

# Minutes of the Veneta City Council

## August 8, 2011

Present: Mayor Sharon Hobart-Hardin, Brittany Boothe, Thomas Cotter, Marion Esty, and Sandra Larson

Others: Ric Ingham, City Administrator; Shauna Hartz, Finance Director; Chris Workman, City Recorder/Human Resources and Risk Management Administrator, Darci Henneman, Assistant City Recorder; and Joan Mariner, Fern Ridge Review

---

Mayor Hobart-Hardin called the Veneta City Council to order at 7:00 p.m.

### 1. PUBLIC COMMENT

#### **Joan Mariner, 25712 Cochran Ct., Veneta, OR**

Ms. Mariner provided a copy of a National Public Radio (NPR) interview called "Emus loose in Egnar". The article focused on small newspapers across the Country that are thriving because they report on local stories. Our local paper, The Fern Ridge Review, needs our support and she encouraged everyone to support the Review by reading and subscribing to the paper. The Review has been in publication for almost one year and soon will be able to publish legal notices.

#### **Greg Demers, 25275 Loten Way, Veneta, OR**

Mr. Demers wanted to take a few minutes to address the Council about economic development in Veneta. Mr. Demers had a deal to sell some property but the buyer backed out after he was told what the System Development Charges (SDC) would be. Mr. Demers felt the SDCs are too high and they discourage businesses from building in Veneta.

Mayor Hobart-Hardin suggested staff follow up on this issue and provide the Council with an update at the next meeting.

After a brief discussion it was the consensus of the Council to direct staff to look into the current SDCs and provide the Council with an update.

#### **Lois Riha, 88160 Lindsay Ln., Veneta, OR**

Ms. Rea's property backs up to a heavily forested area with high grass, poison oak and ivy. She is concerned about fire danger. She had a dead tree removed to avoid it falling and landing on her storage shed and house.

Ric said it's difficult to enforce noxious weeds on property larger than one acre within the City limits but he will have Teresa contact Ms. Riha tomorrow.

#### **Judy Terry, 88154 Lindsay Ln., Veneta, OR**

Ms. Terry said she and her sister enjoy their neighborhood which is mixed with senior citizens and families with children. However, since Christmas, basketball hoop stands have been placed on the sidewalks. One elderly neighbor is visually impaired and walks with a cane. Pedestrians have to leave the safety of the sidewalk and enter the street including the visually impaired resident. She is concerned about people's safety because they are forced to walk in the street in order to get around the basketball hoops. She believes basketball stands should be placed in the street and not on the sidewalks.

Mayor Hobart-Hardin asked Ric to forward these complaints to Teresa for follow up.

Mayor Hobart-Hardin said because there is an Executive Session on tonight's agenda, the regular

Council meeting will be temporarily adjourned and the Urban Renewal Agency meeting will begin. The Executive Session will begin after the Urban Renewal Agency meeting is adjourned.

**2. CONSENT AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Thomas Cotter made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented.  
Sandra Larson seconded the motion.

**Vote:** Marion Esty, aye; Thomas Cotter, aye; Mayor Hobart-Hardin, aye; Sandra Larson, aye; Brittany Boothe, aye.

The consent agenda as approved included Minutes for June 27, 2011, Accounts Payable through August 2, 2011, and Public Works Activity Report for June and July 2011, Social Gaming License for Veneta Moose Lodge 2656, and Elmira High School Homecoming Parade permit.

**3. DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

a. FROM MAYOR/COUNCILORS

Sandra Larson said there was a Teen Night debriefing at the August 3<sup>rd</sup> Park Board meeting. The Teen Night concert was not well attended but the Board is staying positive about the event. The Board discussed collaborating on existing events (Fern Ridge Field Dayz and the Harvest Festival) rather than having separate events.

Mayor Hobart-Hardin attended the LCOG Board meeting. She enjoys the opportunity to see what's happening in other communities. The Communication Plan was finalized. The July 15<sup>th</sup> Park N Ride dedication was a fabulous event. There were great speakers and wonderful representation from state legislature and Congressman DeFazio's office. The event solidified the partnership with LTD and other organizations within the County. The annual Skateboard contest held on Saturday, August 6<sup>th</sup> had a wonderful turn out. Neighbors 4 Responsible Growth (N4RG) has sponsored the event for the last four years. The bench dedication for Luke Esgate was very nice and well done. The Lane County Fire District No. 1 held a bike awareness event and a helmet give away. Next year a BMX competition will be added to the event.

Marion Esty said the Fern Ridge Community Library Foundation welcomed new board members and tomorrow she will attend the Senior Services Advisory Council meeting with LCOG.

b. COUNCIL/COMMITTEE LIAISONS

**4. STAFF REPORTS**

- a. CITY RECORDER/HR & RM ADMINISTRATOR.....CHRIS WORKMAN  
(1) Revised Classification and Compensation Schedule FY2011-2012

Last fall the City hired Local Government Personnel Institution (LGPI) to complete a salary survey in which the pay scale for all City positions was compared to those of comparable cities. The salary survey report was completed in May, 2011 and after review, City staff found that six pay scales needed to be adjusted in order to be consistent with the City's competitiveness within the local labor market. Resolution 1065 is required in order to make those adjustments. It did not look at specific salary comparisons, just minimum and maximum salaries for those positions.

Chris reviewed his memo with the Council and asked if they had any questions.

In response to questions from Thomas Cotter, Chris said some of the cities included in the survey were Madras, Winston, Junction City, Phoenix, and Creswell which are all relatively the

same size as Veneta. LGPI did a good job of vetting out the specific positions to make side by side comparisons. With so many cities included in the survey, the results were very thorough. Chris said most cities responded to the survey. Salaries did not change and inflation or the current recession was not a factor. Chris said the LGPI used existing salaries. Many positions haven't seen increases or steps which translate into the big picture - cities aren't pumping up salaries because it's an employers' market.

In response to a question from Thomas Cotter, Ric said individual salaries were not analyzed just job descriptions, meaning, only the salary schedule was updated not individual salaries. The survey also included benefits, seniority program for 10+ year employees, wage scale, leave time, etc. Again, the survey was not done to provide salary changes but shifted the salary schedule so Veneta's mid-salary range is the same as the other 16 cities surveyed.

Chris said Resolution 1065 indicates the City is not changing salaries. An example would be if an employee was at a step 10 he/she would be topped out but by adjusting the pay scale, now that person may drop to a step seven but his/her salary would stay the same. The City doesn't want to lose a long term employee to another employer because they've reached the top of their pay scale.

Ric said the City is very fortunate to have some employees with 20 years of experience or close to it. Those employees should also be eligible for a merit increase. Previously the City had to deny a merit increase when an employee topped out at a step 10.

Chris said the last survey completed by LGPI was in 2007 and included four adjustments. The current survey called for seven adjustments.

In response to a question from Sandra Larson, Ric said many of the cities used in the survey have union shops or public works departments so they have the salary survey completed every two years.

Mayor Hobart-Hardin said the information was very clear and Chris did a great job on explaining and included benefits for positions.

In response to a question from Mayor Hobart-Hardin, Ric said it's not really necessary to have the survey done every two years but when the market heats up the survey should be completed every two years. Also LGPI was under contract in July 2010 but some internal issues prevented them from completing the survey sooner.

Chris said LGPI recommends a salary survey be completed every five years or when there's a turn over. The Associate Planner position was updated to reflect LGPI's survey results.

Chris said Resolution 1065 will become effective August 12, 2011.

In response to a question from Thomas Cotter, Chris said the step increases are based on a 4% merit adjustment.

- (2) **Resolution - 1065 - A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE REVISED CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION PLANS OF THE CITY OF VENETA FOR THE 2011-2012 FISCAL YEAR AND REPEALING RESOLUTION NO. 1053**

**MOTION: Thomas Cotter made a motion to approve Resolution 1065 as written adopting the Revised Classification and Compensation Schedule for FY 2011-2012. Brittany Boothe seconded the motion which passed with a vote**

b. FINANCE DIRECTOR.....SHAUNA HARTZ

(1) Preliminary Year-to-Date Financial Report for FY2010-2011

Shauna reviewed the preliminary year-to-date financial report for 2010-2011. She is anticipating a reduction in fund balance Citywide of \$417,000. The last payment on the Lane County Sheriff's contract is a large part of that amount. Factors leading to the higher than expected fund balances are: 1) Some budgeted projects were not completed or came in under budget; 2) Specific grant funds were not received so funds budgeted were not spent; 3) A few water and sewer maintenance projects came in under budget, 4) \$42,000 remained from the inflow and infiltration updates not being completed; and 5) The City received \$5,000 more in franchise fees than was anticipated.

Ric said staff is very pleased to see an increase in the fund balance from the first of the year to year end. Staff anticipated that balance being \$1,000,000 less. The Ultra Violet (UV) project on the Territorial Rd. sewer trunk line was \$300,000 under budget. Staff is very encouraged to see a positive number in that fund.

Mayor Hobart-Hardin was thrilled to see such a positive result. The conservative estimates account for City staff being responsible fiscal steward's of the City's money.

Ric said seeing a preliminary end of year budget in August is phenomenal and he thanked Shauna and her fiscal team for a job well done.

In response to a question from Mayor Hobart-Hardin, Shauna said about one third of the audit had been completed. On August 23<sup>rd</sup> the auditors will be here to do some preliminary field work.

c. CITY ADMINISTRATOR.....RIC INGHAM

(1) Fern Ridge Chamber of Commerce Loan Documents

In May, 2011 the City Council approved a \$9000 funding package for the Fern Ridge Chamber of Commerce to complete Phase II of the "Wineries without Walls" project which consisted of a \$4000 grant and \$5000 loan. The loan proceeds are being borrowed from the City's Commercial Loan Fund which has a current fund balance of \$195,500. The adopted budget identifies \$100,000 in FY2011-12 loan expenditures with \$25,000 specifically being set aside for loans to non-profit entities. City records confirm that no business loans have been processed from the Loan Fund since its inception in 1980.

Ric said because of the small size of the loan, City staff chose not to seek legal counsel review of the agreement. However Mr. Dingman from LCOG reviewed the contract.

In response to a question from Mayor Hobart-Hardin, Gina Haley-Morrell, President of the Fern Ridge Chamber of Commerce, said the project is moving along and is still on target for the Labor Day opening.

In response to a question from Thomas Cotter, Ric said the original funds came to the City from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to offer residents assistance with weatherization projects. As funds were paid the City had the ability to lend for other purposes so the Council voted to create the Loan Fund to provide loans to local businesses to support business activity. Funds have not been lent since it's inception in 1980. Ric said the Council, at its discretion, can choose to make a loan or not.

Ric said regardless of what kind of business approaches the City for a loan from this fund, the City generally sits as a third party lender. Businesses will first approach their bank and LCOG to work out the loan terms. If financial assistance is still needed, the City will be a last funding option for what they can't borrow from their bank. These funds would not be loaned for renovations, operating a community center, etc.

In response to questions from Brittany Boothe, Ric said because we haven't made a loan from these funds previously, there's no precedent. Also because the City would be the last funding option for any business, the bank would approve the initial loan before the City got involved. It doesn't seem cost effective to have legal counsel review the loan agreement which at this point has already been approved by the bank. Most lending institutions have knowledge of the available funding options offered by the City of Veneta and would pass that information on to their business customers.

In response to a question from Thomas Cotter, Ric said other cities are working on an SDC deferment loan program. The City could provide the funds based on how many jobs the new business would create or place a lien on the property for the SDC deferred amount.

In response to a question from Sandra Larson, Ric said he would review the ordinance or the Council could repeal the ordinance to see if a forgivable loan could be used as a grant.

**MOTION: Thomas Cotter made a motion to approve the Business Loan Agreement for Phase II of the Fern Ridge Chamber of Commerce's Wineries without Walls project. Brittany Boothe seconded the motion which passed with a vote of 5-0.**

Mayor Hobart-Hardin temporarily adjourned the City Council at 8:06 p.m. and opened the Veneta Urban Renewal Agency meeting. At 8:07 p.m. Mayor Hobart-Hardin adjourned the Veneta Urban Renewal Agency meeting, returned to the regular City Council and opened the Executive Session at 8:10 p.m.

## 5. EXECUTIVE SESSION

ORS 192.660(2) b (i) City Administrator Evaluation

After making no decisions Mayor Hobart-Hardin closed the executive session at 9:10 p.m. and returned to the regular Council meeting.

## 6. OTHER

Ric confirmed that Sandra Larson and Thomas Cotter will be on a Council subcommittee to review and report back to the City Council on the proposed compensation package for the City Administrator.

Ric said Zac Moody submitted his letter of resignation as of September 1, 2011 or until a new Associate Planner is hired. Applications for the Associate Planner position will be accepted through September 9<sup>th</sup>. Because Brian and Zac are taking on the Comprehensive Plan update they felt it was best to advertise for an Associate Planner rather than an Assistant Planner. Ric said when Brian's wife finishes her Doctorial program it is quite likely they will move also.

Kyle Roberts will be concluding his R.A.R.E. internship for the last two years.

In response to a question from Sandra Larson, Ric said the City did not apply for a R.A.R.E intern this year because we really didn't have the right project. Kyle Roberts has been accepted into the Peace Corp. and will be leaving the country in March 2012. Staff would like to host a going away event for Kyle and Zac between now and the first of September.

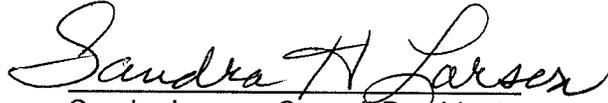
Mayor Hobart-Hardin would like to have a going away celebration at Our Daily Bread for Zac and Kyle.

In response to a question from Thomas Cotter, Ric said three years ago a clothing allowance was created for the Public Works department.

Thomas Cotter said there is an empty lot at Trinity and East Bolton and areas along Hunter that have high grass.

**7. ADJOURN**

Mayor Hobart-Hardin adjourned the Veneta City Council at 9:13 p.m.

  
Sandra Larson, Council President

ATTEST:

  
Darci Henneman, Assistant City Recorder  
(minutes prepared by Dhenneman)