each goal and posting them, along with the goals, on the City's webpage. A simple document could list measurable objectives for each goal. If a goal cannot be measured, perhaps it should not be included as a goal.

- One goal is to have better communication with the community. Adding and reporting measurable metrics regarding the goals would be one way of communicating better with the community. The City could report how communications have been improved, such as by responding to comments, or contacting people to communicate how a concern may have been addressed. For example, publicizing how issues raised at a City Council meeting about the sprinkler system in the roundabout were resolved could demonstrate how the communication goal was being met. He and the rest of the public were informed when the matter was addressed. That contact person would be a measurable goal. Similarly, the City could announce how it plans to raise the additional funds needed for the Garden of Surging Waves, as well as how maintenance of the park would be funded.
- While the City Manager presents to Council how well the Council's goals are being achieved, such a document would enable the citizens to see how well the goals are being achieved. Many people do not attend Council meetings or read the minutes.

Mayor Pro Tem Mellin asked if Council has ever specified the action steps for how the Council goals will be achieved. Councilor Warr agreed the City Manager tracks the annual goals set by City Council. Council insists that each goal is met and is informed as to why a goal may not be met. A separate standardized form may not be the best idea, as the goals are so wide ranging. Several goals are difficult to quantify because they are meant to keep the City focused in certain direction. For example, goals regarding fisheries issues and advocating for bike paths are difficult to quantify since results may not happen for years due to funding issues, etc. However, not advocating for such matters will ensure their failure.

Mayor Pro Tem Mellin noted that Council is adjusting for the lack of funds for the Garden of Surging Waves; however, funds will be raised as needed to accomplish that project.

Councilor LaMear supported Mr. Krettler's idea. At the goal-setting session, City Council analyzed the 2012 goals to determine, internally, if those goals had been met. Some goals do continue on indefinitely; however, most goals had been fulfilled. The community should be informed. The document could be very simple, with just a few sentences explaining what was accomplished towards each goal; some may be noted as ongoing. She agreed with a previous suggestion about installing a sign that updates the public on the Garden of Surging Waves project as it progresses. Communication is important and could easily be put on the website.

Mr. Krettler clarified that he understood measurable objectives may be difficult for some goals.

Mayor Pro Tem Mellin believed Mr. Krettler provided good input. When Councilors report on events, meetings and presentations they attend, they only give an overview. She agreed the City needs to be more specific.

Mr. Krettler explained that earlier that morning, a water leak at the Column caused the water in the restrooms to stop working. He had called to report the problem. Mayor Pro Tem Mellin appreciated that people in the community were vigilant and notice when issues occur and report the problems. Public Works Director Cook reported the water leak had been fixed and the water lost was not significant.

Councilor Herzig believes communication is something everyone can be involved in. He pulled items off of the Consent Calendar to ensure the public receives the same information City Council was receiving. After following up on the crosswalk with ODOT, Councilor Herzig called Betty Stenick to let her know he had followed up. Letting concerned citizens know when an issue or concern has been acted on is something Council can do. City Council should be proud of what they do, but realize that although communicated amongst the Council, information is not particularly getting out to the public. Communication could always be improved.

Don Webb, 3555 Harrison Avenue, Astoria, believed the City is losing a number of large rooms where conferences are held. He suggested the City take an inventory to identify large conference rooms. He is also concerned that the lack of parking near the Garden of Surging Waves was not being handled by the City. The parking concerns resulted in the garden being smaller than originally proposed. He also noted the ground is being washed out along and within the railroad tracks near Safeway. He did not know if the City has funds to repair the washouts. Winter storms will cause more damage and several stretches of track need maintenance. City Manager Benoit stated the City has spent \$40,000 in Promote Astoria funds on repairs to the trolley track. Storms are constantly washing the tracks out. A rail specialist engineer inspects the trestles and tracks annually.

He recommended an additional \$20,000 in repairs and maintenance. The City will be presenting a proposal to address this issue to Council in March or April 2013. Although funds are limited, maintenance is completed each year. Mr. Webb believes the City should consider the affect of recent storms on the tracks more carefully. He sees a lot of wear and tear along the tracks as he works on the trolley.

Councilor Herzig believes the City should install a sign at the Garden of Surging Waves to explain where the garden and parking will be when the project is complete. At least 50 percent of the lot will be parking and the garden will sit on the northern half of the property. Explaining this to the public on a sign will be very useful and dispel some confusion.


Dulcye Taylor, 856 11th Street and 1287 Commercial, Astoria, ADHDA, stated that people do use the benches in the downtown area, although they are low and could be difficult for seniors. She announced a meeting will be held Tuesday, March 5, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. regarding parking passes. The meeting will be critical for anyone who currently uses a parking pass. Information received at the meeting will be passed along to Michelle Reeves, who has been working toward finding a solution to the parking issues in the downtown area. Ms. Reeves has been studying parking in Astoria and will be presenting her findings on April 4, 2013. Ms. Taylor agreed that some parking spots were too large. She noted the PAC could accommodate 250 people and would be a viable venue for conferences.

Councilor LaMear announced that Earth Hour will occur on March 23, 2013 from 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. During this time, cities turn out their lights in an effort to raise awareness of environmental challenges like climate change.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

ATTEST:



Finance Director

APPROVED:



City Manager