

CITY of LA GRANDE
City Council Regular Session
June 2, 2021

Immediately following Urban Renewal Regular Session

The meeting was available for viewing via the City's scheduled Charter Communications channel 180, on the La Grande Alive website at <https://eoalive.tv/city-events/> and on the Eastern Oregon Alive.TV Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/EOAliveTV>.

MINUTES

COUNCILORS PRESENT:

Stephen E. Clements, *Mayor*
Gary Lillard, *Mayor Pro Tem*
John Bozarth, *Councilor*
David Glabe, *Councilor*
Nicole Howard, *Councilor*
Mary Ann Miesner, *Councilor*
Justin Rock, *Councilor*

COUNCILORS ABSENT EXCUSED:

STAFF PRESENT

Robert Strobe, *City Manager*
Sandra Patterson, *City Recorder*
Stacey Stockhoff, *Assistant to the City Manager*
Gary Bell, *Police Chief*
Michael Boquist, *Community Development Director*
Kyle Carpenter, *Public Works Director*
Emmitt Cornford, *Fire Chief*
Joe Fisher, *Building Official*
Christine Jarski, *Economic Development Director*
Heather Rajkovich, *Finance Director*
Stu Spence, *Parks and Recreation Director*
Anita Zink, *Human Resource Specialist*

Per ORS 192.670(1), Councilors and Staff participated in this Regular Session by electronic communication.

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL
AGENDA APPROVAL

Mayor CLEMENTS called to order this Regular Session of the Council at 6:28 p.m. Roll Call was taken and a quorum was determined to be present.

CONSENT AGENDA

- a.** Consider: Approval of Regular Session Minutes;
May 5, 2021
- b.** Consider: Approval of OLCC Liquor License Change
of Ownership; *Willow Grocery*
- c.** Consider: Awarding Bid for Concrete Work; *2021*
City Sidewalk Voluntary LID
- d.** Consider: Accepting "Exhibit A" for Fiscal Year
2021-2022; City/Urban Renewal Agency
Intergovernmental Agreement

MIESNER asked if it was common to issue an Oregon Liquor Control Commission (OLCC) License to an applicant that lives outside of the City of La Grande, to which STROPE stated that the license was issued based on where the facility was located, not where the owner lived. This business was located in La Grande and the license holder would be responsible for following the regulations.

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

MOTION

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

VOTE

MSC. (unanimous)

PUBLIC COMMENTS

City Manager STROPE announced that during Council Comments, the City Council could have a discussion regarding how to proceed with the proclamation for declaring an official *Pride Day for the City of La Grande* that was requested by Brittany CAMBELL, Eastern Oregon LGBTQ+ Coalition; Upon STROPE's request, City Recorder PATTERSON read the proposed proclamation out loud.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

a. Consider: Resolutions; (1) Adopting Budget, Making Appropriations, Levying Taxes; *Fiscal Year 2021-2022* (2) *Declaring City's Election to Receive State Revenue Sharing; Fiscal Year 2021-2022*

RULES OF ORDER

Mayor CLEMENTS announced that the Public Hearing was now Open at 6:35 p.m. on the Fiscal Year 2021 – 2022, City of La Grande Budgets and State Revenue Sharing, as approved by the City of La Grande Budget Committee on May 11, 2021.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

None

STAFF REPORT

Mayor CLEMENTS requested the Staff Report.

Robert STROPE, *City Manager/Budget Officer*

STROPE stated that the City of La Grande Budget Committee opened its Public Hearings on the proposed Fiscal Year 2021-2022, Budgets and State Revenue Sharing on Monday, May 10, 2021. On Tuesday, May 11, 2021, the Budget Committee Hearings were closed and the Committee voted to approve the General Fund Budget as amended and the Enterprise and Other Funds Budgets as presented, and to forward them to the City Council for adoption on June 2, 2021.

STROPE noted that subsequent to the Budget Committee Public Hearings, the La Grande School District asked that the planned joint project to install artificial turf at Optimist

Field be expanded to include a second field. This would result in approximately \$225,000 of funds from the School District and Eastern Oregon University being provided to the City of La Grande to complete the project. This amount was not included in the Approved Budget and in order to expend the funds, \$225,000 of revenue and expenditures needs to be added to the Grants and Donations Fund. There would not be an adverse impact on the budget and the amount of the increase in appropriations was within the Budget Law limits for increases by the City Council without further Budget Committee action.

STROPE stated that as part of the Budget Adoption process, the City must pass a Resolution electing to receive State Revenue sharing.

MIESNER asked how the turfed fields would be protected from someone driving on them, to which SPENCE stated that Optimist Field was already fenced and Community Field would be fully fenced along with the project, which would keep people from driving on them.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Budget Committee Member Greg AMMER stated his reasons why he did not vote to approve the Enterprise and Other Funds Budgets for Fiscal Year 2021-2022, during the Budget Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, May 11, 2021. He felt that it was not a balanced budget because Urban Renewal was underfunded; the expense for the $\frac{3}{4}$ ton pickup truck for the Parks and Recreation Department was not well justified; the 2015 report published by the City of Hermiston showed the City of La Grande had the highest water and sewer bills compared to other surrounding communities; the Public Works Department had no need for a new water source in the near future and he disagreed; and the City of La Grande's Building Department did not need two years of operating expenses in the budget. Mayor CLEMENTS responded to his comment in regard to the 2015 report that was published by the City of Hermiston regarding water rates stating that the report was askew because it did not compare the rates on the same water usage levels in order to produce an accurate report.

Mayor CLEMENTS closed the Public Hearing at 6:46 p.m. on the Fiscal Year 2021-2022, City of La Grande Budgets and Stated Revenue Sharing.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION

None

MOTION

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

MOTION: I move that the Proposed Resolution adopting the Fiscal Year 2021-2022, Budget and levying taxes be Read by Title Only, Put to a Vote, and Passed as presented.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION

None

Upon Mayor CLEMENTS' request, the City Recorder read the Proposed Resolution by Title Only.

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LA GRANDE, UNION COUNTY, OREGON, ADOPTING THE FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022 BUDGET, MAKING APPROPRIATIONS, AND LEVYING TAXES [4807]

VOTE

MSC. SIX (6) of the SEVEN (7) Councilors present voted in the affirmative; BOZARTH abstained from voting because he was not present at the Budget Committee meetings.

MOTION

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

MOTION: I move that the Proposed Resolution electing to receive State Revenues be Read by Title Only, Put to a Vote, and Passed.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION

None

Upon Mayor CLEMENTS' request, the City Recorder read the Proposed Resolution by Title Only.

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LA GRANDE, UNION COUNTY, OREGON, DECLARING THE CITY'S INTENT TO RECEIVE STATE REVENUES [4808]

VOTE

MSC. (unanimous)

b. Consider: Ordinance, First Reading; *Vacation of Public Right-of-Way, File Number 01-Vac-21*

RULES OF ORDER

Mayor CLEMENTS announced that the Public Hearing was open at 6:50 p.m.

RECESSED

Mayor CLEMENTS recessed at 6:51 p.m. for a quick break.

RECONVENE

Mayor CLEMENTS reconvened the meeting at 6:56 p.m.

Upon Mayor CLEMENTS' request, the City Recorder read the Rules of Order in their entirety.

DECLARATIONS

None

STAFF REPORT

Mayor CLEMENTS requested the Staff Report.

Michael BOQUIST, *Community Development Director*

BOQUIST stated that this request was to vacate the west 10 feet of the Walnut Street right-of-way, lying adjacent to 2906 Walnut Street (Tax Lot 1900) and 313 Lane Avenue (Tax Lot

2202). This right-of-way was currently 80 feet wide and this vacation would result in reducing this right-of-way to 70 feet wide, which would exceed the City's 60-foot right-of-way design standard. This vacation was consistent with a similar 10-foot vacation that was previously approved South of Lane Avenue.

BOQUIST noted that during the April 7, 2021, Regular Session of the City Council, the Council found the proposed right-of-way vacation request to be valid and in conformance with State law for such requests, and accepted the vacation petition for processing. By Resolution of the City Council, the Council referred the vacation petition to the Planning Commission for consideration and a recommendation; and, further scheduled the vacation petition for the City Council's consideration and a first reading of the Vacation Ordinance during the June 2, 2021, Regular Session.

BOQUIST stated that on May 18, 2021, the Planning Commission considered this request during their Regular Session. Other than from the petitioner (applicant), there was no public testimony submitted regarding this request. By unanimous vote, the Planning Commission adopted the Findings of Fact and Conclusions set forth in the Decision Order and recommended approval by the La Grande City Council.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

None

COUNCIL DISCUSSION

None

Mayor CLEMENTS announced that the Public Hearing would be continued to July 7, 2021, at which time the Proposed Ordinance was scheduled to be read a Second Time by Title Only and considered for Adoption.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION

None

Upon Mayor CLEMENTS' request, the City Recorder read the Proposed Ordinance for the First Time by Title Only.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LA GRANDE, UNION COUNTY, OREGON, VACATING THE WEST TEN FEET (10') OF THE WALNUT STREET PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY BETWEEN BENTON AVENUE AND LANE AVENUE; ALL BEING ADJACENT TO PROPERTIES DESCRIBED AS BEING IN TOWNSHIP 3 SOUTH, RANGE 38 EAST OF THE WILLAMETTE MERIDIAN, SECTION 06AB, TAX LOTS 1900 AND 2202, LA GRANDE, UNION COUNTY, OREGON; AND, DECLARING AN EFFECTIVE DATE

MIESNER asked for clarification on page eight (8) of the Decision Order (*IV. Conclusions and Order section*) stating

that it was not made clear that the Planning Commission “met” and the vote was recommended for “approval,” to which BOQUIST stated that when it comes back for the second reading at the July 7, 2021, Regular Session City Council Meeting, he would make sure to fix this paragraph so that it reflected that the Planning Commission “met” and voted for “approval.”

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

STAFF COMMENTS

BOQUIST announced that Public Notice went out on Friday, May 28, 2021, to those who might be impacted with the proposed floodplain changes and he was already receiving feedback as well inquiries from people looking for more information.

CITY MANAGER COMMENTS

STROPE mentioned that the resignation of Christine JARSKI was announced during the Urban Renewal Meeting earlier that evening and announced that Kip ROBERSON also turned in his resignation (Editorial note: ROBERSON’s last day would be Monday, June 28, 2021). STROPE added that both ROBERSON and JARSKI have done an amazing job working for the City of La Grande and they would both be missed.

STROPE mentioned that with the decline in COVID cases in our county and current state guidelines in place, a conversation should be held regarding how to proceed with the City’s public meetings starting in July, 2021. STROPE addressed the different options in regards to holding the public meetings in the Council Chambers, to which a Council discussion was held on how to follow the current state guidelines with social distancing measures, checking proof of vaccination for attendees, mask wearing for those not vaccinated, and the timeframe to put the policy into motion starting at the July 7, 2021, Regular Session City Council Meeting. A decision was reached targeting July 7, 2021, for return to in-person City Council meetings with vaccine verification or masks and social distancing but no change at this time for Advisory Commission meetings, which would continue to be virtual or in-person with masks.

CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mayor CLEMENTS stated that he, City Manager STROPE, and Mayor Pro Tem LILLARD met virtually with Elaine CLEGG, Boise City Council President, and David STROHMAIER, Missoula County Commissioner, to discuss coordinating efforts in forming a regional *Greater Northwest Railroad Working Group* with the intent to bring back passenger rail lines through northern Washington, Idaho and Montana and the Pioneer run, which would run from Portland, Oregon to Salt Lake City, Utah. He would be

emailing information to the Councilors once he had all of the materials gathered.

Mayor CLEMENTS stated that June was Pride Month and was celebrated throughout the Country. He was contacted by Brittany CAMBELL, Eastern Oregon LGBTQ+ Coalition, who had requested that the City of La Grande read a Pride Proclamation during Public Comment at tonight's City Council meeting with hopes that he would sign it.

BOZARTH and MIESNER expressed concern regarding how the proclamation was currently written stating that the proclamation should not focus on only one group, to which ROCK concurred. HOWARD, LILLARD, GLABE, and Mayor CLEMENTS all spoke in favor of the proclamation, stating that it was well written, the City of La Grande has made proclamations for single groups before, and the proclamation made a statement of tolerance as a City for marginalized groups. There was also discussion of the merits of establishing a specific day designated as compared to the national recognition of the month.

STROPE stated that the language within the proclamation could be revised to address the concerns expressed by the City Councilors. The Council reached consensus that Mayor CLEMENTS and STROPE would work together on the revisions with the main focus highlighting June being Pride month and including tolerance for all members of our community for the Mayor to sign.

MIESNER thanked Kip ROBERSON for his service with the City of La Grande.

There being no further business to come before this Regular Session of the Council, Mayor CLEMENTS adjourned the meeting at 7:56 p.m. The Council is scheduled to meet again in Special Session on Monday, June 14, 2021, at 6:00 p.m., via electronic communications due to COVID-19 pandemic.

Stacey M. Stockhoff
Assistant to the City Manager

Stephen E. Clements
Mayor

APPROVED: _____