

**September 15, 2021
Regular Session
City of Gaston
In-Person & Zoom Videoconference**

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

Absent:

Staff Present: Public Works Specialist Rick **Mapes**, City Recorder Wenonah **Blanchette** and Washington County Deputy Jarrod **McCreary**. Seven students were also present from Gaston High School.

- I. Mayor David **Meeker** called the regular meeting to order at 7:01 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**: Present
Councilor Don **Richter**: Present
- III. **ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS:** Mayor **Meeker** called for additions or deletions to the agenda with Gaston Resident Sonja **Zawodny** asking Council if she can purchase for the City of Gaston radar signs like those that were installed along Hwy 47 to slow speeders. Public Works Specialist **Mapes** suggested instead of buying signs for the City she donates the money, and the City will purchase radar speed signs for E. Main Street. Councilor **Martin** made a motion to approve the purchase of the two radar speed signs for E. Main Street with second heard by Councilor **Nice**. Motion carried. Voting Aye: **DePiero, Dooley, Meeker, Nice, Bell, and Richter**. Nay: None.
- IV. **CITIZEN COMMUNICATION:**
Rob **Danielson**, property owner of Country Mobile Estates was present to inquire of his recent application with the City to annex his property within City limits. Rob **Danielson** further discussed with Council the City is supportive of annexing his property within City limits but concerned that costs and red tape could prevent him from completing the project. Councilor **Richter** motioned to table this item for next month's meeting and was seconded by Councilor **Martin**. Motion carried. Voting Aye: **DePiero, Dooley, Meeker, Nice, Bell and Richter**. Nay: 0.

Eva **Kristofik**, representative of Federal Fish & Wildlife was present to answer questions relating to the City's inquiry made by Scott **Flaherty** to pursue funding for purchasing said property. Discussion heard on swapping properties as debated in prior meetings, Fish & Wildlife purchasing the property, and opening dates for the public to access the walking path around Wapato Lake. Councilor **Martin** motioned to obtain a loan to purchase Flaherty's property and was seconded by Councilor **Richter**. Voting Aye: **DePiero, Richer, Martin, Dooley, and Nice**. Nay: **Meeker** and **Bell**. Motion passed. The Recorder was instructed to begin the process for obtaining a loan for Flaherty's property for approximately 6 acres.
- V. **STAFF/COUNCIL/COMMITTEE/SUPERVISOR REPORTS:**

Police: Deputy **McCreary** provided his report to the Council for August:

- With the increase in COVID cases, the Sheriff's Office is reducing some services and most personal interactions as much as possible.
- Car Show on August 28 resulted with one minor issue with hazardous driver speeding throughout town. No fights.
- New residents at the Riverside Apartments have made calls for service relating to fires being started under the bridge.
- Church Street: Violation of restraining order and suspect was taken to jail.
- Radar signs installed on Hwy 47 are completed and working.
- A sex offender sweep took place in town.
- New stop sign was installed on Trail Street and Hedin Terrace.

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

- The Attorney is reviewing the bond and insurance information for the 3rd Street widening project expected to begin in October.
- The accountant was unable to provide finances before the September meeting but will provide when available. The City has received funds from Washington County for the remaining funds allocated for the 3rd Street widening (\$19,190) and Cottonwood Street Sidewalk (\$40,000).
- America Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds allocated for the City to receive is \$160,276.80 with half of the money (\$80,138.40) immediately available for use towards negative impacts from COVID, Premium pay for essential workers, differences of revenue for government services equal to prior years, and investments to water, sewer or broadband.
- Through Oregon Business, the Special Public Works Funds will be sought for with hopes of obtaining a loan to purchase Flaherty's property.
- Corrective Action Plan was submitted to the Oregon Department of Revenue to meet new requirements addressing audit findings.
- Planning activity includes administrative work preparing Rob Danielson's annexation of Country Mobile Estates.
- Meeting is scheduled with the Fire Marshall to review the prospect of removing the proposed extension of Cottonwood to Gaston Heights instead having the school use the property for ball fields.
- Gaston Elementary School is reporting a high-water bill concerning enough for the City to investigate the usage with the School. It is possible the high usage is accurate, but more information is needed determine the issue.
- Construction is scheduled to begin October with the City working to obtain temporary construction easements from those affected property owners. The project was realigned with the need to purchase right-of-way from the corner property only with the remaining properties unaffected.
- A franchise agreement will need to be adopted for telecommunications and awaiting information from Ziplly Fiber for further developments. Also, a meeting with PGE relating to the Trails End Pump Station upgrade was held on September 7th to discuss development costs with Tim **McDonald** for Gaston Heights. The City will be working to renew the franchise without changes in the upcoming months.
- OAMR (Oregon Association of Municipal Recorders) Annual Training event scheduled for September 29-October 1st has been changed to a webinar and will no longer require lodging accommodations.
- Councilor **Bell** requested to update all bulk water forms stating past due balances over 45 days will receive a \$15 late fee if not paid by the due date. All water customers are subject to late fees for balances 45 days late or later.

Public Works Report:

- Public Works confirmed information that the School continues to have high water usage and will be removing the head of the meter to have it tested.

- Over the weekend a fire occurred off Olson Road resulting with the local Fire Department accessing water from the hydrant off Hwy 47 and Olson Road but unable to completely shut off the hydrant. Contractors recently hired for repairing hydrants throughout town is scheduled to fix that hydrant Friday and will have all water shut off south of Olson Road. Hydrant on South Road needing repair will be addressed at the same time.
- Radar speed signs were installed above the “30MPH” signs along the highway on the north and south sides of town. It was requested to purchase a new laptop to access the information that is collected from these signs.
- Stop sign on Hedin Terrace was installed.
- Sidewalks along the school route were painted and may require a second coat. The hope was to have Washington County Inmate Road Crew available to paint but due to additional COVID restrictions that will not happen anytime soon.
- More vandalism at the park with Public Works purchasing timber, concrete and supplies previously approved limit of \$2,000 should come in at that amount to install a cable fence around the grassy area.
- The hydro excavator is rented for next week to repair a water service at County Mobile Estates, clearing storm drains and installing fencing at the park.
- Attended the annual OAWU (Oregon Association of Water Utilities) Conference and was extremely beneficial meeting other small cities public works employees. It will cost approximately \$2 per gallon in construction costs to build a new reservoir as reported from a class as the City continues to move forward with future reservoir updates.
- Councilor **Martin** questioned when speedbumps will be installed with Public Works reporting that it is an asphalt company, not a purchase for goods, but services, that comes in to install speedbumps and been delayed coming out.

At this time Recorder **Blanchette** asked the Mayor to call a 10-minute recess. Mayor Meeker called this meeting closed at 8:10PM for a 10-minute break. Meeting reconvened at 8:15PM

- VI. CONSENT AGENDA:** Mayor **Meeker** called for a motion to adopt the consent agenda with Councilor **Bell** motioning to approve was seconded by Nice. Motion passing. Voting aye: **Meeker, Nice, Martin, Dooley, DePiero, Bell, and Richter**. Nay: 0.
*Bills Payable September 2021 *Exhibit A**
April 15, 2020 Regular Council Session
May 19, 2020 Budget Committee #3
May 20, 2020 Regular Council Session
September 1, 2021 Special Meeting

- VII. NEW BUSINESS:**
ARPA Request for Approval, Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recover Fund:
 Councilor **Martin** made a motion to approve the City’s AARP funds on behalf of the City with second heard by Councilor **DePiero**. Councilor **DePiero** thanked previous Councilor Andy **Sewall** for notifying the City of funds available. Motion carried. Voting Aye: **Meeker, Nice, Martin, Dooley, DePiero, and Richter**. Nay: None.

Parking of PODS on City Streets: Discussion was heard on parking PODS in town being one has been on Park Street for several months and difficult to see around when driving. Discussion heard on the POD trailer no longer parked on Park Street and adopting a form for people wanting to park on City right-of-way. Councilor **Dooley** motioned to adopt a form permitting parking on City Streets for seven (7) days for \$50. Late fee each day of \$50. Motion was seconded by Councilor **Martin**. Motion passed. Vote: Aye: **Meeker, Nice, Martin, Dooley, DePiero, and Richter**. Nay: 0.

Designate Meal Periods/Lunch Hours: Discussion lead by City Supervisor Councilor **Bell** discussing changing the handbook to accommodate for possible changes with lunch hours that include having an entire hour for lunch or having a minimum of 30-minutes and closing the office to work with City Hall closed. By mutual consensus amongst the Council was to leave the handbook designating one-hour lunch as-is with no changes.

OLD BUSINESS:

Water Credit Request, Dupree Properties: Council reviewed water usage for the seven accounts requesting water usage credit based on previous averaged usage. Council determined the usage was appropriate, noting that some usage was estimated but was accurate based on the following months. No action taken.

5 Year Lease Agreement with Railroad Property for Maintenance: *No update.*

Gaston Heights Billings: As previously noted in email correspondence, the developer is to pay by October 1st amounts previously stated in the email dated Sept. 9, 2021.

COMPLAINTS:

Old—

Trees at 404 6th Street: This complaint was determined to be the responsibility of the property owners and not the City's concern with property owner to property owner disputes.

104 2nd Street Stagnant Water: Public Works reported the stagnant water as stated in the complaint filed, is a swimming pool which was emptied and refilled with floaties. It appears that the residents are using the pool. Council mutually agreed to remove this complaint from the complaints list.


Recorder **Blanchette** asked Council to temporarily City Hall again due to COVID numbers increasing and will asked to hold the next Council meeting via Zoom. No Councilors objected and agreed to restrict public access to City Hall.

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Mayor **Meeker** closed the special meeting and opened the executive session at 9:25PM asking those audience members in attendance to leave the room at this time. *(There were no audience members in attendance).* This executive session is scheduled to review and evaluate employee performance pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(i) to review and evaluate the employment-related performance of the chief executive officer of any public body, a public officer, employee or staff member does not request an open hearing. Executive session closed at 10:19PM.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn was made by Councilor **DePiero** with second heard by Councilor **Richter**. Motion carried unanimously closing the meeting at 10:19PM.



Mayor David Meeker

Attest: 

City Recorder Wenonah Blanchette