

**November 20, 2019**  
**Regular Session**  
**City of Gaston**

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

**Absent:** None

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

- 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 the Councilor **Sewall** wanting to add a discussion about the Wapato Wildlife Refuge.
- IV. **Wapato Wildlife Refuge:** Councilor **Sewall** met with Larry **Klimek** Manager for the Wildlife Refuge at the Wapato Wildlife Refuge site and provided information for the Council of the official opening of the site occurring September or October of 2020 which will be the first phase for public use. The Refuge is looking for parking and is interested in gaining permission to use the City's Onion Lane property for that. Possibly provide parking for around 30 vehicles graveling the area and adding a porta pottie. At this time, they have construction funds available that they would use to construct this parking lot and is seeking Councils interest in them using the area. Discussion heard amongst the Council with them using the lot and the property south of it owned by Scott **Flaherty** who the was City in discussions with previously trying to purchase the land. The caveat for the use would be the City maintaining the area. Also discussed is securing a lease for the area with the possibility for demolishing the building on the Onion Lane property and matching funds for other improvements in the future. Council by consensus agreed to move forward with the Wapato Wildlife Refuge using the property for constructing a parking area and adding a porta pottie.
- V. **STAFF/COUNCIL/COMMITTEE/SUPERVISOR REPORTS:** Mayor **Meeker** asked for staff reports with Recorder **Blanchette** providing her report at this time.

**Recorders Report:** Recorder **Blanchette** provided a verbal report with the following:

- Legal: Review of Tetra Tech Engineering fees are for Council consideration of moving forward with negotiating fees or moving to ask Project Delivery Group for their engineering services. Also, many contracts have been worked out between the City Attorney and Planning, Farmers Market, SCA Grant Extension request, and Planning Grant. The City Attorney is also working with the land use attorney for ADA requirement at Gaston Heights and the hydraulics analysis exemption request.
- Finances: Monthly reports submitted by Mike Marr for September and October in packets for Council. These documents are lengthy and can provide them on request for paper copies but will send them via email. Field work scheduled for October 23-25 which went well enough that they did not need the three days to complete the work but completed it in two. Only a few items of materials needed to finalize their portion of the work. Once their work is complete, they send the material to a second team of accountants to review before finishing the audit report that will be signed by Pauly Rogers.

- Planning: Planning Grant was received which the City applies for every two years to assist with general planning services. Not much planning services for the month of October.
- Much of the time spent in the office is dealing with meter readings and rereading water meters due to the absence of the Public Works Director and possibly will not return until Monday.
- Municipal Court: The city has a new deputy and have municipal court scheduled for January. LEDS contract was submitted to the attorney for his review.
- Hiland Water is providing DRC (Direct Responsible in Charge) for the City's water department. Checking with the state website for the Drinking Water Program they are listed as such. Alexin Labs are coming to City Hall to collect samples for testing and that has been helpful for keeping the water department in compliance for testing.
- IT Services Proposals are included in packets for Council's consideration. No need for a formal RFP process; consulting with the attorney, the requirements are based on the contract of services and length of services. The attorney recommended to try and receive three bids for services and select one.
- Grants:
  - Meeting with Safe Routes to Schools Project Identification Project which had a walking audit beginning at the School and ending at County Mobile Estates at the top of the hill. This occurred on October 22<sup>nd</sup>. Also, a phone conference was held to discuss findings and some minor corrections. A draft plan will then be submitted for further review. Final draft is expected to be complete by the beginning of next year.
  - Cottonwood Safe Routes to School: Submitted the quarterly report, no word back from the property owners for a meeting with the Engineers and staff on the project.
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Widening Project has approval from NOAA regarding the storm management and treatment but is at a standstill with review of the State Historic Preservation Office and with review of 209 Cottonwood.
  - SPIRE Grant contract was reviewed and signed for use of a portable generator through the Military as an alternate power source for the water pump. The City should expect it to arrive within the next two weeks.
- Councilor **Branch** inquired of the reimbursement processes for grants that have been awarded and if the City is properly tracking them with the Recorder stating that as the City continues to receive grants, the audit company has suggestions as to documenting them month by month.

**Police:** Deputy **McCreary** provided his report for October with the following: Deputy **McCreary** has been selected as the new deputy for Gaston and today is his second day in Gaston. Deputy **McCreary** provided his history with the Washington Sheriff's office stating he's been with Sheriff's office for 20 years mostly near the Portland area. Provided services as an officer for 6 years, worked in gangs, currently on a lab response team dismantling drug labs, currently responds with the incident management team in the event of major incidents with the County and with preparedness for natural disasters.

Highway 47 is an issue with speeding and will be getting the speed trailer tomorrow. With using the speed trailer, it tracks north and south traffic even having the once side with the lights displaying warning speeds. This will help determine the speeders vs. high traffic times which will aid in slowing down drivers on the highway. Deputy **McCreary** drove around the City, met with the school and other businesses.

Stats for the month of October had a total of 66 incidents, 34 self-initiated, 32 public demand, 10 reports, 2 traffic stops, and 1 citation. Deputy **McCreary** stated communication is important and to contact him either email or dispatch for anything that should be investigated and will be creating a FaceBook page but not to report crimes through FaceBook.

Councilor **Branch** requested his attendance as the elementary school in the morning as kids arrive at school with Deputy **McCreary** responding that school presence is very important and already met with the school's superintendent yesterday. At this time Deputy **McCreary** introduced his supervisors Sgt. **Ray** and Sgt. **Wheaton** spoke to the Council concerning questions or issues Council may have and provided contact information for Council.

**VI. CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS:**

Tim **McDonald** was present to speak to Council on behalf of Gaston Heights phase 2 concerning establishing a timeline or date towards solving compliance issues with ADA. Councilor **DePiero** reported that the City's attorney and the land use attorney are working on a solution but still no date is known when he can move forward with gaining approval for construction permit or approval by the City. Tim **McDonald** explained an alternate solution for stormwater treatment that would be approved by Clean Water Service and wanted to discuss with Council their thoughts. Gaston Heights planned to install a detention pond but because of the location; Northwest Hydraulic Consultants provided reports citing that across the street is a large wetland which eventually drains into Wapato Creek and run off from the surface area created by Gaston Heights could be drained into this natural detention pond (or wetland). Tim **McDonald** further explained that using the natural wetland instead of constructing on property near Gaston Heights a detention pond the City would no longer need to provide maintenance and/or spend money to maintain the detention pond the stormwater runoff would be naturally treated within the wetlands. Councilor **Branch** agreed that this alternate stormwater plan; if it is approved by Clean Water Services would be a good option.

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

**VIII. CONSENT AGENDA:** Recorder **Blanchette** that due to lack of staff minutes are incomplete with half completed minutes for September 11, 2019 Work Session. Further discussion heard on billings for Gaston Heights. Recorder **Blanchette** announced that 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**. Councilor **Branch** requested Councilor **DePiero** to check with CIS regarding the City's handbook for sick leave for clarity. Councilor **DePiero** motioned to approve accounts payable for \$79,303.75 seconded by Councilor **Martin**. Motion passed. Voting aye: **DePiero, Sewall, Martin, Meeker, Branch, Whittaker, and Richter**. Nay: 0

**IX. NEW BUSINESS:**

**1<sup>st</sup> Street Tree Removal:** Recorder **Blanchette** explained that information for Council's consideration was to be provided by the Public Works Director who is not present tonight spoke to the property owner near the trees would like to keep the wood reducing the cost for the City's portion. Gaston Resident Brent **Whittaker** explained the trees are associated with a sidewalk improvement agreement which requires the property owners responsible for half the cost of the project. Councilor **Whittaker** requested the Recorder research and report back to Council. No action taken or needed.

Gaston Resident Brent **Whittaker** was called upon by Mayor **Meeker** to address a storm drain issue near his property that needs to be investigated due to poor construction by possibly the developer that when heavy rains occur it causes overflow near and into his garage. Council decided to have the Public Works Director look into this and report back to Council once he returns.

**X. OLD BUSINESS:**

**Pythian Sisters Farmers Market Contract Review:** Council reviewed the new contract revised by the City attorney with Councilor **Whittaker** questioning if any funds towards the Market have been allocated with response heard that monies were moved out of that line item and the City will not have any involvement with the Farmers Market.

**OPUS Proposal-Outsourcing Water Utility Billing:** Recorder **Blanchette** explained she did not have any proposals yet but requested to table the item. The Recorder asked Council to consider the idea with replacing all water meters with the electronic reads and outsourcing the utility billing would be something council would want to move forward with. With the water fund at \$112,000.00 the City has funding to replace meters financially and the Public Works Director will begin replacing

those once he returns to work. Brent **Whittaker** reported there were around 175 meters still needing to be replaced with about 60 already in the ground.

**FirstNet Proposal:** Discussion heard of changing cell phone carriers from Verizon Wireless to AT&T being FirstNet can provide prioritized cell phone coverage and internet service in the event of an emergency. Motion made by Councilor **DePiero** following second heard by Councilor **Richter** to change to cell phone carriers to AT&T if it does not cost the City additional money. Motion passed. Aye: **DePiero, Sewall, Martin, Meeker, Branch, Whittaker, and Richter**. Nay: 0.

**Forest Grove Newly Elected Training-Fundamentals Training December 5th:** Recorder **Blanchette**, Councilor **Martin**, Mayor **Meeker**, Councilor **Sewall**, and possibly Councilor **Richter** but will need to check the prior Monday to verify if he is able to attend, will be registered either by the individual or contact the City Recorder to register for them. This training costs \$25 per attendee paid for by the City.

**IT Service Proposal:** Proposals include IT Garage, Global Data Link, and Computer Lift. Discussion heard on costs and services with a motion to continue services with Genuine Technology made by Councilor **Branch** seconded by Councilor **Martin**. Voting Aye: **Martin and Meeker**. Nay: **Sewall, DePiero, Richter, Whittaker and Branch**. Motion failed. Motion to change our IT service provider to IT Garage as recommended by Councilor **Sewall** was made by Councilor **DePiero** and seconded by Councilor **Sewall**. Motion carried with aye votes heard from **Meeker, Richter, Sewall and DePiero**. Nay: **Martin**. Abstain: **Whittaker and Branch**. Motion carried.

**City Engineer RFQ:** Councilor **Sewall** provided information about fees from Tetra Tech and how their fees are slightly higher but similar to what the City is looking for. Councilor **Sewall** requested direction from the Council to either negotiate costs for what the City will approve or follow the RFP process and move on to the next selected engineers that were previously rated by Council. By consensus of the Council it was decided to have Councilor **Sewall** match costs to AKS Engineering or move forward to the next engineers selected during the RFQ process.

**City Planner RFP:** Due to the Public Works Director's absence; providing proposal information for Planning services by consensus of the Council, will be tabled for the following Council meeting.

At this time High School students participating in the audience for their senior government class was excused.

## X. COMPLAINTS:

### New—

- 100 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and 102 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Storm Drain: Mayor **Meeker** stated he and staff will look at the storm drain to determine what needs to be done to repair the drain. Brent **Whittaker** explained it's a long grate that is maybe 3ft deep and 16ft long. When it was installed it was done curbside; the street's don't have gutters on the curbs there so the asphalt abuts the curb and whoever tried to fix it put cold patch and tried to divert it but as a result the water is seeping past the asphalt; seeping past the drain causing damage underneath the sidewalk and curb.
- Robert **Dooley**, Gaston resident stated he has an issue with the neighbors behind him piling bags of vegetation along his fence. Those bags consisting of pine needles.

### Old—

- 124 Front Street-Green Awning: Mayor **Meeker** explained that awning has been there since the 1960s and has been through 18 inches of snow and is still there. Further discussion heard on how to remedy the complaint; contact the property owner or contact the Highway Department to further assess if it's on their right-of-way. It was decided to look up the building codes and City codes to

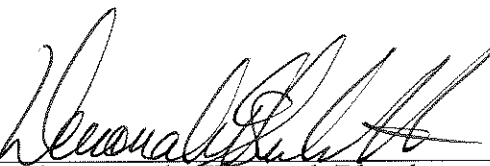
determine the exact plan-of-action to move forward with the issue directing the Public Works Director to follow up with Council.

- 304 2<sup>nd</sup> Street-Dead Trees: Mayor **Meeker** informed Council the dead trees have been cut back and no longer a fire hazard. By consensus of the Council to remove this complaint from the complaint list.
- 104 2<sup>nd</sup> Street: Livestock: It was discussed to appoint the new Deputy to follow up with a determination if the property owner has chickens and other fowl in their back yard.

Mayor **Meeker** announced a Legislative Meeting December 6<sup>th</sup> in Cornelius beginning at 5PM and would like to have a representative from Gaston attend. Mayor **Meeker** stated he will attend if no one else is able to.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT:** Motion to adjourn was made by Councilor **Martin** with second heard by Councilor **DePiero**. Motion carried unanimously closing the meeting at 8:49PM.

  
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Mayor David Meeker

Attest:   
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City Recorder Wenonah Blanchette