

CITY of LA GRANDE
City Council Regular Session

December 6, 2023

**Council Chambers
La Grande City Hall
1000 Adams Avenue**

MINUTES

COUNCILORS PRESENT:

Justin Rock, *Mayor*
David Glabe, *Mayor Pro Tem*
Corrine Dutto, *Councilor*
Nicole Howard, *Councilor*
Molly King, *Councilor*
Mary Ann Miesner, *Councilor*
Denise Wheeler, *Councilor*

COUNCILORS ABSENT EXCUSED:

STAFF PRESENT

Robert Strobe, *City Manager*
Stacey Stockhoff, *City Recorder*
Keri Quinn, *Assistant to the City Manager*
Gary Bell, *Police Chief*
Timothy Bishop, *Economic Development Director*
Michael Boquist, *Community Development Director*
McKayla Rollins, *Aquatics and Recreation Superintendent*
Stu Spence, *Parks and Recreation Director*

**CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/
ROLL CALL/AGENDA APPROVAL**

Mayor ROCK called to order this Regular Session of the Council at 6:00 p.m. Roll Call was taken and a quorum was determined to be present.

CONSENT AGENDA

- a. **Consider:** Approving Regular Session Minutes; *November 1, 2023*
- b. **Consider:** Approving OLCC Liquor License; K. Voelz Wines, LLC
- c. **Consider:** Authorizing Agreement Between City and La Grande Swim Club; and Between City and Grande Ronde Hospital for use of Veterans' Memorial Pool

The following Motion was introduced by DUTTO; HOWARD providing the Second:

MOTION

MOTION: I move that we accept the Consent Agenda as presented.

VOTE

MSC: 7-0 (Yes: ROCK, GLABE, DUTTO, HOWARD, KING, MIESNER, and WHEELER; No: None)

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. Consider: Resolution: Establishing Lien on Real Property

STAFF REPORT

Mayor ROCK requested the Staff Report.

Michael BOQUIST, *Community Development Director*

BOQUIST stated during Spring, 2023, the City of La Grande Police Department began receiving complaints regarding tall grass and weeds on the subject properties. In late June, 2023, it was determined that the tall grass and weeds had become a significant fire hazard and immediate action was warranted. The City's code enforcement officer initiated code enforcement action, notifying the property owner via certified letter about the dry and hazardous conditions, and the required actions to resolve the matter by July 9, 2023. The property owner reached out to both the code enforcement officer and the planning division staff in July, and advised that they did not feel it was their responsibility to mow and maintain their properties and they elected to not take any action to resolve this matter.

BOQUIST noted that due to the lack of cooperation and resolution by the property owner, the City's code enforcement officer moved forward with a City initiated nuisance abatement by contracting with *Cisco Lawn Care, LLC.*, to have the properties mowed. This process is outlined in the City's Enforcement Ordinance 3203, Series 2012, which includes notification to the property owner, posting the property with an abatement notice, the City hiring contractors to clean up the property, then billing the property owner for all costs incurred, then ultimately placing a lien on the properties for any unpaid costs.

BOQUIST stated that abatement was scheduled and completed on August 15, 2023, with nine (9) lots mowed at \$275/each, amounting to \$2,475. The property owner was provided an invoice for the abatement costs, plus a \$50 administrative fee per City Resolution, on August 16, 2023, and was asked to submit payment by September 15, 2023. The abatement costs remain unpaid.

WHEELER asked if the property owner was capable of taking care of the issue, BOQUIST stated that they were.

DUTTO asked if the property was owner occupied, BOQUIST informed that the parcel was undeveloped and vacant.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION

None.

MOTION

The following Motion was introduced by; MIESNER; HOWARD providing the Second:

MOTION: I move that the proposed Resolution establishing a lien for failure to pay the cost of abating a nuisance and land use violation on properties owned by Sally Bruce Standley on Gemini Drive, be read by Title Only, Put to a Vote, and Passed.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION

None.

Upon Mayor ROCK's request, City Recorder STOCKHOFF read the proposed Resolution by Title Only.

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LA GRANDE, UNION COUNTY, OREGON, ESTABLISHING A LIEN ON REAL PROPERTY FOR FAILURE TO ABATE NOXIOUS WEED AND GRASS NUISANCES [4846]

VOTE

MSC: 7-0 (Yes: ROCK, GLABE, DUTTO, HOWARD, KING, MIESNER, and WHEELER; No: None)

UNION COUNTY COMMISSIONER UPDATE

Commissioner Matt SCARFO shared that the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) funding has been paid in the amount of \$19 million for the next two years. This funding includes overtime for the snow removal crews and fog line installation. Senator Lynn Findley and Senator Elizabeth Steiner helped in obtaining that funding.

STAFF COMMENTS

BOQUIST noted success in obtaining a Technical Assistance Grant for the Goal 14 Urban Growth Boundary Expansion. The project costs \$95,000 and half would be paid by the State. He was hopeful to get started on the project beginning of this next year.

CITY MANAGER COMMENTS

STROPE asked that Councilors reach out to him with topics for the upcoming retreat. STROPE noted that December 7, 2023, was the cutoff for any comments or questions about the codification project. He also mentioned that the monthly report was emailed to them earlier that day.

STROPE noted that a person running for State office may be reaching out to him to speak with the Council. It was reemphasized that if a candidate for office wanted to speak during the public comment portion of the meeting, they

were welcome to do so; otherwise, there would be no agenda item scheduled for this purpose.

CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS

MIESNER commented the Holiday Parade and Tree Lighting event held by La Grande Main Street Downtown was a success and thanked Oregon Trail Electric Company, John Howard, and the Rotary Club for their contributions to the event.

DUTTO mentioned she had spoken with McKayla Rollins, Aquatics and Recreation Superintendent, about locker room cleanliness at Veterans' Memorial Pool and the issue was taken care of promptly, to which ROLLINS briefly explained the future planned project to put up shower wall coating to further improve the locker rooms and mentioned the floors would be updated at a later time as well. DUTTO thanked her for acting quickly in the matter.

ROCK noted on Wednesday, December 13, 2023, from 4:30-6:00 p.m. the Holiday Open House would be at City Hall in the Council Chambers and invited everyone to join.

There being no further business to come before this Regular Session of the Council, Mayor ROCK adjourned the meeting at 6:10 p.m. The Council is scheduled to meet again in Regular Session on Wednesday, January 3, 2024, at 6:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 1000 Adams Avenue, La Grande, Oregon.

Stacey M. Stockhoff
City Recorder

Justin B. Rock
Mayor

APPROVED: _____