

**March 18, 2020
Regular Session
City of Gaston**

Present: Mayor David **Meeker**, Council President Bill **Martin**, Andrew **Sewall**, Sarah **Branch**, and Suzy **Whittaker**. Also present are Janette **Noble**, Brent **Whittaker** and Tony **Hall**.

Absent: Don **Richter**

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

- I. Mayor David **Meeker** called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 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**: *(absent)*
- III. **ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS:** Mayor **Meeker** announced he met with Fire Chief earlier today and was presented information about the coronavirus. Mayor **Meeker** announced that the City will not be declaring an emergency but will be cutting the meeting short and tabling most item to address next month.
- IV. **CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS:**
Laurie **Hoodenpyl**: Farmers Market, Laurie **Hoodenpyl** was not present at the meeting. Mayor **Meeker** announced the Pythian Sister's requested to hold their upcoming Farmers Market on the Onion Lane property the City owns. The City's property on Onion Lane will be used for the Federal Fish & Wildlife in developing a parking area for the Wapato Wildlife Refuge and cannot be used for the Farmers Market. Council by mutual consensus agreed to table the Farmers Market and any remaining public comment items on the agenda to next month's meeting.
- V. **STAFF/COUNCIL/COMMITTEE/SUPERVISOR REPORTS:** *No reports at this time.*
- VI. **PRESENTATIONS:** *No presentations at this time.*
- VII. **CONSENT AGENDA:** Mayor **Meeker** called for a motion to approve the consent agenda with Councilor **Sewall** motioning to approve with Bills Payable of \$34,462.11. Motion was seconded by Councilor **Branch**. Motion carried. Aye votes: **DePiero, Sewall, Martin, Meeker, Branch** and **Whittaker**. Nay: 0.
- VIII. **NEW BUSINESS:**
National Community Development Week April 13-April 17, 2020 Proclamation: Mayor **Meeker** read aloud the proclamation. Councilor **DePiero** made a motion to approve the proclamation and was seconded by Councilor **Martin**. Motion passed. Aye: **DePiero, Sewall, Martin, Meeker, Branch**, and **Whittaker**. Nay: 0

Adopt Safe Routes to School Project Identification Plan: By consensus, it was decided to table adopting the plan and will reconsider it at the next Council meeting.

Budget Reorganization: Mayor **Meeker** called upon Budget Committee Chairperson Brent **Whittaker** with his response to table discussions to next month's meeting.

Appoint Budget Officer: Councilor **Branch** cited the need to appoint a budget officer and begin preparations for next year's budget with a motion heard by Councilor **DePiero** and seconded by Councilor **Sewall** to appoint Wenonah **Blanchette** as the Budget Officer for 2020-2021. Motion carried. Aye: **DePiero, Sewall, Martin, Meeker, Branch, and Whittaker.** Nay: None.

Appoint Budget Committee Members: Council recommended community members who might participate as budget committee members, those include Ruben **Lopez**, Tony **Hall**, Brent **Whittaker**, and Adam-Ross **Branch**. Councilor **Branch** directed the Recorder to include a member with the water bills asking residents to volunteer for the budget committee. Discussion heard on purchasing teleconferencing capabilities to virtually hold meetings due to the six-foot social distancing as City Hall cannot accommodate space necessary to maintain social distancing restrictions. The Recorder was instructed to check into options for teleconferencing next month's meeting.

Review and Approve Budget Committee Meeting Dates: Reviewing suggested budget committee meeting dates, Council informally agreed with the proposed meeting dates selected but due to the pandemic cannot confirm attendance prioritizing the need for teleconferencing capabilities. Also discussed filing extensions with the state for budget reporting deadlines if necessary.

Charter Update Approval: The Mayor called to table the charter update approval with Councilor **Branch** asking Brent **Whittaker**, charter committee member, if he had final copies of what the committee updated responding that he would prepare a copy easing the burden on the Recorder having it ready for the attorney to review.

Changing City Halls Hours Discussion: Recorder **Blanchette** requested to change hours temporarily Monday through Thursday 7AM to 6PM and close City Hall Fridays but with circumstances being what they are there is no need to change hours from the standard work week if City Hall is to remain closed to the public. By consensus of the Council it was decided City Hall will remain closed to the public as the Recorder works alone in the office to ensure safety amid the pandemic.

IX. OLD BUSINESS:

Towing Ordinance: Recorder **Blanchette** explained to Council that Deputy **McCreary** has difficulty towing vehicles that are unlicensed or have expired tags because current city code does not define these vehicles as being subject to tow and would like to correct that. Recorder **Blanchette** is working with the City Attorney in drafting an ordinance based on towing regulations from Washington County for Council to consider adopting at next month's meeting.

Ordinance 2020-001 Emergency Operations: Councilor **Sewall** at this time explained the most important role as a City representative and as a City is to communicate with locals about trustworthy sources of information about the coronavirus from sources such as the Fire Department, Oregon Health Authority or Washington County. Councilor **Branch** stated she would not support adopting Ordinance 2020-001 Emergency Operations. Gaston resident Tony **Hall** provided background on the Emergency Ordinance recalling during his previous tenure as Mayor the City received the City of Bank's Emergency Operations plan and modified it for Gaston. Councilor **DePiero** called for the Council to decide on adopting or rejecting the emergency ordinance with Councilor **DePiero** motioning to reject and vote no on adopting Ordinance No. 2020-001 Emergency Operations with second heard by Councilor **Branch**. Councilor **Sewall** confirmed that Council is voting in favor to not pass the ordinance. Voting Aye: **DePiero, Sewall, Martin, Meeker, Branch, and Whittaker.** Nay: 0.

Staff Reorganization: *Tabled at this time.*

Mayor **Meeker** confirmed the City will continue park maintenance as usual.

X. **COMPLAINTS:** Councilor **Branch** called to table all complaints at this time. Council by mutual consensus agreed to address complaints at the following meeting.
New—

Old—

- 124 Front Street-Green Awning: *Tabled at this time.*
- 100 3rd Street: *Tabled at this time.*

XI. **ADJOURNMENT:** Motion to adjourn was made by Mayor **DePiero** and seconded by Councilor **Sewall**. Motion carried unanimously closing the meeting at 7:27PM.



Mayor David Meeker

Attest: 

City Recorder Wenonah Blanchette