

**November 17, 2021
Regular Session
City of Gaston
Zoom Videoconference**

Present: Mayor David **Meeker**, Bill **Martin**, Mario **DePiero**, Robert **Dooley**, Margaret **Bell**, and Don **Richter**.

Absent: Billy **Nice**

Staff Present: Public Works Specialist Rick **Mapes**, City Recorder Wenonah **Blanchette** and Washington County Deputy Jarrod **McCreary**.

- 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 Bill **Martin**: Present
Councilor Robert **Dooley**: Present
Mayor David **Meeker**: Present
Councilor Margaret **Bell**: Present
Councilor Billy **Nice**: *absent*
Councilor Don **Richter**: Present
- III. **ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS:** Mayor **Meeker** called for additions or deletions to the agenda adding citizen communication for Diana **Watkins** and Jay **Disbrow**, representatives of the Gaston Community Library present to discuss with Council the opening of the Gaston Community Library.
- IV. **CITIZEN COMMUNICATION:** Diana **Watkins**, President of the Gaston Community Library provided background information, which was founded in the 1970s is exclusively non-profit, and provides book lending services for free to everyone in the community. The Gaston Library is not affiliated with the Washington County or Yamhill County library organizations and is temporarily closed for maintenance but came to discuss with Council their plan for opening in the Spring. Discussion heard on the garage area and office space currently used by the library which is not part of their lease agreement with the City. Public Works Specialist **Mapes** requested the library remove their items from the office space and garage area to use for City purposes. Councilor **Martin** motioned to use the office room currently used by the Gaston Community Library to be used as a mud room and was seconded by Councilor **Richter**. Motion carried. Vote: Aye: **DePiero**, **Bell**, **Richter**, and **Dooley**, Nay: **Meeker**.
- V. **STAFF/COUNCIL/COMMITTEE/SUPERVISOR REPORTS:** Mayor **Meeker** called for staff reports starting with Police Report:

Police: Deputy **McCreary** provided his report to the Council for October with the following: Call for service averaged the same, self-initiated calls were down 1 to 15, public demand up 1 to 22, traffic stops increased by 19 for a total of 41 traffic stops and a total of 8 citations written.

- Spoke with the Right Choice Automotive to park and run radar as it's the best place to safely catch speeders.
- DUII crash on Park Street with the defendant, not from Gaston, crashing into a parked car and taken to jail.
- Follow up with the rape reportedly occurring on 3rd Street. It was determined no crime occurred.
- Stolen vehicle on Front Street.
- A fraud report was created for alleged ID theft.

- The rainy weather creates issues for the phone lines at City Hall that call 9-1-1 in heavy rain. Staff is working to fix this issue and have had Zply Fiber out several times but continues during each heavy rainfall.

Councilor **Dooley** inquired if stolen gas is common in the area with Deputy **McCreary** responding that lately no reports of stolen gas have been reported but have had several reports filed in the past. Councilor **Dooley** indicated he had gas stolen from a gas can in the back of his truck that was filled because he felt someone was stealing gas from his vehicle and did not file a report. Deputy **McCreary** also reported that 3 separate individuals have contacted him about a drone flying low at night around Salter Street and Church Street. Deputy **McCreary** is aware of the flying drone and will be researching the legalities of flying drones next week.

Recorders Report: Recorder **Blanchette** provided her report to the Council for November:

- Updated the check amount for D&D Concrete as the engineer reviewed and recommended changing the amount from \$154,410 to \$127,217.50.
- Fund balances are all positive, but the Street Fund and Water Fund will reflect significant changes which will bounce back within the next few months due to the grants and water projects going on.
- Request was directed to Council by the Recorder for using ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) Funds for charitable services in the Water Department that otherwise qualify as low-income and eligible for use of these funds for a one-time total payment of \$3,350 to use toward three water accounts. Motion to pay \$3,350 towards 3 water accounts that qualify as low-income/charitable uses in response to the public health emergency and it's negative impacts, was made by Councilor **DePiero** and seconded by Councilor **Richter**. Motion carried with aye votes heard from: **Martin, Meeker, Bell, Dooley, Richter, and DePiero**. Nay: None.
- Meeting held with Oregon Business in determining the City's eligibility for acquiring a loan to purchase Onion Lane for future development with the City. The City will be applying through the Special Public Works Fund that is provided to local governments. Next steps include submitting a preapplication form once Oregon Business approves the project as a qualifying project.
- 305 W. Main Street applied for a new family dwelling with staff working with them to defer their System Development Charges to expedite the building process. Councilor **Bell** instructed the Recorder not to defer SDC payments due to current ongoing issues with the subdivision's development fees and to contact the appropriate person to pay their fees with the City before permits are issued.
- No update on the annexation recently applied for by Ron **Danielson** for Country Mobile Estates.
- Municipal Court was held yesterday and will be continuing to meet virtually for court related matters. Court yesterday resulted in one trial, 2 email responses requesting traffic school and 3 arraignment held. Next Court is scheduled January 18, 2022.
- The Pythian Sisters donated \$500 towards the City's GIFT program which is offered by the Gaston Water Department that reviews applications submitted by low-income households that are needing assistance for their water bill. This program is run on donations and is anonymous for all those involved.
- Tim **McDonald** paid fees owed to the City and associated with his subdivision in the amount of \$13,781.67. It was stated interest continues to accrue for the remaining balance of \$79,771.53 as well as interest accrued from the \$13,781.67 from October 2nd - November 16th.
- Bill cards for water bills were ordered several days before bills were to be mailed but have not been delivered with less than half of the remaining water bills waiting to be mailed once bills cards are delivered to City Hall.
- Established contact with the Zply Fiber liaison and will be drafting a franchise agreement for Council to consider adopting.

- Several trainings were attended as well as a Habitat for Humanity meeting scheduled earlier today offering information on a new program through the Forest Grove Foundation and The Salvation Army that helps individuals facing homelessness. This program is called RATH (Rural Assistance in Transition for Homelessness) and will begin assisting people in rural areas.

Public Works Report: The Public Works Specialist provided his report for October with the following:

- Street sweeping is scheduled for December 3, 2021 and signs will be going up the day before.
- New water main for 3rd street has been installed. Pressure, chlorination/disinfectant, and BAC-T testing will occur within the week.
- The City will be asking Community Development for additional funds for the 3rd Street main line replacement.
- Washington County LUT donated a radar trailer to the City.
- Street signs posts and sleeves ordered from Western Iron Works came in and will begin installing them this week.
- Speed radar signs purchased by the City from Sonja **Zawodny's** donation in remembrance of Mark **Zawodny** are on back order but will be installed on E. Main Street once the City receives them. It was noted the signs on the highway have significantly reduced speeding throughout town.
- The City's new storm system constructed near the School is causing issues from what appears that the City did not thoroughly inspect the storm system during final inspection and is a result of drainage issues because it was not improperly installed on 6th Street to Park Street.

At this time, the Public Works Specialist asked the Council to consider a raise in hourly pay or change his classification to a salary employee earning up to \$70,000 rather than hourly wages. Public Works Specialist **Mapes** provided a letter (*Exhibit B*) to the Council identifying several factors and support in his request for an increase in pay that include wages of other public work employees are paid throughout the state of Oregon, certifications, and current inflation/COLA rates. Public Works Specialist **Mapes** requested the Council consider changing the title of Public Works Specialist back to the Public Works Director. Motion to increase Rick **Mapes's** hours wage to \$28 dollars an hour was made by Councilor **Dooley** and seconded by Councilor **Richter**. Aye: **Martin, DePiero, Dooley, Bell, Meeker, and Richter**. Nay: None

- VI. CONSENT AGENDA:** Mayor **Meeker** called for a motion to approve the consent agenda with a motion made by Councilor **Bell** following second by Councilor **Richter**. Motion carried with aye votes heard from: **DePiero, Dooley, Meeker, Martin, Bell, and Richter**. Nay: 0. Motion carried.

*Bills Payable November 2021 *Exhibit A*
October 20, 2021 Regular Council Session
November 3, 2021 Special Session*

- VII. NEW BUSINESS:**
Discussion/Decision on American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds Allocations: *(this issue previously discussed in the meeting)*

- VIII. OLD BUSINESS:**
Onion Lane/Property Purchase Update: *(this issue previously discussed in the meeting)*

3rd Street Improvements Update: *(this issue previously discussed in the meeting)*

Gaston Heights Billings: Payment has been made for development fees associated with Gaston Heights subdivision Phase 2 by the Developer. Upon further research with the City Attorney, the City does not have the authority to issue a stop work order at this time for work performed during phase 2. For the next phases of the project the City will include into the development agreement that the City has authority to issue stop work orders due non-payment of city fees.

IX. COMPLAINTS:

New—

Trash Dumpster for 1st Street Apartments: Councilor **Dooley** reported the residents at the apartments on 1st Street do not pick up trash after it falls out of the dumpsters after the garbage company picks up the trash. Other neighbors are having to pick up garbage that falls out after dumping the garbage. By mutual consensus of the Council, the City will send the property owner a letter informing them they need to ensure their tenants are properly throwing their trash in the dumpsters.

400 Front Street, Overgrown Ivy on Sidewalks: Discussion heard on ivy vegetation on Front Street that is overtaking the sidewalk. Councilor **DePiero** requested staff inspect all city sidewalks and determine what sidewalks need maintenance, in addition to vegetation removal at 400 Front Street. Public Works will talk to the property owner about the vegetation issue before sending letters to other potential violations.


A complaint was heard on Park and Trail Street relating to an RV trailer parked along the street that is causing traffic to bottleneck. No action taken.

Old— None

X. ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Councilor **DePiero** with second heard by Councilor **Richter**. Motion carried unanimously closing the meeting at 8:34PM. Aye: **Meeker, Martin, DePiero, Bell, Richter, and Dooley**. Nay: None.



Mayor David Meeker

Attest: 

City Recorder Wenonah Blanchette