

**December 18, 2019  
Regular Session  
City of Gaston**

**Present:** Mayor David **Meeker**, Council President Bill **Martin**, Mario **DePiero**, Andrew **Sewall**, Sarah **Branch**, Suzy **Whittaker**, and Don **Richter**. Present Sgt. **Ray** and others represented on the sign in sheet (attached)

**Absent:** None

**Staff Present:** Public Works Director Andy **Worley**, City Recorder Wenonah **Blanchette** and Washington County Sheriff's Office Deputy **McCreary**.

- I. Mayor David **Meeker** called the regular meeting to order at 6:58 PM.
- 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** called for additions or deletions to the agenda with none being heard.
- IV. **STAFF/COUNCIL/COMMITTEE/SUPERVISOR REPORTS:** Mayor **Meeker** asked for staff reports with Recorder **Blanchette** providing her report at this time.

**Police:** Deputy **McCreary** provided his report for November with the following:

- Providing information about traffic control for Gaston, Deputy **McCreary** spoke with ODOT (Oregon Department of Transportation) about installing a painted crosswalk in front of the store which was stated is not feasible as the City already has a crosswalk near Main Street and cannot have a second crosswalk that close to another one. A request was made for larger speed signs and was told those speed signs are the largest ones that are provided unless the city wanted billboard speed signs. Also spoke to ODOT about rumble strips to caution drivers to slow down which those do not fit within criteria needed to qualify; painting double-yellow lines throughout town to prevent passing; installing No Passing signs requested. The one possible opportunity ODOT said would be painting a double yellow line as recent rules have changed but may not happen until spring. If the City is able to pay for electronic radar speed signs, the City would be able to mount those directly on ODOT speed signs. Approximate costs for two signs-two solar panels and batteries would be \$5,400.
- The speed trailer was placed throughout town to determine what peak times speeders travel through town was distributed for Council to review. Deputy **McCreary** stated that based on the information provided people speeding occurs during morning and evening regular traffic times. Other ideas to curb speeding through town would be to have a motor unit do a mission.
- Due to staff currently not certified in LEDS (Law Enforcement Data Systems) this causes problems with writing tickets due to needing access to driving records for the Judge for court. There have been some difficulties in establishing contact with the State to receive this training and certification but will update Council when that happens.
- Stats are for October and November were distributed to Council including a map of the calls for service.
- There is a new FaceBook page for the Gaston Police: WSCO Gaston. On this page, information will be shared such as crashes and other important information.

- Deputy **McCreary** is researching options to getting rid of the two police vehicles the City is paying insurance coverage for. One crown Victoria is in working order, the other one does not start. GovDeals is a government auction website and will be signing up to place the vehicles up for auction.
- The Gaston's police guns were destroyed by the Washington County Sheriff's Office and police reports from the Gaston's police department are being reviewed and destroyed per records retention law. Most records can be destroyed with exception to murders and sex crimes which are permanent records. Washington County Sheriff's records department will take records that are not destroyed and retain them in their records system.
- Cars throughout town are being tagged that haven't moved in years with two already being towed and tagging several others.
- Sgt. **Ray** announced with Council he is Deputy **McCreary's** direct supervisor and since appointing him to Gaston he's helped foster a better relationship with the City and things are moving forward accomplishing a great deal in a short amount of time.

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

- Legal: Councilor **Sewall** may provide additional information regarding the rates with engineering services for Tetra Tech (later on the agenda). The City Attorney recommended hiring on behalf of the City a land use attorney (Dunn & Carney LLP) to research ADA compliance for development with Gaston Heights. Ownership has been transferred over to the Pythias Sisters for the Farmers Market. Grant extension for the Small Cities Allotment Grant (SCA) for 3<sup>rd</sup> street was reviewed and signed by the City attorney. The city is still working with Community Development Block Grant and waiting for approval of the storm treatment plan through HUD for approval. Currently SHPO (State Historical Preservation Offices) is reviewing the building on Cottonwood and Church Street to determine if there is any impact to the property and asked for specifics of the project.
- Finances: The City has received the bulk of tax revenue from property taxes paid in November. The City is near completion of the audit report for 2018-2019 and will need to provide an action plan to address significant deficiencies which will then be sent to the state.
- Planning: Planning Grant was received which the City applies for every two years to assist with general planning services. Recorder **Blanchette** announced she is looking for volunteers from the audience and/or Council to help prepare invoices for planning, engineering and legal reimbursements, more specifically Gaston Heights billings. A preliminary sign permit was submitted from the OLCC (Oregon Liquor Control Commission) for the Ace Tavern similar to the Knights of Pythias sign; overhanging the sidewalk and wanted to know if the City would still like to continue planning services with AKS or wait for the Council to decide on a new planner.
- Having some difficulty in contacting the State Police to inquire about CJIS (Criminal Justice Information Service Division) compliance training. This allows for those certified to run driving records as needed by municipal court. Made contact with Sue **Hudson-Rau** for information relating to what is needed for the Gaston municipal court system with her response that the minimum requirement is to be CJIS certified.
- Met with John **Southgate** on November 8, 2019 to discuss economic development issues and opportunities for Gaston. **Southgate** is a consultant hired through Washington County to help provide feedback and information to better serve the outlining rural communities of Washington County. Next month, Commissioner Jerry **Willey** will be present to provide information to help businesses in Gaston.
- The City's public works phone successfully transferred to FirstNet with the same number as well as IT services changed from Genuine Technology to IT Garage. Changes with service include the city purchasing software monthly from Microsoft. IT Garage would like to purchase new computers.
- The City's current Risk Management Consultant through CIS John **Zakariassen** will be retiring the end of December and will his replacement will be Adrian **Albrich**.
- Grants:
  - Cottonwood Safe Routes to School: Submitted the quarterly report was submitted and sent letters to the property owners along Cottonwood scheduling a meeting on

- December 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:00PM discussing the project in detail to those affected property owners.
  - A draft plan will then be submitted for further review. Final draft is expected to be complete by the beginning of next year. Meeting dates are outlined if anyone is interested in attending.
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Widening Project has approval from NOAA regarding the storm management and treatment but is waiting for the State Historic Preservation Office for their review and approval of 209 Cottonwood Street also known as the Church at the corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> and Cottonwood.
  - SPIRE Grant: The generator has been delivered and in the garage. The City is required to provide annual maintenance. Mayor **Meeker** met with representatives of Portland General Electric and was informed that the City may be eligible for grant funds to wire the pump station for the generator as it was originally intended for in the event of an emergency or power outage to continue drawing water to the residents of Gaston.
- Follow-up information from Frontier Communications stated they were bought out by Northwest Fiber closing on March 31<sup>st</sup> and will be working with local governments to update their franchise agreements. On Friday, I will be attending a MACC (Metropolitan Area Communication Commission) and receive more information regarding cable/telephone services.
- Waste management franchise was terminated in 2017 and will require the City to obtain a new franchise carrier for garbage service in four years or by 2021.
- New business owners at the Ace Tavern.

**Public Works:** Public Works Director Andy **Worley** provided his report to Council with the following:

- Request to purchase a Honda Generator and Qwik-Freeze portable pipe freezing equipment to for the water department. Public Works Director **Worley** explained the generator would cost \$1,049 and the Qwik-Freeze would cost \$852 believing these items would benefit the City's water department in repairing water lines. Discussion was heard on how to use the Qwik-Freeze to repair water lines.
- Trees on 1<sup>st</sup> Street need to be taken down with proposals submitted for removing them include R&B Tree Service for \$6,500 Marble Tree Service for \$6,525, Watts Tree Service for \$7,500. R&B Tree Service being the cheapest option is recommended for council to approve. Mayor **Meeker** called on Gaston resident Brent **Whittaker** and asked Council about the improvement agreement that splits the cost of the improvement and sidewalk with the property owners which also includes the removal of the trees. Brent **Whittaker** further explained the first two property owners with trees on their property will be responsible for half the cost to remove those trees and that the 3<sup>rd</sup> property owner would not have to pay for tree removal as there are none on that property.
- Water maintenance includes ordering new water meters for installation for meters that have over three million gallons of usage. Replace damaged or leaking curb stops in town and other water leaks.
- Storm system: The non-set catch basin needs to be cleaned every six years and the sub-catch basins with those needing to cleaned once a year because they fill with sediment. Spoke with Clean Water Services about maintenance but is working on it.
- Park maintenance is minimal due to the time of year but leaves need to be raked before spring.
- Water treatment certification class is scheduled for January 7-8<sup>th</sup> 2020.
- No current water loss figures provided with Councilor **Sewall** requesting to provide those next month. Sanitary survey on December 10<sup>th</sup> was had with Larry **Finster** from Washington County and is done every three years. Councilor **Whittaker** asked the Public Works Director to include in his report what work was performed in addition to citing what work is intended to be done.

#### V. **CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS:**

Mayor **Meeker** called for citizen communication with none heard.

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

**VII. CONSENT AGENDA:** Councilor **Sewall** asked questions regarding composing minutes with the Recorder responding that depending on the topic and detail of the subject generally is what decides verbatim vs. summary transcription of minutes. For example, topics that include Gaston Heights or finances usually are verbatim. Other general topics do not need such detail. Discussion had with possibly contracting with ABC Transcriptions to transcribe minutes which could save time and complete minutes in a timelier fashion. It was requested to contact the League of Oregon Cities to see if there is more information on how to format minutes. Motion to approve December's Bills payable of \$55,551.88 with motion made by Councilor **DePiero** and seconded by Councilor **Sewall**. Motion carried with aye votes heard from **DePiero, Sewall, Martin, Meeker, Branch, Whittaker,** and **Richter**. Nay: 0.

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS:**  
**Honda Generator & Qwik-Freeze Pipe Freezing Equipment Purchase:** Discussion heard amongst the Council for need of these tools and informed staff to rent these items instead of purchasing them. Councilor **Whittaker** inquired about other options for a generator but due to the lack of need at the moment, does not want to purchase one at this time as the City is trying to save money. By consensus of the Council staff was informed to rent a qwik-freeze tool and not purchase a generator at this time.

**IX. OLD BUSINESS:**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Street Tree Removal:** Motion to select R&B Tree Service to remove trees on 1<sup>st</sup> Street was made by Councilor **DePiero** and seconded by Councilor **Sewall**. Motion passed. Councilor **Branch** wanted to ensure the City provided notice to the property owners to remind them of the improvement agreement citing they are responsible for half the cost of the tree removal and to notify the property owners when the trees are going to be removed. Voting Aye: **DePiero, Sewall, Martin, Meeker, Branch, Whittaker,** and **Richter**. Nay: None.

**Tetra Tech Engineering:** Councilor **Sewall** discussed with Council updated rates from Tetra Tech matching fees from AKS Engineering as requested. Motion to move forward with Tetra Tech as the City's engine of service was made by Councilor **Sewall** and seconded by Councilor **Martin**. Motion carried. Aye: **DePiero, Sewall, Martin, Meeker, Branch, Whittaker,** and **Richter**. Nay: None.

**City Planner Selection:** Selection for City planning services was had with proposals provided by MIG, Urban Planning and Tenneson Engineering Corporation. Councilor **Sewall** noted MIG specializes in ADA compliance which is becoming more and more significant for building and development. Councilor **DePiero** motioned to move forward with MIG and start that process. Second heard by Councilor **Richter**. Motion passed with aye votes heard from **DePiero, Sewall, Martin, Meeker, Whittaker,** and **Richter**. Abstain: **Branch**. Nay: 0.

**X. COMPLAINTS:**  
**New—**

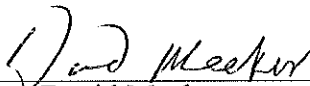
**Old—**


- 124 Front Street-Green Awning: Mayor **Meeker** stated that awning has been there nearly 40-50 years with Councilor **Sewall** saying this is going to be looked into by the local deputy. Councilor **Martin** took pictures of it saying only one corner has evidence of rust on it stating the awning might outlive the building. Councilor **DePiero** identified the property is overhang the sidewalk which is within ODOT's right of way. Discussion heard amongst the Council of who the responsible party would be to determine if it's a safety concern and if so how to correct it. City Resident Brent **Whittaker** stated the City will need to declare it a nuisance under the nuisance ordinance but said he had looked into this issue before and mentioned it was a dead end would be difficult to pursue. Until the City can adopt a frontage improvement ordinance or something that would allow for someone to

trespass onto the property it would be difficult to address. Discussion heard on who to contact; Washington County Building Department, ODOT and the property owner. City Recorder was directed to make this contact. The Recorder was directed to contact the City Attorney if no information could be reached with those contacts.

- 100 3<sup>rd</sup> Street: Property owner submitted his complaint in writing requesting the City address the water runoff issue that occurs that is slowly damaging his property causing water to run down his foundation, pitching the driveway, and causing cracks in the foundation due to an ill-designed storm system the City will need to have the City engineers look at. Property owner Brent **Whittaker** stated the key areas to look at is a new gutter on the curb, the attempted fix with the asphalt and the distance from the curb to the storm drain. Councilor **Sewall** stated if the City cannot fix it, the City will need to contact the City Engineer to address this issue.
- 104 2<sup>nd</sup> Street: Livestock: Councilor **DePiero** asked if the Deputy had a chance to look at the livestock that has been reported at the property with the Public Works Director citing he looked behind the fence and verified there are no more chickens or fowl adding he took pictures to verify this. There is only chicken wire attached to the neighboring fence but no animals back there. Council requested the Public Works Director **Worley** to follow up with the complainant and to see if he is content with resolution of this complaint.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT:** Motion to adjourn was made by Councilor **Martin** with second heard by Councilor **Richter**. Motion carried unanimously closing the meeting at 9:01PM.

  
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Mayor David Meeker

Attest:   
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City Recorder Wenonah Blanchette