

CITY OF ALBANY  
CITY COUNCIL (WORK SESSION)  
Council Chambers  
Monday, July 21, 2008  
4:00 p.m.

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Council President Sharon Konopa called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Councilors present: Councilors Floyd Collins, Ralph Reid Jr., Bessie Johnson, Dick Olsen, and Sharon Konopa

Councilors absent: Mayor Dan Bedore and Councilor Jeff Christman.

BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

There was no business from the public.

CHANGES TO INTERSTATE 5/HIGHWAY 20 OVERPASS

Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) Project Leader Jerry Wolcott said the state has 12 projects scheduled to improve bridge clearance which will primarily benefit trucks and other over-height vehicles. Currently trucks have to detour to avoid low clearance bridges which increases fuel costs and tears up off-route roads. Wolcott passed out a picture from the *Gazette-Times* which shows a truck that hit a sign while passing under a bridge in Corvallis (see agenda file). This is an example of what ODOT wants to avoid. It is neither safe nor efficient.

The bridge project will cost \$3.8 million. This does not include the Environmental Impact Study for the new interchanges in Albany, which is a study 2-3 years out, followed by identifying sources for funding construction.

Wolcott described how traffic will be rerouted during the bridge project and referred to the picture in the agenda file. The route has been approved by the City and Benton County. They were asked to close the ramp for the shortest time possible, but there is a high water table in the area they will have to work around. The project will be bid in April 2009 with work to begin that summer.

Wolcott said it is less expensive to lower the grade than to raise the bridge in this case. During construction Knox Butte Road will have four way stop signs for about one month, which is more cost effective than putting in a traffic light for that short duration of time.

Councilor Floyd Collins encouraged the Council to consider a temporary signal at Knox Butte instead, not only during construction but also after the project is complete. It would help the businesses on the east side of the freeway and is important enough that the City should consider participating in the cost. Discussion followed. Wolcott said he would forward the proposal to the ODOT committee but he doubts they will approve it.

MOTION: Collins moved to request that ODOT install a temporary signal, instead of a stop sign, on Knox Butte Road during the construction period; for ODOT to consider leaving the temporary signal there long-term; and that the City might contribute financially to the signal and Councilor Dick Olsen seconded it.

Councilor Ralph Reid asked, is the freight industry contributing financially? Wolcott said there is no federal money involved. Reid is concerned that ODOT is simply playing catch-up. He asked, what about the south bound and north bound side and the integration of I-5? The projects seem to be piecemealed. Collins agreed, and said there is a lack of coordination and planning. When I-5 is widened later, the freeway exit will just have to be redone. There seems to be a lot of money being spent on short-term fixes. Wolcott said the bridge project is from Cottage Grove to Salem and the bridge study pertains only to Albany.

James Brooks, owner of the 76 Station on Pacific Boulevard, wished to speak. He drives Timber Street and Goldfish Farm Road. They are not safe, so it is important to limit their traffic. Goldfish Farm Road is too narrow and both roads have low limit bridges, so trucks should not be routed there at all. Wolcott said there will be signs to prevent trucks from using those roads.

Collins wants to see documentation of pre-detour and post-detour damage on these two roads.

Reid wants the east side of the interchange to be lighted, especially by Knox Butte Road and Century Drive. Discussion followed. Wolcott said lighting is outside of the project limit.

VOTE: A vote was taken and the motion passed 5-0.

COUNCIL CHAMBERS AUDIO CHANGES

Information Technology (IT) Director Jorge Salinas described the problem with the audio system and the changes that have been implemented to resolve it. He reviewed the document titled "Council Chambers Audio Updates" (see agenda file). Salinas said the audio recordings should be clear and balanced. They also added a lapel microphone to the audio system.

IT Technician Michael Cox gave the Council detailed speaking and presentation tips.

The Council thanked Salinas and Cox for their attention to the details and for providing the public with a quality reproduction.

#### COUNCILOR COMMENTS

Olsen said he attended the Linn County Fair and enjoyed it. It seemed to be successful.

Konopa noticed the agenda for the next Regular Session included setting top four priorities for the League of Oregon Cities legislative proposal survey. She thinks it warrants discussion in a work session. City Manager Wes Hare said Albany is one of 240 cities submitting lists, so he suggests we do not spend too much time on it. Staff agreed to schedule it for a work session.

Bedore arrived at the meeting at 4:35 p.m.

Olsen said he does not like the new keypads which were installed on the doors which enter into staff offices at City Hall. Hare said the locks were installed as a result of non-employees wandering around through the areas and a recent theft. The goal is to have entry be as unobtrusive as possible while also providing a higher level of security.

#### CITY MANAGER REPORT

Hare met with the developer of the Wheel House project, David Johnson, to work through some of the last hurdles. Johnson has until August 1 to have the project plans completed.

City Attorney Jim Delapoer noted that Transportation Systems Analyst Ron Irish did a great job on this project.

In a previous meeting the Council asked staff to post speed limit signs and possibly have the speed lowered on Scenic Drive. Irish talked to Benton County and found out that they studied the stretch between Dover Lane and 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue in 2004. Their counts were consistent and the speeds did not change although the numbers did. Irish put out a counter and found that the average speed is 55 mph, with 85-90 percent of the speeds at 58 mph. He doubts Benton County would forward a request to ODOT to lower the speed limit because they won't want to drop it lower than 58 mph. Irish does think Benton County would be willing, however, to post signs.

Collins said that without the speed being posted, law enforcement cannot write tickets. He also thinks Springhill Drive should have signs. Collins suggested to North Albany Neighborhood Association (NANA) President Bill Root, who was in the audience, that this is an example of the Council responding to citizen concerns. Root said that is why he attends the meetings and said that communication between NANA and the City has been good.

Reid said he would not be able to attend the upcoming Cascade West Area Commission on Transportation meeting and asked Irish, as the City's designated alternate, to attend and vote in his place.

Hare said he learned that Linn County is applying for an Emergency Operations Center Grant. It makes sense for the City to apply along with them for this single-command center. It would not require a resource commitment from the City because a match has already been identified. Hare commented that the City's relationship with Linn County is good and he commended them.

Public Information Officer/Management Assistant Marilyn Smith said the November 2008 Council meeting schedule needs to be adjusted because Smart Centre's plan is being submitted, with the corresponding 120 day clock scheduled to run out on November 12, 2008. The Council decided to schedule Council meetings for November 12 and 24, and December 8 and 17.

#### ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, the Work Session adjourned at 4:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary A. Dibble, CMC  
Deputy City Clerk

Reviewed by,

Stewart Taylor  
Finance Director