

CITY OF ALBANY  
CITY COUNCIL (WORK SESSION)  
Municipal Court Room  
Monday, March 10, 2008  
4:00 p.m.

**MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Dan Bedore called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Councilors present: Councilors Floyd Collins, Jeff Christman, Bessie Johnson, Dick Olsen, and Sharon Konopa.

Councilors absent: Councilor Ralph Reid Jr.

BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

There was no business from the public.

WATER ISSUES OF MUTUAL INTEREST

Linda Modrell, Benton County Commissioner, said that how we manage the water we have is critical to the livability and economic viability of communities in our valley. Unfortunately there are ever-growing mismatches in policies between agencies. As population and water use increases, mismatched policies can lead to serious water issues in the future.

Councilor Jeff Christman arrived at 4:02 p.m.

Modrell said Benton County is developing a cross jurisdictional water supply policy. Watersheds cross political boundaries. She is hoping this approach will set up a framework for the future. Ideally there would be a policy that applies to the whole county, but that is too big a project right now so she is starting with a policy regarding the headwaters. She passed out a yellow map which showed Polk, Marion, Lincoln, Benton, Linn, and Lane counties (see agenda file). Modrell has been reaching out to Linn County Commissioners to work together on data collection. Eugene Water & Electric Board (EWEB) is collecting data for Lane County.

Modrell reviewed with the Council a proposed draft Memorandum of Cooperation between Benton County and the City of Albany for a Water Policy and Supply Plan (see agenda file). The objective is to find out what the community values (good drinking water, fish, water rights, farm irrigation, wastewater, etc). The question is, how can we take the water we have and use it most efficiently and effectively? There is no regulatory authority, so Benton County is acting as a convener. The draft memorandum is framed within the water rights we already have. Right now we are one of three states without a water supply policy. We recognize that we are likely to have a problem if we do not manage our resources.

Councilor Floyd Collins asked, do you see this project addressing the proliferation of uses in the far extremes of North Albany, such as wells drying up in the summer? Modrell said, it could.

Councilor Sharon Konopa asked, is this part of the Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD)? Modrell said yes. Konopa said she asked OWRD awhile ago about the long-range plan; they said there is no long-range plan due to lack of funding. Modrell said there is some funding available now, and Benton County has some one-time money they are investing as well.

Councilor Bessie Johnson asked, do you anticipate having a task force? Modrell said yes; she is working with the institute of watersheds at Oregon State University (OSU) to find the best format.

Staff will review the memorandum and bring it back to the Council.

OVERVIEW OF REGIONAL WATERSHED COUNCILS

Public Works Water Quality Control Supervisor Chris Bailey introduced Erica Lang, a representative of the North and South Santiam Watershed Councils and Tara Putney, a representative of the Calapooia Watershed Council. Eric Hartstein is the Coordinator for South Santiam.

Lang gave a Power Point presentation (see agenda file).

Bailey said that May 17 is Down by the Riverside Day at Bryant Park. Volunteers will be removing ivy along the river. There will also be a Living on the Land workshop in Lebanon in April and May. Discussion followed regarding ivy and blackberry removal.

Collins is concerned about woody debris removal being counterproductive to fish habitat. Putney will research the issue.

#### SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS TO PACIFIC BOULEVARD

Transportation System Analyst Ron Irish said that after many contacts with the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) staff and neighborhood meetings, the solutions for safety improvements to Pacific Boulevard have been narrowed down.

Irish introduced Gary Wolcott from ODOT.

Wolcott said ODOT's intention for Pacific Boulevard is to correct the safety issues. Dangerous intersections are between Geary Street and the Union Pacific Railroad, and Madison Street and Sherman Street, as outlined in the staff report. Geary Street is the number one accident site in the state. ODOT is responsible for highway safety and the City is responsible for street safety, so together we have a responsibility to act.

Wolcott said that Geary can be fixed with striping. A March 5, 2008, ODOT letter explained how the crossovers can be fixed from the most effective to the least effective way (see agenda file). The ODOT project calls for proposed striping, as in Exhibit 1 (see agenda file). He has made a couple of changes since the last presentation of this design to the Council.

Exhibit 2 shows that the on ramp would be closed to all traffic except emergency vehicles, with a small speed bump (see agenda file). The speed bump is a visual indicator so that if a vehicle is approaching at night, it will draw their attention to the sign. Wolcott said they recognize that by doing this, traffic will be backed up downhill.

Exhibit 3 shows an enhanced signal at Hill Street and Madison Street (see agenda file), as a way to encourage drivers to make a right turn on Hill Street.

Wolcott discussed large truck radius with Exhibit 4 (see agenda file). If the road can't be designed to avoid impact to the house on the corner of Hill Street and Madison Street, then staff will come back to the Council.

Exhibit 5 shows Main Street and Pacific Boulevard, where most of the t-bone accidents occur (see agenda file). The decision to make it a dead-end was unanimous. A pork-chop entry is not as effective. Wolcott stressed that it is important for public safety that we make this the most effective fix possible. They considered putting in traffic lights but it did not pass design standards for downtown.

Johnson is concerned about closing the on-ramp to traffic and rerouting it to Hill Street, as it will increase traffic on Hill Street. Wolcott described the discussion surrounding the decision and the experts that visited the site affirmed that Hill Street can handle the increased flow, well into the future. The timing of the traffic lights will be adjusted also.

Exhibit 6 is an aerial view of the Chicago-SPRR project (see agenda file).

A pork-chop on Sherman Street, as shown in Exhibit 7 (see agenda file), should balance out the traffic by allowing half to turn on Pacific Boulevard and the other half to head downtown.

Collins asked, what is the traffic split between Santiam Boulevard and Pacific Highway? Irish said they are about even. Discussion followed.

Olsen asked, how many vehicles traveling north on Hill Street turn left on Pacific Boulevard to go downtown? Wolcott said 1,203 a day. Olsen asked, how many vehicles travel south on Hill Street? Wolcott said about 700 a day. Olsen said currently, he has to wait through two lights before he can make a left turn. Wolcott said it would be a protected light so it would clear out faster.

Collins asked what the community input has been. Wolcott said after the initial community input they made some changes, and mailed notices. After the second mailing, they received just one call.

Konopa asked, if we don't approve this will it force ODOT to make changes to the overpass? Wolcott said no, it will not; if you do not use the money that the state is making available to you now for this project, the money will be returned to the federal government in September 2009.

Johnson doesn't want to lose the opportunity to use the money, so long as the changes do not hurt local businesses. Wolcott said he doesn't think these solutions will please everyone, but with all the input received, this is a good solution that would work for most people.

Collins said for the two critical problems, this is an interim solution. The ultimate solution is the overpass, but the funding is not available for it now. This Council decision relates to the degree of risk we want to subject the motorists to. If this would decrease motorists' risk, then we should move forward; but he does not want it to be considered a permanent solution.

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Wolcott passed out a March 5, 2008, summary titled: Safety Improvements for Pacific Boulevard (HWY 99E): What Else Was Considered? (see agenda file).

The Council asked City staff for an opinion. Irish said he likes the striping changes. He also likes the idea for addressing the crossover problem on Main Street and believes a lot of thought went into the solution. The gas station owners were interested in not restricting movement on the south side. On the north side the property owner that called has driveway access to Pacific Boulevard, but it would not be closed. Irish said the Sherman Street pork-chop is not as effective, but it does allow for some access and adds some connectivity that closing the street would not provide. He is concerned about the gull-wing being open to emergency vehicles only, because it would reroute truck traffic to Hill Street and he is not sure what the impact will be. He does like the intersection treatments for Sherman Street and Main Street.

Collins asked, would ODOT pay for all the improvements presented today? Irish said yes, they just need our permission for our side streets. However, ODOT does not need our permission for changes to Pacific Boulevard. Both agencies can veto each other.

Olsen asked, can 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue handle truck traffic structurally? Irish is not sure. Discussion followed.

Bedore asked, is the closure of the on-ramp a firm decision? Wolcott said Albany would have a difficult time getting an agreement without it.

Collins asked, can we condition approval on the structural assessment of 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Hill Street? Wolcott said that if those streets needed to be redone to support truck traffic, ODOT would pay for it.

MOTION: Collins moved to approve the preferred design with the stipulation that this is an interim solution until the overpass is analyzed and that any structural modifications necessary to 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Hill Street, to accommodate heavier traffic loads, be the responsibility of ODOT. Christman seconded the motion.

Konopa will support the motion but thinks this is a mistake because it will not fix the problems.

Bedore agrees that it is not a cure all, but thinks it will alleviate a good chunk of the safety problems. He appreciates the open process ODOT uses for city and community input.

VOTE: A vote was taken on the motion and it passed 4-1 with Olsen voting no.

#### BOYS & GIRLS CLUB LAND TRANSFER

Parks & Recreation Director Ed Hodney explained that on December 10, the Council authorized the City to work with the Boys & Girls Club (Club) of Albany on details of the land transfer. Hodney is here tonight to seek Council approval of the resolution. If the Council is comfortable with moving forward by formal acceptance at the next Council meeting, it would allow the City to accept the property and we would begin to develop a park with all the funding in place.

Hodney said that one issue that came up is the topic of what we want to do with Oak Street, and when. He said that since that original discussion, Public Works Director Diane Taniguchi-Dennis suggested we resurface Oak Street with chip seal to improve the surface. It will not accomplish the full goal of an urban upgrade, but in the interim it would look and feel like a road.

Konopa asked, would we allow a developer to construct on an unimproved road? Taniguchi-Dennis said no. Konopa is concerned that it is not fair, then, if the City proceeds with this project. Hodney said, we have a choice to make, as we have an opportunity to accomplish an element of the Parks & Recreation Master Plan with fairly significant leveraging of funding from the state grant, but it would not help Oak Street. Hodney had suggested on December 10 that if a funding mechanism is required, that 1,000 feet of park frontage be appropriately assessed and we could treat it as a Parks System Development Charges (SDC) reimbursement expense.

Hodney said that all the conditions outlined by the Council on December 10 have been met and the Boys & Girls Club is ready to execute the deed. Staff needs Council direction on whether to proceed.

Collins declared a conflict of interest, as he is a Board Member of the Club. He will not be voting, but he offered his opinion: the City would be picking up a 12 acre park and with it, the improvements to the property the Club has made already. This is an asset. We are assuming some unknown future liability, but it would be less than the asset we are acquiring. It is to our advantage in the long-term and fulfills a portion of our Parks Master Plan.

Konopa wants to move ahead with the park because we don't have enough of them, but before we start using it and bringing in extra traffic, we need to do something to Oak Street. She doesn't think resurfacing is enough.

Johnson said since it is only 3,000 feet long, maybe we can include it as a street to be fixed in the future. She doesn't see how the City can turn this down, based on the property. Discussion on possible funding for Oak Street followed.

Konopa asked, could the development of the park be delayed until Oak Street is improved? Hodney said, if we adopt that strategy then we will not be securing the grant funds awarded to us. Our window to receive the funds is closing

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and it would table the development from the City's perspective. Also, it is likely the Club would withdraw their offer because they can build facilities if they meet the conditions in the conditional use permit. Hodney said, we would need to open the park by the end of the calendar year.

Konopa wants the Council to aggressively seek improvement options for Oak Street.

Councilor Christman said this emphasizes the continued need to get Transportation System Plan (TSP) completed and prioritized.

This item will come back to the March 12 City Council meeting.

#### REQUEST TO RECLASSIFY POSITION IN PARKS MAINTENANCE

Hodney said there is a vacant Park Maintenance II position that needs to be elevated to a lead worker position. The position is responsible for landscape maintenance and tree services. The reclassification will aid recruitment efforts. The fiscal impact of this reclassification is negligible.

This item will come back to the March 12 City Council meeting.

#### OVERVIEW OF WILLAMETTE BASIN TMDL REQUIREMENTS

Environmental Services Manager Herb Hoffer gave a Power Point presentation on the overview of Albany's response to the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) requirements to develop a TMDL implementation plan (see agenda file).

Tanguchi-Dennis said that right now, the plan is paid for by streets, water, and sewer. In the next budget process the project will be listed in street capital for \$75,000. They are on track to create a stormwater SDCs. She noted that sewer SDCs cannot pay for this project.

#### STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE TIMELINE

Hodney said a draft of the Strategic Plan will be reviewed at the April 7, 2008, work session.

#### COMMUNITY ATTITUDE SURVEY DISCUSSION

Public Information Officer/Management Assistant Marilyn Smith asked if the Council had any questions.

Konopa asked, will the survey be dispersed evenly throughout town? Smith said yes.

The Council reviewed the survey and made changes.

#### COUNCILOR COMMENTS

The Council discussed a timeline for the Central Albany Revitalization Area (CARA) meeting scheduled for next week to enable the Council to attend a meeting about housing for the mentally ill in Albany. Smith will check with staff and update the Council at the Wednesday meeting.

Konopa asked what the format will be for the North Albany Neighborhood Association (NANA) meeting to be held at Ciddici's Pizza on March 18. Smith said the meeting starts at 6:00 p.m. and her understanding is that NANA wants staff to briefly explain what they do. Smith is not sure what questions they will have for the Council.

Collins said that Roger Kroening, retired from Umpqua Bank, met with Urban Renewal Coordinator Kate Porsche to discuss due diligence. Kroening was impressed with Porsche's background in real estate and loans. Collins said that as a person with a background in finance, Kroening left the meeting feeling confident about the process we are using for CARA.

Bedore will not be able to attend the March 26 Council meeting.

#### CITY MANAGER PRO TEM REPORT

Taniguchi-Dennis said that Albany has received the American Academy of Environmental Engineers award for plans to improve the water quality of the Willamette River by creating an integrated wetland treatment system. The award will be presented in Washington DC.

Hodney said that Mayor Bedore will be accompanying City staff members to a luncheon in Salem for the Oregon Festival and Events Association. Albany has been nominated for awards in six different categories.

Hodney said the Albany Rotary Club invited Peter DeFazio to speak at their next meeting on March 11, 2008. The meeting is at 12:00 p.m. at Pop's Branding Iron. Hodney invited the Council and asked that Councilors let him know if they plan to attend.

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Bedore said he received notice that Albany will be named "Tree City USA" again this year. The award is generally presented at a Council meeting during Arbor Week.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, the Work Session adjourned at 6:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary A. Dibble, CMC  
Deputy City Clerk

Reviewed by,

Stewart Taylor  
Finance Director