

**April 15, 2020  
Regular Session  
City of Gaston  
Zoom Videoconference**

**Present:** Mayor David **Meeker**, Council President Bill **Martin**, Andrew **Sewall**, Sarah **Branch**, Suzy **Whittaker**, and Don **Richter**. Also present Brent **Whittaker** and Larry **Klimek**.

**Absent:**

**Staff Present:** City Recorder Wenonah **Blanchette**.

- I. Mayor David **Meeker** called the regular meeting to order at 7:45PM.
- II. **ROLL CALL:** City Recorder **Blanchette** conducted the roll call for the record with:
  - Councilor Mario **DePiero**: Present
  - Councilor Andrew **Sewall**: Present
  - Councilor Bill **Martin**: Present
  - Mayor David **Meeker**: Present
  - Councilor Sarah **Branch**: Present
  - Councilor Suzy **Whittaker**: Present
  - Councilor Don **Richter**: Present
- III. **ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS:** Mayor **Meeker** announced that John **Southgate** from Washington County Economic Development was present to discuss with Council opportunity of leasing or renting the three-bay door area for profitable purposes. Discussion had with Council noting the City has potential opportunity for money-making investments and agreed to have John **Southgate** continue pursuing business opportunities leasing City Hall. No action or decisions made. John **Southgate** left the meeting at this time.
- IV. **CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS:**

Larry **Klimek** was present to discuss the Wapato Wildlife Refuge providing an update on information to construct a 30-car parking lot on City property adjacent to the old Gaston Feed Store. Additional information presented for Council to consider installing a 1,000-gallon tank concrete vault restroom at the area. Larry **Klimek** clarified the Wildlife Refuge would install and donate the vault restroom to the City and negotiate a maintenance agreement between the Wildlife Refuge and City. Councilor **Sewall** provided information on pumping costs and asked Council if they would be interested in moving forward with this proposal. City Resident Brent **Whittaker** inquired if the Wildlife Refuge plans to continue partnership with the City for improvements around Wapato Lake. Larry **Klimek** responded that there are no plans for such a project in their long-range planning goals. A mutual consensus was made amongst the Council to have Larry **Klimek** draft an MOU (Mutual of Understanding) between the City and Wildlife Refuge. Larry **Klimek** will provide an update next month. Other topics discussed include police services, vandalism, overnight parking, power, and lighting.
- V. **STAFF/COUNCIL/COMMITTEE/SUPERVISOR REPORTS:** Mayor **Meeker** called for staff reports at this time:

**Police:** Deputy **McCreary** provide his report for March with the following information: New COVID-19 restrictions with the Sheriff's office asking everyone to restrict self-initiated contact significantly reducing the number of traffic stops throughout the County. Limited supply of PPE (Proper Protection Equipment) along with closures throughout the State have caused a shift in how police services used to operate. The Washington County jail has suspended lodging individuals for misdemeanor crimes. Active warrants issued for individuals on Salter Street but due to COVID-19 restrictions, tickets are being issued instead of warrants and will not take anyone to jail unless felony or domestic/assault crimes are committed.

Deputy **McCreary** provided his input on the revised parking ordinance and recommends Council adopt the ordinance citing no additional changes.

**Recorders Report:** Recorder **Blanchette** provided her report for March with the following information:

- Legal: Working with the attorney on Cottonwood Street and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. Administrative is near complete for 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and next is working to purchase the right-of-way from some property owners.
- Financials: Provided in the Council packets are balances for each fund with information used from the accountant's report and will continue to provide these for future meetings.
- Land Use and Planning: Some questions were heard about property development outside the urban growth boundaries, but not much land use activity.
- Municipal Court: Court's been rescheduled, and Deputy **McCreary** is no longer writing tickets because of recent COVID-19 restrictions.
- Brown Park is tentatively reserved for the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> for the Oregon Water Fowl Festival to commence the opening of the Wapato Lake Wildlife Refuge. This event includes vendors, contests, kids' events, and a BBQ Fundraiser.
- The City received the annual franchise fee from Portland General Electric for 2019 in March.
- City Hall has not heard back from Judy **Clark** regarding Job Descriptions.
- Hiland Water is still reading the City water meters and have the last four months while the City is without a public works director.
- Waiting for contractors to provide bids for the library repair.
- Grants:
  - Cottonwood Safe Routes to School: Obtaining temporary construction easements from property owners with the help of Jason from AKS Engineering.
  - Council will need to consider adopting the Project Identification Program through the Safe Routes to Schools incorporating an update to the transportation master plan between Cottonwood Street to County Mobile Estates widening the surface area, adding fill to the west side of the highway allowing room for a walking path/sidewalk.
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Widening Project has approval from NOAA regarding the storm management and treatment plan but now waiting for approval by the state which will occur in March. No updates.
- The City Council will need to consider hiring a new solid waste sanitary service with the City terminating collection services by 2021 with Waste Management. In previous talks with Council, the City was wanting to reach out to surrounding companies to determine if there is an interest to serve residents of Gaston. Further discussion heard on the residents wanting yard debris collection added to regular garbage services. Councilor **Branch** requested the recorder collect information for what next steps should be soliciting for new services including a franchise agreement.

**VI. PRESENTATIONS:** *No presentations at this time.*

**VII. CONSENT AGENDA:** Councilor **Whittaker** requested the Recorder call RonJons to pick up one regular porta potty leaving the ADA porta potty at the park. Further discussion heard for asking the Knight of Pythias to meet with Council about the City paying for the car show's porta potty expenses without compensation on use for the field. Councilor **DePiero** motioned to adopt the consent agenda and Bills for April 2020 at \$47,951, with second heard by Councilor **Richter**. Motion passed approving the consent agenda with aye votes heard from **DePiero, Sewall, Martin, Richter, Meeker, Branch,** and **Whittaker**. Nay: 0

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS:**

**Resolution 20-002 A Resolution Adopting a Supplemental Budget for Fiscal Year 2019-2020 and Appropriating Funds.**

**Resolution 20-003 A Resolution Declaring the Eligibility of the City of Gaston to Receive State Funds and Declaring Municipal Services Provided by the City of Gaston in Accordance with ORS 221.760.**

**Resolution 20-004 Workers Compensation Coverage to Volunteers of the City of Gaston.** Motion to adopt Resolution 20-003, 20-004, and 20-004 was made by Councilor **DePiero** and seconded by Councilor **Richter**. Aye: **DePiero, Sewall, Richter, Martin, Meeker, Branch,** and **Whittaker**. Nay: None.

**Adopt Safe Routes to School Project Identification Plan:** Councilor **Sewall** noted on page 5 had typos with two bold phrases that should be corrected. Motion made by Councilor **Sewall** to adopt the Safe Routes to School Project Identification Plan with noted corrections to page 5. Councilor **DePiero** seconded the motion with votes, Aye: **DePiero, Sewall, Richter, Martin, Meeker, Branch,** and **Whittaker**. Nay: None.

**Budget Reorganization:** It was mutually agreed upon by Council to make changes to the budget during the budget meetings. No action taken.

**IX. OLD BUSINESS:**

**Towing Ordinance: Ordinance No. 20-001 An Ordinance of the City of Gaston Amending the City of Gaston Code Relating to Parking Violations.** Recorder **Blanchette** explained Deputy **McCreary** has had difficulty towing vehicles that are unlicensed or have expired tags because current city code does not define these vehicles as being subject to tow. Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 20-001 An Ordinance of the City of Gaston Amending the City of Gaston Code Relating to Parking Violations was made by Councilor **DePiero** and seconded by Councilor **Sewall**. Motion carried. Aye: **Sewall, DePiero, Whittaker, Branch, Martin, Richter,** and **Meeker**. Nay: None.

**Staff Reorganization:** Due to the lack of information provided by HR Answers, Councilor **Branch** and Councilor **Sewall** voiced concerns moving forward with consulting services improving the City's employment concerns with written policy. It was decided to contact HR Answers for further information for their contribution to improving staff policy. Councilor **DePiero** stated the League of Oregon Cities can assist the City finding a public works director. City resident Brent **Whittaker** suggested changing the title of Public Works Director removing the word Director.

Discussion heard on water leak detection, repairs on South Road that Hiland Water performed, hydrant replacements, and flushing hydrants. No action.

**X. COMPLAINTS:**

**New—**

**Old—**

- 124 Front Street-Green Awning: The Recorder was instructed to contact Washington County Building Department and ODOT to determine who is liable for the safety along sidewalks.
- 100 3<sup>rd</sup> Street: The Recorder was instructed to contact the City Engineer concerning the stormwater issue drainage and provide recommendations for repair costs.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT:** Council mutually agreed to adjourn this meeting at 9:33PM.

  
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Mayor David Meeker

Attest:   
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City Recorder Wenonah Blanchette