

Minutes of the Veneta City Council

October 10, 2011

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

Others: Ric Ingham, City Administrator; Chris Workman, City Recorder/Human Resources and Risk Management Administrator; Shauna Hartz, Finance Director, Darci Henneman, Assistant City Recorder; T.J. Brooker, Julie Fischer, Scott Mansur, Carrie Lenart and Joan Mariner, Fern Ridge Review

Mayor Hobart-Hardin called the Veneta City Council to order at 6:58 p.m.

She informed the Council and audience that Resolution 1068 would be added to the agenda under agenda item 5. (a) (1) Authorization of Funding Request for Fern Ridge Chamber of Commerce Wineries without Walls Project.

1. PUBLIC COMMENT

T. J. Brooker, PO Box 655, Veneta, OR

Mr. Brooker spoke to the Council tonight on behalf of the Jack Kelley Fern Ridge Post 9448 of the Veteran's of Foreign Wars (VFW). He provided copies of their new monthly newsletter which was created in order to bring community awareness of the VFW Post. The Post erects the American flags at the West Lane Center and maintains the large flag at the same location. Previously Arlie & Co. provided the funds to maintain the flags but they are no longer able to do that so Post 9448 is soliciting yearly flag fees from local businesses in an effort to continue repairing and replacing flags for our entire community to enjoy. For making a donation, local businesses will be advertised in their newsletter. Post 9448 is requesting the City make a \$100 annual donation to cover the continued costs of repairing and replacing the flags. Mr. Brooker said he would provide a donation request letter to the City for review.

Mayor Hobart-Hardin said she would like to get the donation request letter on the next Council agenda.

2. FERN RIDGE CORRIDOR (Highway 126) FACILITY PLAN UPDATE

Julie Fischer of Cogito, LLC and Scott Mansur of DKS Associates provided an update on the Fern Ridge Corridor Facility Plan. Both firms were hired by ODOT to create and present the Corridor Plan.

Mayor Hobart-Hardin said the meeting held last Thursday was very informative and well attended.

Ms. Fischer said with a project this large, it's important to follow the guidelines with the National Environmental Policy Act from the onset. The Lane Area Commission on Transportation (LACT) will spend time evaluating the project and looking at the outcome of the public meetings and technical reports. Eventually the project will go to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) and then to Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC).

In response to a question from Mayor Hobart-Hardin, Ms. Fischer said it's ODOT's goal is to have open work sessions with both LACT and the BCC and to keep them updated on the timeline. The project is slated to run into next year. Ms. Fischer said she would bring the Corridor Plan back to the City Council whenever the Council would like.

Mr. Mansur said two more community meetings are scheduled.

Ms. Fischer said the third meeting will likely be in May 2012. Public comments will be received over the next couple of weeks and well as after each meeting.

In response to a question from Ric, Ms. Fischer said 70 to 80 interviews were conducted with area residents and the biggest concerns voiced were to make the highway safer, find a way to interface bicycle traffic with vehicle traffic, and try to understand that the highway interfaces with the reservoir and the entire natural habitat surrounding it. There is also a high level of awareness that funds are lacking and realistically a project timeline is needed to address the project be done in phases.

Mr. Mansur said the main issues in any community are to reduce congestion and widen the roadway to accommodate more traffic. He received feedback that addressed a balance of all modes of travel. He wanted to reiterate that this is not just an ODOT plan but the community's plan as well. The project will have a lot of environmental constraints and a lot of environmental groups are going to step forward and fight this project. The community really needs to speak out and voice their concerns to see that the framework gets set for the next 10 to 15 years. He encouraged the Council to get involved and encouraged participation in finding the right fit for our community.

Mayor Hobart-Hardin restated that there was a great turn out at Thursday's meeting. This is a huge issue for our community and safety is on the top of the list. This is a great opportunity to see something happen.

Mr. Mansur said the community needs to be involved prior to backing from LACT and before the BCC takes it to OTC for approval.

In response to a question from Joan Mariner, Mr. Mansur said this is a four phase project with the first phase focused on the Corridor Plan. They didn't want to come up with an alternative and get the community excited about an alternative and then find out the alternative wasn't going to work because of an environmental issue. ODOT invested a little more money and created a screening level to look at the bigger picture and ensure that they will be able to move forward with whatever alternative they come up with.

Ms. Fischer said the West Eugene Wetlands Association and the Audubon Society have been involved from the onset and are in the loop.

In response to a question from Ms. Fischer, Mayor Hobart-Hardin suggested Ms. Fischer could outreach to the Fern Ridge Rotary, Lions Club, Fern Ridge Kiwanis, Moose Lodge, VFW Post 9448, Midlane Community Partnerships, Fern Ridge Chamber of Commerce, Fern Ridge Community Action Network (CAN), School District, Fire District and the Ministerial Alliance.

Brittany Boothe suggested outreaching to Elmira residents and the Elmira Grange.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION: Thomas Cotter made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Marion Esty seconded the motion.

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

The consent agenda as approved included minutes for June 13, 2011 Council Work Session, minutes for September 26, 2011 Council meeting, and the Public Works Activity Report for September 2011.

4. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

a. FROM MAYOR/COUNCILORS

Marion Esty attended the last Library meeting. There are still some issues to be settled because of the high cost of senior meals and home care. State and federal funding is uncertain. Tuesday, October 12, Senior Services is meeting with all committees to hear a special Health Care presentation from Brian Newberg of the Oregon Health Authority.

Mayor Hobart-Hardin attended the Mayor's Meeting last week where they had an interesting discussion on recalling a Mayor and Councilors. The Mayor of Oakridge attended the meeting who recently went through a recall situation. The State of Oregon is one of a few states that don't include a recall provision in our state constitution. The mayors reviewed the issue to see if they had enough information to support a motion. In the end it was a good discussion. Another discussion focused on city council members and city departments which made her realize how blessed our community is to have the City Council and staff that we do.

Sandra Larson attended the League of Oregon Cities (LOC) Conference in Bend where she took in the Council workshop, as well as a budgeting and economic development workshop. She realized how very fortunate our community is that her colleagues and the City staff make things run so well. She went on the roundabout art tour in Bend. She would like see some kind of art placed around the City in the future. At their last meeting the Veneta Park Board chose their signature events: The Park Board will not enter a float in the Light Parade but will host the Tree Lighting ceremony, located at the Veneta Farmers' Market site at Luther Lane. The Park Board will continue to host the Easter Egg Hunt and for Earth/Arbor Day the Park Board will work with the school district for their "Green Week". The Park Board will also participate in other cooperative events throughout the year. There was a large turnout for the school district work session which focused on the crowd supervision at the high school football games. She said people were very vocal and concerned and felt perhaps the district didn't communicate very well with the public but the majority of those in attendance were supportive of the action the school district took. The well drilled at the middle school came in at 65 gpm and was under budget. The water had a low iron count.

Brittany Boothe also attended the LOC Conference in Bend and also took the roundabout art tour. She really enjoyed the conference and took a lot away from it. From talking to other Councilors from around the state she realized things seem to work well at the City of Veneta. As a new member it's a privilege to come on board where there are already good lines of communication. She encouraged everyone to attend next year's conference. The 3rd class of the Ford Family Leadership completed their second weekend and is beginning discussions about their group project. She will keep the Council updated.

b. COUNCIL/COMMITTEE LIAISONS

(1) Community Center Fee Modification Request

Carrie Lenart is a yoga instructor wanting to teach one hour yoga classes four times a week at the community center beginning November 1, 2011. The minimum rental fee/time is \$32.00 for three hours. Since each class is one hour she would like the fee to be split between two classes each; for a weekly total of \$64.00.

Mayor Hobart-Hardin thought the classes are a good idea but is concerned Ms. Lenart's yoga classes would be in competition with yoga classes offered at the fitness center. She is also concerned that the City would be perceived as being in support of one entity and not another.

Ms. Lenart said the yoga classes offered at the fitness center are limited to members only.

In response to a question from Brittany Boothe, Ric said the minimum the Community Center can be rented is three hours for \$32.00. In the past the Council has approved breaking the three hour block up for for-profit entities.

In response to a question from Sandra Larson, Ms. Lenart said the cost is \$10 per class or \$50 for six classes.

MOTION: Thomas Cotter made a motion to approve modifying the Community Center rental fee to \$64 for four yoga classes. Marion Esty seconded the motion which passed with a vote of 5-0.

In response to a question from Thomas Cotter, Ms. Lenart said the classes would continue as long as there was a public interest.

Ric suggested amending the motion to include a sunset clause and at that time the Council could revisit the matter.

MOTION: Thomas Cotter made a motion to amend the previous motion to include a sunset clause of May 31, 2012. Marion Esty seconded the motion which passed with a vote of 5-0.

5. STAFF REPORTS

a. CITY ADMINISTRATOR.....RIC INGHAM

- (1) Authorization of Funding Request for Fern Ridge Chamber of Commerce Wineries without Walls Project

At the September 8th Council meeting the Fern Ridge Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) presented their final business and marketing plan for the Wineries without Walls (WwW) project. After the presentation the Chamber requested \$20,000 in operational funding. The Council agreed contingent on staff creating program rules and regulations for the Commercial Loan Fund, now referred to as Business Assistance Loan/Grant Fund Program.

The Commercial Loan Fund was established in 1999 by Resolution 790 which amended Resolution 470 establishing the original Housing Rehabilitation Loan Fund allowing funds to also be used for business assistance activities.

In response to a question from Brittany Boothe, Ric said the Chamber's original request of \$2200 was coded to Economic Development and \$4000 of their \$9000 request was charged to the Rural Tourism Marketing Program Grant. The \$20,000 will be for future operating costs through year four of the project. The \$9000 was to pay for the consultant plan. He said it's at Council's discretion whether or not to require the Chamber to go through the application process.

After a brief discussion it was the consensus of the Council to not require the Chamber to complete a Business Assistance Loan application.

MOTION: Thomas Cotter made a motion to authorize the \$5,000 loan originally awarded to the Chamber of Commerce be converted to a \$5,000 Business Assistance Grant effective immediately. Brittany Boothe seconded the motion which passed with a vote of 5-0.

MOTION: Thomas Cotter made a motion to authorize \$20,000 to the Chamber of Commerce from the Business Assistance Grant program, with \$10,000 being made available prior to December 31, 2011 and the remaining \$10,000 be made available on or before June 30, 2012. Marion Esty seconded the motion which passed with a vote of 5-0.

(2) Business Development Loan/Grant Program Rules

Based on Council direction from the September 26th meeting, staff made the changes and modifications to the Business Assistance Loan/Grant Fund documents and also included a definitions page. Shauna also suggested a Resolution be passed which will change the loan/grant program name from "Commercial Loan Fund" to "Business Assistance Loan/Grant Fund".

Mayor Hobart-Hardin suggested removing the reference that an applicant is enrolled in eDev (Entrepreneurial Development Services) program but rather applicants must be enrolled in a state or federally recognized assistance program.

In response to questions from Brittany Boothe, Ric said currently there is \$180,000 available in the fund. Resolution 1068 will repeal the previous resolutions adopting the original Housing Rehabilitation Loan Fund. Ric agreed capping the grant funds is a good idea.

Brittany Boothe said the funds should be used as a bridge not a perpetual funding source and suggested a cap be included.

Thomas Cotter agreed there should be some kind of cap on how much can be granted but he's not sure it should be limited to a "one time only" basis. He said if in the future the WwW program is successful and they wanted to apply for another grant they wouldn't be able to because they've already met their \$25,000 cap.

Brittany Boothe disagreed. She said if WwW is successful but in the future may need additional funding they should be able to seek funds from other sources. She doesn't think the Council would be good stewards if they continue to award grant funds time after time. Even if a business has capped out on their grant funds they could still apply for a loan.

Mayor Hobart-Hardin said we want to support the businesses that we have but we also want to encourage new businesses and the more flexibility the program has the better. It can always be revised at a future date. She agreed there needs to be a cap on the grant funds but we should keep our options available.

Thomas Cotter said he's fine with a cap and suggested language be added that under specific circumstances grant funds could be available after a cap is met.

Ric suggested including language that any one entity cannot get more than \$25,000 for the life of the program but possibly under certain circumstances that could change.

Brittany Boothe is still outside her comfort zone but she will approve the documents as long as the intent is to not give more than \$25,000 in grant dollars to any one entity for the life of the program.

After a thorough discussion it was the consensus of the Council to adopt the Business Assistance Loan/Grant Fund documents as presented and include the recommendations made by the Council.

Sandra Larson said felt the language on page 11, paragraph D. Loan/Grant Servicing - "monitoring a grant" should be removed.

In response to a question from Thomas Cotter, Ric recommended the Council make two motions; one to adopt the application materials to include the discussed changes and one adopting the resolution as it's currently written.

MOTION: Thomas Cotter made a motion to adopt the Business Assistance Loan/Grant Fund Application documents as modified by the recommendations of the Council. Marion Esty seconded the motion which passed with a vote of 5-0.

MOTION: Thomas Cotter made a motion to approve Resolution 1068. Marion Esty seconded the motion which passed with a vote of 5-0.

6. OTHER

Rural Tourism Marketing Program (RTMP) Process

Ric said each year the City receives transient room tax dollars through the Rural Tourism Marketing Program. Because we don't have a motel, the county calculates our annual allocation which is generally \$6200 to support regional marketing projects. All of the necessary contracts will be brought to the October 24th Council meeting requesting Council approval for the Mayor to sign the contracts on behalf of the City.

7. EXECUTIVE SESSION - ORS 192.660(1) (e) - Real Estate Negotiations

Mayor Hobart-Hardin adjourned the Council into Executive Session at 8:30 p.m. Having made no decisions, the Council returned to regular session at 8:51 p.m.

8. ADJOURN

Mayor Hobart-Hardin adjourned the Veneta City Council at 8:51p.m.



Sharon Hobart, Mayor

ATTEST:



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