

Minutes of the Veneta City Council Work Session

December 8, 2014

Present: Sandra Larson, Thomas Cotter, Victoria Hedenstrom, and Thomas Laing

Absent: Brittany Boothe

Others: Ric Ingham, City Administrator; Kyle Schauer, Public Works Director; Katie Babits, Management Analyst; Darci Henneman, Assistant City Recorder; Lydia McKinney, Lane County Transportation Planning Manager; Bill Morgan, Lane County Engineer; Jay Bozievich, Lane County Commissioner; and Joan Mariner, Fern Ridge Review

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Sandra Larson called the Veneta City Council to order at 7:30 p.m.

2. SUPPORT LANE COUNTY IN PLACING A COUNTY VEHICLE REGISTRATION FEE ON THE MAY, 2015 BALLOT

Lydia McKinney reviewed her presentation on the Vehicle Registration Fee proposed by the Lane County Board of Commissioners (LCBC).

In response to a question from Thomas Cotter, Commissioner Bozievich said all trucks pay gas taxes which is calculated from driver mileage logs kept by all truck drivers.

In response to a question from Thomas Laing, Ms. McKinney said even though we've see an increase in the gas tax, the amount of money generated from gas tax is less because of electric cars, better mileage, and people are using different forms of transportation. She said vehicles will continue to become more efficient.

In response to a question from Victoria Hedenstrom, Ms. McKinney said if we don't start building back the reserve the backlog of maintenance increases drastically. She said we realize this doesn't completely solve the problem but it will close the gap from 9 million dollars to about 3 million dollars.

In response to a question from Thomas Laing, Ms. McKinney said the grant program started in 2012 continues to be successful for capital projects only but not for general maintenance. She said imposing a local Vehicle Registration Fee (VRF) rose to the top as the easiest and most cost efficient way to fund the road maintenance reserves. She said ORS specifies that a percentage of the funds collected (based on city population) will be distributed directly to cities. She said Veneta will receive \$78,000 to \$100,000 annually and all of those funds are earmarked specifically for road maintenance only.

Ms. McKinney reviewed the timeline for getting the VRF on the May ballot.

In response to a question from Mayor Larson, Ms. McKinney said recreational vehicles are not included because they already pay a registration fee that feeds the Oregon State Parks system.

In response to a question from Victoria Hedenstrom, Ms. McKinney said currently, nationwide, Oregon is ranked as the eighth lowest as far as what residents pay for gas tax, road maintenance, and registration fees. Ms. McKinney said the State of Oregon is considering a registration fee and gas tax increase.

Commissioner Bozievich said if the State of Oregon does increase its VRF, the County wouldn't impose the maximum fee of \$35 per vehicle and \$20 per motorcycle every two years.

In response to a question from Victoria Hedenstrom, Ms. McKinney said the VRF would be collected by the state and tacked on to the current registration fee already in place.

In response to a question from Tim Brooker, Commissioner Bozievich said the reserves came from Capitol Hill and the Secure Rural Schools funds (SRS). He said every time a SRS is re-upped, they cut the amount of money by just a little bit which doesn't make us whole but it does help. He said this is a nationwide issue about US Forest Service Harvests which is what we've been living off of for the last five or six years and we've used those reserves. He said if we don't do something soon, we're going to have a backlog of road maintenance countywide. He said it's critical that LCBC take local action.

In response to a question from Victoria Hedenstrom, Mr. McKinney said Multnomah County is the only county statewide that has passed a registration fee. She said Benton County Commissioners passed the fee without putting it to the voters and it was recalled. She said Washington County Commissioners included the fee on their last ballot but it was unsuccessful.

Bill Morgan said if voters pass the VRF, 11.5 million dollars would be earmarked for road maintenance; Lane County would receive approximately 6.5 million dollars and 4.2 million dollars would be distributed among all incorporated Lane County cities.

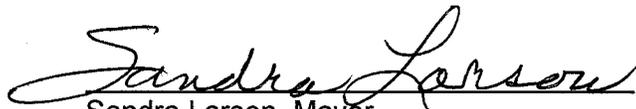
After a thorough discussion Mayor Larson, Thomas Cotter, and Thomas Laing requested staff put this item on the December 15th agenda in order for Mayor Larson to sign the letter supporting the VRF be placed on the May 2015 ballot. Victoria Hedenstrom was undecided.

6. OTHER

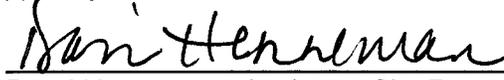
Commissioner Bozievich said he met with Frannie Brindle, ODOT Region Two Area 5 Manager, and discussed forming a small safety task force for Highway 126. He said he had a brief discussion with Tim Brooker and Chief Terry Ney who both indicated they would like to serve on the task force. He said folks from west of the Highway 126 tunnel would also be on the task force along with ODOT Safety Engineer, Angela Cargile.

7. ADJOURN

Mayor Larson adjourned the Veneta City Council at 8:41 p.m.


Sandra Larson, Mayor

ATTEST:


Darci Henneman, Assistant City Recorder
(Minutes prepared by DHenneman)