



MONROE CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

March 28, 2022

6:00 PM

Monroe Community Library

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Sheets called the City Council meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

Pledge of Allegiance: Mayor Sheets asked Councilor Ritch to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Present: Mayor Sheets; Councilors: Baker, Cuthbertson, Lindner, Knott, Ritch, WInther
Staff present: City Administrator Martinenko.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Floyd Billings commented the park is getting used more and the park is not as clean as he believes it should be. In particular, there is a lot of garbage being dumped to the point of overflowing the containers. Mr. Billings continued with comments about the community garden and the need to fence it in along with the need for steps on the east side of the rest room structure.

Benton County Commissioner Nancy Weiss introduced herself to the Council and mentioned she is the liaison between the City and the Commissioners. She encouraged the Council to reach out to her for any questions.

3. **STAFF REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS:**

3.1. Deputy Bressler of the Benton County Sheriff's Office gave a brief report and opened the discussion for any questions. Councilor Cuthbertson asked about speeding near the school and Deputy Bressler responded by saying they are definitely citing drivers for plates and expired tags, not as much speeding.

3.2. Chris Webber, representing ODOT, presented on the construction projects for ADA ramps in Monroe. She said the contracts were going out for bid in April for actual work starting later in the summer. She asked the Council for the best ways to reach out the community. Mayor Sheets replied that it would be through multiple ways such as the website, social medial, newsletters and perhaps door hangers. Chris mentioned the construction would at times close down one lane and there would be flaggers, perhaps 24/7. Commissioner Eastridge commented that the Monroe Fire Department needs to be kept in the loop since any backup up of traffic will affect their response times. Chris responded that ODOT has an emergency management plan and will work with both the Sheriff's office and the fire department.

3.3. City Administrator Martinenko reported on a fire hydrant being struct by a car at the south end of town on territorial. Fortunately, the hydrant was not damaged to the point of having a water break and work will begin shortly to put the hydrant back in



service. CA Martinenko also mentioned other reports of pipe breaks around town, mostly with irrigation and customer-side water supply and sewer connections. CA Martinenko continued with a discussion of City Park services including engineering to create an ADA compliant ramp from the east parking area to the restroom. This would be the primary focus with steps secondary. CA Martinenko concluded with a submitting and AARP grant for the new park area north of Ash Street and work with RCAC to begin engineering work for the water plant.

3.4. Brennan Burbank from ODOT was able to join the Council meeting and briefly discussed the ADA ramp project. He mentioned there were 11 ramps being revised and that the daily traffic count is 5,500 vehicles, 1,100 of which are trucks. He said ODOT understands the impact this kind of project has on the community and is committed to helping coordinate construction activity with Monroe.

4. CONSENT AGENDA:

4.1. Mayor Sheets asked if there were any questions regarding the financials or minutes. Councilor Ritch asked about the economic Development grant from OCWCOG and whether that had a match requirement. CA Martinenko replied it did not. Councilor Ritch motioned to accept the Consent Agenda. Councilor Lindner seconded. Mayor Sheets called for a vote: Councilor Baker: Yes; Cuthbertson: Yes; Ritch: Yes; Lindner: Yes; Knott: Yes; Winther: Yes. Motion carried.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

5.1. Mayor Sheets opened a public hearing regarding resolution 2022-05, adopting an update festival budget. CA Martinenko commented the budget at the beginning of the fiscal year did include a resolution to fund the festival for \$6,250 but there was a question at the time whether there would be a festival given COVID. This is to make the fund whole and transfer funds from Public Works as the original resolution required. Mayor Sheets and Councilor Ritch both commented that while the City is funding the Festival as a City-Sponsored event, the effort is to grow the festival so it is self-sustaining. After general discussion about the Festival, Mayor Sheets closed the public hearing on Resolution 2022-05 and called for a vote: Councilor Baker: Yes; Cuthbertson: Yes; Ritch: Yes; Lindner: Yes; Knott: Yes; Winther: Yes. Resolution 2022-05 passed.

5.2. Mayor Sheets opened a public hearing regarding Ordinance 2022-01, reading an ordinance for adoption of a public places trespass order. CA Martinenko explained this is a reading of the ordinance and a vote to actually approve the ordinance would occur at a later meeting once the ordinance was properly posted. CA Martinenko read the title and purpose of the ordinance that would authorize the City Administrator to exclude people from City Property under certain circumstances prescribed in the



ordinance. There was general discussion regarding how the ordinance would work and coordination with law enforcement. Councilor Winther questioned section 6(I) regarding refusal to obey any direction of a city government employee. CA Martinenko replied that was a good observation and should be reviewed. With no other comments, Mayor Sheets closed the public hearing on the reading of Ordinance 2022-01.

5.3. Mayor Sheets opened a public hearing regarding Ordinance 2022-02, reading and ordinance to enact a code of ordinances for the city of Monroe, Oregon, revising, amending, restating and codifying, and compiling certain existing general ordinances of the political subdivision dealing with subjects embraced in such code of ordinances. CA Martinenko commented this is the recommended language from American Legal Publishing to take the codified ordinances and replace the original stand-alone ordinances, in effect starting with a clean slate. There were no further comments or discussion and Mayor Sheets closed the public hearing on the reading of ordinance 2022-02.

6. NEW BUSINESS:

- 6.1. **Recommendation to create an ordinance for City fees that can be changed by resolution.** Councilor Ritch discussed a recommendation from the Finance Committee to create a central list of city fees that could be changed by Council by a resolution. Councilor Ritch explained the current fees are in several resolutions and ordinances making them hard to manage to ensure they are up-to-date. During discussion, the Council had general agreement that staff should move forward with compiling the fees for later review.
- 6.2. **Recommendation to approve a City Administrator position description with a new salary scale and differential pay for additional duties.** Councilor Lindner presented a job description for the City Administrator that more accurately reflects what the City desires for administration of the city but also separates additional duties that are currently required to be filled by the City Administrator because of limited staff and budget. CA Martinenko commented that the goal would be for the City to eventually have dedicated staff to fill the required skill sets, but recognizes at present this is not possible until the City can grow its tax base. For salary, Councilor Lindner recommended a six-step scale that is consistent with current staff salary scales. Step one of the scale would start at \$80,000 to \$102,100 at step 6. Each step beyond step 1 reflects a 5% increase from the previous step. Any increase beyond Step 6 would be the result of a COLA adjustment or for performance as determined by Council. Councilor Lindner commented that the HR Committee wanted the compensation to be competitive in the current market for City Administrators. Councilor Cuthbertson asked if the salary was feasible given the City's budget position and how to balance that.



Councilor Lindner asked can the City afford not to pay someone in that salary scale so they end up leaving. Councilor Ritch the said the Committee did discuss this issue and recommended it take effect the next budget cycle and would be addressed in the budget process. Mayor Sheets asked what the current City Administrator's salary is. Councilor Lindner replied just under \$69,000 that includes filling both the City Administrator position and Water Plant Operator position. During discussion, CA Martinenko commented that the former water operator was paid \$72,000 per year and the City Administrator \$76,000 per year. Councilor Lindner mentioned that of the 14 cities used for a comparison, Monroe was the lowest paying of the group. The second recommendation Councilor Lindner made was the City Administrator position should also have the ability to attend relevant workshops and report back to Council and Committees what was learned to help compile best practices for City operations. The third recommendation from the HR Committee is a 10% stipend for operating the water treatment plant. This stipend would end when the water treatment plant has trained, dedicated staff assigned. Mayor Sheets then asked if there was further discussion and called for a motion to adopt all three recommendations. Councilor Ritch so moved with the caveat the Council reviews them with the Budget Committee as well. Councilor Knott seconded. Mayor Sheets called for a vote: Councilor Baker: Yes; Cuthbertson: Yes; Ritch: Yes; Lindner: Yes; Knott: Yes; Winther: Yes. Motion carried.

- 6.3. **Budget Committee Appointment.** Mayor Sheets commented the City is looking for a budget committee member. They need to be a City resident for one year and be a registered voter.
- 6.4. **New Council Work Session for City Committee Work.** CA Martinenko discussed moving most of the committee meetings to a once per month work session in the first part of each month. The committees would still be in place, but the committee chairs would decide if a topic brought up for discussion required a separate meeting. Blank agenda forms would be available at the work session for the chairs to complete. Since the Councilors are on the various committees anyway, it makes sense to have everyone in the same room together to help with continuity. This can also help shorten the Council meetings since information sharing would be part of the work session. During discussion, Councilors mentioned one work session instead of several committee meetings might encourage more community participation and make more efficient use of staff time. Councilor Cuthbertson said this might be a good time to try this approach since activities are slowing down some compared to the beginning last year. Mayor Sheets said we can try this and see how it works. April 11, 2022 was agreed on as the first work session.



6.5. **Upcoming events.** Mayor Sheets mentioned events in the park during the summer and the Halloween Spooktacular in the fall. Councilor Knott commented that she hoped the ODOT work did not impact access to the park during these events.

7. **OLD BUSINESS:**

7.1. **Planning Commission Update.** CA Martinenko discussed a few of the applications to the Commission including:

- The old gas station being turned into an entertainment venue
- H.Paulson activities that seem to include retail operations in a light industrial zone including a food truck. This new use will have to be reviewed by the Commission for potential rezoning to commercial.
- Habitat for Humanity is ready to put a house at 870 Main Street
- Brickyard developers are beginning to call and ask questions about the property, zoning, what we would allow, and our infrastructure.
- Stone Properties west of Red Hills are still under discussion with the County. The City and County agree that to preclude runoff issues, it would be best to have any development use the City infrastructure but that would also require the land to be brought in the Urban Growth Boundary.

7.2. **Cascades West Transportation Committee.** Mayor Sheets asked if there was anyone willing to participate in the Committee that is hosted by Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments. Councilor Cuthbertson asked about the time commitment, when the group meets, and if it is on Zoom. CA Martinenko said he would find out and report back.

7.3. **Council Work Session with County Sheriff.** Mayor Sheets said he is working on a work session with the Sherriff's office for community policing. He is hoping for a May timeframe.

7.4. **Joint Goal Setting Session with the Council and Planning Commission.** Mayor Sheets also mention that he is working on a work session with the Planning Commission in the May or June timeframe.

7.5. **Events Follow up.** Mayor Sheets described the Safe Routes to Schools ribbon cutting event that was attended by all three County Commissioners. Councilor Knott talked about the Monroe Community Cleanup day and the twelve people that showed up to pick up trash around town. Several bags of trash were collected and the group felt they were very successful.



7.6. **Monroe Festival.** Mayor Sheets updated the Council on festival activities including 25 spaces rented to craft vendors, 5 food trucks, 9 wineries, and 1 brewery. In addition, there are 9 informational booths including law enforcement, fire department, Long Tom Watershed Council and Business Area Monroe. The committee is also receiving applications for the BBQ competition and classic car show that currently has 14 entries. Mayor Sheets said the committee is looking for volunteers including golf cart drivers and ID checkers.

8. **OTHER BUSINESS:**

8.1. **Committee Reports:**

8.1.1. **City Facilities and Parks.** Councilor Cuthbertson discussed the Park Sign and options for finishing the donated wood slab. Councilor Knott mentioned the Community Engagement Committee is working on fund raising and also finding ways to have craft time donated and different signage solutions to lower the cost.

8.1.2. **Economic Development.** Mayor Sheets commented on the Economic Development Work Shop held on March 12th. There will be a second workshop scheduled in the early June timeframe.

8.1.3. **Beatification and Community Engagement.** Councilor Knott reported on the community garden including wood that has been donated for the garden beds. In addition, the committee is working on getting flowers for the planters around town.

8.1.4. **Human Resources.** Councilor Lindner mentioned staff is holding regular safety committee meetings and there are enough applicants for the temporary administrative assistant and facilities and grounds worker positions to schedule interviews.

8.1.5. **Ordinance Committee.** Councilor Winther said the Committee has made the first pass through the codified ordinances and reconciled the usage of "City Recorder" and "Police Chief."

8.1.6. **Public Works.** CA Martinenko briefly discussed ways to replace aging vehicles including municipal leases and purchasing newer but used vehicles. The principal utility truck is 23 years old, is burning a great deal of oil, and is becoming uneconomical to keep repairing. In addition, there is a need for a light street legal vehicle to get around town with for errands and meter reads that uses less gas than the full-size pickups with have now. CA Martinenko also said the City is looking into a different brand of water meter that can detect leaks. This may be a good option given some of the pipe breakage we have seen recently.

8.2. Councilor Comments: **None**

8.3. Mayor's Comments: **None**



9. **ADJOURN:** Mayor Sheets adjourned the meeting at 8:54 PM

Approved by Council Action on April 25, 2022

Mayor Dan Sheets  Date: 4/25/2022

Attest: 

Steve Martinenko, City Recorder