

MINUTES
Warrenton City Commission
September 28, 2021
6:00 p.m.
Warrenton City Hall - Commission Chambers
225 S. Main
Warrenton, OR 97146

Mayor Balensifer called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and led the public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioners Present: Mayor Henry Balensifer, Tom Dyer, Mark Baldwin, Gerald Poe, and Rick Newton

Staff Present: City Manager Linda Engbretson, City Recorder Dawne Shaw, Public Works Director Collin Stelzig, Public Works Operations Manager Kyle Sharpsteen, Fire Chief Brian Alsbury, Harbormaster Jane Sweet, and Planning Director Scott Hazelton

CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. City Commission Meeting Minutes – 9.14.21
- B. City Commission Work Session Minutes – 9.14.21
- C. Warrenton Community Library Board Meeting Minutes – 6.11.21
- D. Warrenton Community Center Annual Report – FY 2020-2021
- E. Police Department Monthly Report – August 2021

City Recorder Dawne Shaw noted corrections to the 9.14.21 minutes. There were no objections.

Commissioner Newton made the motion to approve the consent calendar as presented. Motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Newton – aye; Dyer – aye; Baldwin – aye; Balensifer – aye; Poe - aye

City Manager Linda Engbretson noted the lobby will be closed the morning of October 4th for carpet replacement. It was noted the carpet was donated for free. She introduced new Planning Director Scott Hazelton. Mr. Hazelton introduced himself and provided a few comments about his background and community involvement. Commissioner Newton noted Warrenton is the education center for high need students in the county.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS – None

PUBLIC COMMENT

David Manion commented on the SW Alder paving project including sidewalks and greenways along the curbs. He has concerns about people getting out of vehicles into the wet grass. He

noted concerns about soil compacting and drainage. He made further commented on future development and lack of notification to adjacent property owners about development and responsibility of greenway maintenance. He asked for consideration of drainage piping at his property frontage and future development north of his property. He asked for future consideration of sidewalks instead of grass in residential areas.

PUBLIC HEARINGS – None

BUSINESS ITEMS

Mayor Balensifer noted the Interim City Manager contract and the specifics of the extension.

Commissioner Newton made the motion to authorize the Mayor’s signature on the Interim City Manager contract. Motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Newton – aye; Dyer – aye; Baldwin – aye; Balensifer – aye; Poe - aye

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Norm Hoxsey of Spruce Up Warrenton spoke about what the group has been doing. He noted a new program and distributed brochures. He passed out pictures of nuisance properties and discussed each: Rosalee’s store in Hammond, 365 N Main, property at 9th and S Main, 368 S Main. He would appreciate if the city can come up with a direction to address the properties.

Commissioner Poe commented on the nuisance properties and noted it is a slow process financially and legally. He agreed they are a problem. Commissioner Baldwin discussed the yellow house on S Main. He noted it does not take much to paint, clean a window, or hang a curtain. He noted a house on Anchor needing siding and a few on NW Warrenton Dr. He discussed his concern about being strict with some properties about small issues while not addressing other properties that have major issues. He discussed the property at 9th and S Main and feels there has been ample time to clean up. His hope is everyone will do their part and he does not want to come down on someone having a hard time. Commissioner Dyer suggested a tax write off for people or companies for assisting with property clean up. He would rather assist people than clamp down on them. Commissioner Newton noted he owns the house on Anchor and is hoping to get siding soon. He noted lack of available materials. He noted the S Main house is looking much better and further noted past discussion with the owner. He noted challenges with the house. Mayor Balensifer noted his preference is that the commission decide on properties, prioritize, reach out, then issue official notices. He noted multiple businesses wanting to come to Warrenton that cannot because of high prices on rundown properties. Commissioner Newton noted the need to improve the first impression of Hammond. Ms. Engbretson stated in the past they were aggressive, then got direction to back off a little. She noted there are four or five properties in the works that were complaint driven. She appreciates if the commission has properties they want to prioritize. She noted this has not been focused on because of staffing instability over the past couple years. Many complaints do not come to the commission level because property owners respond to staff outreach. She suggested budgeting money next year for

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consulting because of the time and money required to address nuisances. Commissioner Dyer thinks the Rosalee property in Hammond should be a priority. Mayor Balensifer noted the house next to it. Commissioner Baldwin noted the post office. Ms. Engbretson noted outreach to them and an attempt to make improvements. There was discussion about façade grant requirements. Commissioner Newton feels improvements to these three properties could snowball new business. Mayor Balensifer feels a soft touch is good for owner-occupied, single-family homes but not for owners of multiple nuisance properties. People could live in or have a business on these properties but cannot because owners are unwilling to sell, lease, or improve the property. He agreed that improving the three properties in Hammond could springboard other improvements. He discussed the red house on N Main that is being used as a campground. He agreed the old Peterson lot needs to be demoed. There was brief discussion about the nuisance process. Commissioner Newton feels the owners of the red house have taken advantage of the city. There was discussion about hammering down on bank-owned properties and difficulties with enforcement. Commissioner Baldwin feels like the Peterson property falls at the same level as the red building. Mayor Balensifer asked if the commission would like a member of Spruce Up Warrenton, a planning commissioner, a city commissioner, and a member of staff meet to prioritize the projects then report to the commission or have staff continue to present each one. Ms. Engbretson noted getting properties to the nuisance declaration process takes time. Commissioner Baldwin noted a property on 4th and Main Ct. He does not want to burden staff and suggested sending a generic chain letter. Ms. Engbretson noted staff already do this. Mayor Balensifer asked about the most time-consuming part of the process. Ms. Engbretson noted need for additional staff and discussed the process on top of daily operations. Mayor Balensifer suggested putting the priority on the thoroughfares: S Main, NW Warrenton Dr, and Pacific. There was brief discussion about the 4th and Main building.

Ms. Engbretson requested consideration of a noise variance request. There were no objections to adding it as business item 7.B. She noted the jail contractor on SW 19th requested a variance for an early start for 3 days at approximately 5:00 a.m. She noted the WMC requirements. It was noted there are homes in the area. The contractor will only need one day but are unsure which. They requested a waiver for October 5th, 6th, and 7th. Mayor Balensifer is not in favor because the residents have endured a lot. Discussion followed. The consensus was to hold them to the 7:00 a.m. start time.

Mayor Balensifer asked Harbormaster Jane Sweet to give a brief summary on Buoy 10. Ms. Sweet discussed the figures for the season. Mayor Balensifer noted the stats exceed past years. Ms. Engbretson noted camping worked out okay this year. Discussion followed. Ms. Engbretson asked how moorage was affected by delayed dredging. Ms. Sweet noted it was tough, but everyone worked together to make it work. The permit for dredging starts November 1. There was discussion about addressing sediment from the tide gate. Mayor Balensifer noted if there are any funds available, he supports Ms. Sweet's discretion to address this.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Commissioner Newton asked Fire Chief Brian Alsbury to discuss COVID-19 transmission concerns regarding firefighters and patients. Commissioner Newton discussed the protocols.

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Chief Alsbury clarified the protocols and PPE use noting it protects firefighters first but also protect patients. Commissioner Newton commented on nearly zero chance of firefighters spreading COVID-19. He also noted Chief Alsbury put out a survey to the department to evaluate his leadership anonymously. Chief Alsbury thanked Commissioner Poe for offering his volunteer fire services. Commissioner Newton also noted a suggestion for a webcam at the Hammond marina.


Mayor Balensifer noted he knew there would be pushback but was surprised about comments on his Facebook live update on the emergency responder vaccine mandate. He noted his letter to the governor and outlined concerns. He thanked Chief Alsbury for providing stats. Ms. Engbretson stated the firefighters appreciate him going to bat for them. Mayor Balensifer noted appreciation for and importance of EMS services.

Ms. Engbretson noted two long-term employees that are retiring the end of the month. Utility Worker Jay Bandeen has been with the city 26 years and Police Clerk Kathi Smith for 35 years. She thanked them for their long service. Mayor Balensifer made comments of appreciation. There was brief discussion about vacant positions in public works.


There being no further business, Mayor Balensifer adjourned the regular meeting at 7:03 p.m.

Respectfully prepared and submitted by Rebecca Sprengeler, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:


Dawne Shaw, CMC, City Recorder

APPROVED:


Henry A. Balensifer III, Mayor. *Pro tem*
Thomas Dyer,