



CITY OF ALBANY
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Municipal Court Room
Wednesday, August 3, 2011
5:45 p.m.

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Sharon Konopa called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Councilors present: Councilors Bill Coburn, Floyd Collins, Bessie Johnson, Dick Olsen, Jeff Christman

Councilors absent: none

DRAPER HOUSE

City Manager Wes Hare said that at the last meeting the Council voted to support the order to proceed with demolition of the property located at 337 Sixth Avenue SE. He said that his understanding was that if we received an offer to rehabilitate the home from someone it would be considered. He said that an offer was received [see agenda file] from Scott Lepman. Hare said that this offer would require financial support from the City, and the short sale would have to be successful and would take an indefinite amount of time. Hare said that demolition is scheduled for tomorrow; and if the Council doesn't want demolition to proceed, he would recommend a motion to that effect and then have the issue discussed at Wednesday night's meeting.

Councilor Dick Olsen said that he has talked to Scott Lepman about the proposal. He said that he is interested in a single-family home. He said that Mr. Lepman has an interest in this neighborhood because he has reconditioned the apartments on the other side of the block, and it was a successful project.

MOTION: Olsen made a motion to consider Scott Lepman's proposal at Wednesday night's meeting. Councilor Floyd Collins seconded the motion. Discussion followed.

Konopa clarified that the motion would need to be approved tonight to stop demolition.

Collins said that he would like to consider Mr. Lepman's proposal. He said that if the demolition goes forward, it will cost the City \$25,000. He said that we will end up with a vacant lot and we won't see the \$25,000. He said that this property may meet some of the CARA requirements. Collin would like to understand the proposal before saying no.

Councilor Bessie Johnson said that there would be a loan involved and a mortgage lender involved; this process could end up taking a very long time. She said that she is still for demolition because she thinks it will take too long. Discussion followed.

Councilor Bill Coburn said that he looked at the building today and said it is a dangerous, ugly building, it attracts transients, and is a fire danger. He said that he agrees with Wes's e-mail and the neighbors living in that area. He said that the short sale process could take a very long time. Johnson said that she doesn't think that any CARA money should be used for this property.

VOTE ON MOTION: A vote was taken on the motion and it failed 2-3 with Johnson, Christman, and Coburn voting no.

WARD II-A VACANT CITY COUNCILOR SEAT

Preinterview Discussion

Konopa said that each applicant will be brought in one at a time. She said that when the applicant comes in, we will do a brief introduction, quickly discuss the ethics rules, and the time requirements of this position. Councilor Jeff Christman said that it is hard to adhere to this process because he has different questions for each applicant. Konopa said that if Council needs more time to make a decision, the applicants can be narrowed down and invited back for a second interview. Collins said that we can ask unscripted questions if we get through the questions before time is up.

Applicant Interviews

TERRY CROOK

1. **(Olsen)** Do you find Albany an enjoyable place to live? If so, what makes it that way and what will you do to keep it that way?

Mr. Terry Crook said that he has lived in Albany for 41 years. When he was serving in the military abroad, Albany was always the place he thought of coming back to. He said that Albany is geared toward senior citizens, young people, and families. He said Albany is diverse.

2. **(Coburn)** Why do you want to be on the City Council? What experience and expertise do you bring the Council?

Crook said that he would like to be a part of the City Council because he has a need for challenges and would like to improve Albany for the future. He remembers when he was growing up that there weren't many activities for younger people in Albany and that has improved. He said that he would bring his life experiences to the Council.

3. **(Christman)** What do you consider to be the three top issues facing the City of Albany and how would you solve them?

Crook said that the first issue is employment and getting more businesses in Albany. He said that the homeless issue is another big issue. He said that he is working to get homeless veterans off the streets. He said that there is a lot of growth going on in this town and we should do more to get more growth.

4. **(Konopa)** As decision makers, we should all have a vision for Albany and the mid-Willamette Valley's population and how the landscape will look for the next century. In order to achieve a vision of great neighborhoods, quality water, and a healthy environment, it takes regulations to achieve that vision. What is your opinion of government regulations? Can you support standing up to special interest groups to require regulations to meet that vision?

Crook said that he believes government intervention can only go so far. He said that there has been a lot of building in Albany and taking away natural habitat. He said that we need to preserve the natural habitat for future generations.

5. **(Johnson)** Do you feel it would be beneficial for the Council to have yearly combined meetings with the Chamber of Commerce, the Albany Downtown Association, AMEDC, the Albany Visitors Association, and any other applicable organizations to get their views and ideas regarding what's happening in Albany?

Crook said that every organization works together so that there isn't a duplication of efforts. He said that once a year probably isn't enough. He suggested meeting biannual meetings.

6. **(Collins)** What is your opinion of and experience in dealing with Oregon's land use laws?

Crook said that he doesn't have any experience with land-use laws.

7. **(Olsen)** Should our CARA urban renewal plan be used to entice new development or to enhance what's already here?

Crook said that it is a two-fold effort. He said that he has watched the efforts in the last ten years and businesses have been drawn back downtown and he believes CARA is doing a great job.

8. **(Christman)** The economy and economic development are issues in Albany; what are your thoughts about improving Albany's economy and encouraging economic growth?

Crook said that the budget must be tight in this type of economy. He said that it is necessary to invest in the economy to get more businesses in here.

9. **(Konopa)** Supporting the need to expand public infrastructure is a huge cost to cities—expanding streets, water and wastewater systems, and parks. The demand to expand systems is due to new development/growth. Do you think all residents of Albany should carry the burden of higher taxes or fees to support new development, or do you think new development should pay for the costs to expand public systems?

Crook said that he thinks the taxpayers should be somewhat accountable for upgrades to existing systems and that any new development should be responsible for paying their portion of costs.

10. **(Johnson)** What are your feelings regarding public and private sectors working together on projects?

Crook said that working together is a great thing to do.

11. **(Collins)** What differences are there between private sector and public sector budgeting and financial planning?

Crook did not submit an answer.

12. **(Coburn)** As a city councilor, you are representing all of the citizens in your ward. How would you propose to do that?

Crook said that he would go door-to-door to talk to people and see what issues there are in his Ward. He said it is best to find out what the issues are and go from there to solve them.

13. **(Konopa)** Do you have any questions or comments for us?

Crook had no questions.

WOLF DYNER

1. **(Olsen)** Do you find Albany an enjoyable place to live? If so, what makes it that way and what will you do to keep it that way?

Mr. Wolf Dyner said that he has lived in Albany for twenty years. He said that he likes Albany because it is safe, it has great schools, it is a great community, there is a great social network, and it is in a great location. He said that he would continue to work for maintaining the type of livability that we have. He said that there is work here and there are plenty of small businesses in town.

2. **(Coburn)** Why do you want to be on the City Council? What experience and expertise do you bring the Council?

Dyner said that the reason he wants to be on City Council is because he recently retired and has time to participate and work on the issues facing Albany. He said that he is a thorough person and that he can listen to both sides of an issue to make a decision.

3. **(Christman)** What do you consider to be the three top issues facing the City of Albany and how would you solve them?

Dyner said that the first issue would be to determine what should be done with the Pepsi money. He said that he thinks that the money should be used now to either purchase something or invest it in something. He said that services right now are reasonably priced and it is better to spend it now while the money is worth more or to invest it to keep the money growing.

Dyner said that the second issue is the "Blue" dog case. He said that it is unfortunate that it is dragging out so long and he understands that it may not be possible for the Council to make a decision regarding this issue. He said that he doesn't know all of the details.

Dyner said that the police station and fire station are the third issue. He said that he believes there is a need to have functioning facilities. He said that the police station is needed, but he would want it to be built to encompass future growth.

4. **(Konopa)** As decision makers, we should all have a vision for Albany and the mid-Willamette Valley's population and how the landscape will look for the next century. In order to achieve a vision of great neighborhoods, quality water, and a healthy environment, it takes regulations to achieve that vision. What is your opinion of government regulations? Can you support standing up to special interest groups to require regulations to meet that vision?

Dyner said that property is something people cherish in the United States. He said that government regulation in the big scheme of things is important. He said that, generally, people should be allowed to do what they wish with their property. He said that it would be their job to step back and really look at laws made. He said that he respects people's privacy and property and he would hope that there would be a sense of community.

5. **(Johnson)** Do you feel it would be beneficial for the Council to have yearly combined meetings with the Chamber of Commerce, the Albany Downtown Association, AMEDC, the Albany Visitors Association, and any other applicable organizations to get their views and ideas regarding what's happening in Albany?

Dyner said absolutely. He said that it is key to reaching a common goal. He said that all of the organizations have the goal to make this a great community and in the end, it all benefits us.

6. **(Collins)** What is your opinion of and experience in dealing with Oregon's land use laws?

Dyner said that he has none. He said that the closest he has come is receiving a letter from the City that said that he is in a 100-year flood zone.

7. **(Olsen)** Should our CARA urban renewal plan be used to entice new development or to enhance what's already here?

Dyner said that he would hope it would do both. He said that he is not fond of urban renewal areas and that is because they are usually developed without a vote from the people and that they are also a gamble. He said that this particular one in Albany is a great thing, though, and has seen much improvement in the downtown area. He said that he is comfortable with our urban renewal area.

8. **(Christman)** The economy and economic development are issues in Albany; what are your thoughts about improving Albany's economy and encouraging economic growth?

Dyner said that there isn't a climate right now for great economic development. He said that Albany does have great water and sewage treatment plants. He said that when he looks at AMEDC, most referrals come from the state of Oregon. Dyner suggested considering international businesses. He thinks that we need to combine the economic development groups that already exist and see if there are other countries who are interested in investing in us.

9. **(Konopa)** Supporting the need to expand public infrastructure is a huge cost to cities—expanding streets, water and wastewater systems, and parks. The demand to expand systems is due to new development/growth. Do you think all residents of Albany should carry the burden of higher taxes or fees to support new development, or do you think new development should pay for the costs to expand public systems?

Dyner said that new development should have to pay for the new infrastructure.

10. **(Johnson)** What are your feelings regarding public and private sectors working together on projects?

Dyner said that the public and private sectors need to work together. He said it has to be a hand-in-hand relationship.

11. **(Collins)** What differences are there between private sector and public sector budgeting and financial planning?

Dyner said that he would guess that the private sector would need to have a balanced budget just like the public sector.

12. **(Coburn)** As a city councilor, you are representing all of the citizens in your ward. How would you propose to do that?

Dyner said that he would go to the local businesses and would make contact with the folks living in the ward. He said that he would go door-to-door and make himself available to people.

13. **(Konopa)** Do you have any questions or comments for us?

He said that he is retired now and has the time to devote to the projects and activities that the Council needs to handle.

DR. LARRY MARTIN

1. **(Olsen)** Do you find Albany an enjoyable place to live? If so, what makes it that way and what will you do to keep it that way?

Dr. Larry Martin said that he grew up in Corvallis. He said that he knows the area very well and he moved his family back here six years ago. He said that Albany is a community where families are important and where the community supports the schools and area.

2. **(Coburn)** Why do you want to be on the City Council? What experience and expertise do you bring the Council?

Martin said that he has always had a love for politics and he has always been a service-oriented person. He said that he is a family guy and wanted to make sure he had time to devote to that. He said that his kids are out of the house now and this is a good opportunity to provide service.

3. **(Christman)** What do you consider to be the three top issues facing the City of Albany and how would you solve them?

He said that the lack of jobs is probably the top issue. He said that he is impressed with how the city is operated. He said that the budget is right up there, too. He said that education is also very important.

4. **(Konopa)** As decision makers, we should all have a vision for Albany and the mid-Willamette Valley's population and how the landscape will look for the next century. In order to achieve a vision of great neighborhoods, quality water, and a healthy environment, it takes regulations to achieve that vision. What is

your opinion of government regulations? Can you support standing up to special interest groups to require regulations to meet that vision?

Martin said that regulations are necessary and he likes regulations that take care of all people. He said that the decisions should be made that affect the largest amount of people being benefited.

5. **(Johnson)** Do you feel it would be beneficial for the Council to have yearly combined meetings with the Chamber of Commerce, the Albany Downtown Association, AMEDC, the Albany Visitors Association, and any other applicable organizations to get their views and ideas regarding what's happening in Albany?

Martin said that as a Council, the more input you have the better off you will be. He said that it would add to a better acceptance of what the Council is doing.

6. **(Collins)** What is your opinion of and experience in dealing with Oregon's land use laws?

Martin said that his experience is limited.

7. **(Olsen)** Should our CARA urban renewal plan be used to entice new development or to enhance what's already here?

Martin said that his understanding is that it is more of an upgrading and development of the downtown area. He said that he likes what CARA has done. He said that he would favor anything that brings new business to Albany.

8. **(Christman)** The economy and economic development are issues in Albany; what are your thoughts about improving Albany's economy and encouraging economic growth?

Martin said that he believes it will have to come down from the top first. He said that we need to continue to focus on what is good in Albany to help improve Albany. He said that once the overall economy improves he believes it will improve here.

9. **(Konopa)** Supporting the need to expand public infrastructure is a huge cost to cities—expanding streets, water and wastewater systems, and parks. The demand to expand systems is due to new development/growth. Do you think all residents of Albany should carry the burden of higher taxes or fees to support new development, or do you think new development should pay for the costs to expand public systems?

Martin said that it depends on what benefit the development is giving to the taxpayers. He said that the taxpayers have to pay to have things done, but we also have to be considerate of spending other people's money.

10. **(Johnson)** What are your feelings regarding public and private sectors working together on projects?

Martin said that he would like to see more of it. He said that we have developed ourselves into an us-versus-them attitude when it comes to government and private sector.

11. **(Collins)** What differences are there between private sector and public sector budgeting and financial planning?

Martin said that there is a big difference. He said that he is in a profession that is really being hit hard because the primary population that he cares for are elderly. He said that the elderly population starts locking up their pocketbook as the economy gets bad. He said that the private sector tends to make budget adjustments quicker than the public sector.

12. **(Coburn)** As a city councilor, you are representing all of the citizens in your ward. How would you propose to do that?

Martin said that he really feels responsibility when it comes to making decisions for other people. He said that being cautious of taxpayers' money that they are entrusting to us.

13. **(Konopa)** Do you have any questions or comments for us?

Martin said that he has looked at the reports that the City has prepared and is impressed with what the City has done. He said that he doesn't have any agenda to serve. He said that he will be passionate about issues.

LARRY TOMLIN

1. **(Olsen)** Do you find Albany an enjoyable place to live? If so, what makes it that way and what will you do to keep it that way?

Mr. Larry Tomlin said that he was born and raised in Oregon and has never found a better place to live. He said that he would like to help regain our employment status. He said that we have lost far too many family-wage jobs.

2. **(Coburn)** Why do you want to be on the City Council? What experience and expertise do you bring the Council?

Tomlin said that he has been on the Planning Commission for a couple of years and the decisions that are made can be reversed. He said that he likes being a decision maker. He said that he has something he can offer to the community. He said that he looks at Lebanon and they are doing an awesome job and we could be doing the same thing.

3. **(Christman)** What do you consider to be the three top issues facing the City of Albany and how would you solve them?

Tomlin said that we have to put people in the empty buildings to make them worth something since we have a declining tax base. He said that we need more jobs for families. He said that Albany is going in the right direction as far as livability. He said that his ward doesn't have any grocery stores in his area. He said that he knows Winco is looking at Albany.

4. **(Konopa)** As decision makers, we should all have a vision for Albany and the mid-Willamette Valley's population and how the landscape will look for the next century. In order to achieve a vision of great neighborhoods, quality water, and a healthy environment, it takes regulations to achieve that vision. What is your opinion of government regulations? Can you support standing up to special interest groups to require regulations to meet that vision?

Tomlin said that a society without rules is anarchy. He said that people who don't work together can't get anything done. He said that he considers himself to be moderately conservative. He thinks that considering all aspects of an issue is extremely important.

5. **(Johnson)** Do you feel it would be beneficial for the Council to have yearly combined meetings with the Chamber of Commerce, the Albany Downtown Association, AMEDC, the Albany Visitors Association, and any other applicable organizations to get their views and ideas regarding what's happening in Albany?

Tomlin said that as long as the meetings are targeted, then yes. He said that he would want a specific agenda to cover specific topics. He said meetings like these are important but should be focused.

6. **(Collins)** What is your opinion of and experience in dealing with Oregon's land use laws?

Tomlin said that they are very confusing. He said that the various agencies of the state government have different rules that are tiered differently and they are difficult to understand.

7. **(Olsen)** Should our CARA urban renewal plan be used to entice new development or to enhance what's already here?

Tomlin said that he thinks the intent of what CARA is to take care of what is here. He said that it can restimulate existing buildings. He worries about CARA's scope getting too big.

8. **(Christman)** The economy and economic development are issues in Albany; what are your thoughts about improving Albany's economy and encouraging economic growth?

Tomlin said that it needs to be improved and these are some of the toughest times we have had. He said that building is down and it hasn't bounced back. He said that we have lost a lot of jobs in the valley and this has impacted the economy.

9. **(Konopa)** Supporting the need to expand public infrastructure is a huge cost to cities—expanding streets, water and wastewater systems, and parks. The demand to expand systems is due to new development/growth. Do you think all residents of Albany should carry the burden of higher taxes or fees to support new development, or do you think new development should pay for the costs to expand public systems?

Tomlin said that it is a double-edged sword. He said if a new business has to carry all of the burden, then they may choose not to come to Albany. He said that it is a shared responsibility and that housing should carry its own costs. He said that the fees assessed have to be justifiable.

10. **(Johnson)** What are your feelings regarding public and private sectors working together on projects?

Tomlin said that he sees no reason why partnerships can't be done. He said that as long as an advantage isn't being provided to a specific private company and as long as it meets the City's goals.

11. **(Collins)** What differences are there between private sector and public sector budgeting and financial planning?

Tomlin said that there are a lot of political issues that the private sectors don't have to deal with. He said that he often questions the layering of positions within government.

12. **(Coburn)** As a city councilor, you are representing all of the citizens in your ward. How would you propose to do that?

Tomlin said that he meets a lot of the folks everyday at his business. He said that many people talk to him about issues. He said that it depends on how much input is given from the people in your ward.

13. **(Konopa)** Do you have any questions or comments for us?

Tomlin said that he has been in the community for a long time and he has attended meetings with all of the City Council members.

RAY KOPCZYNSKI

1. **(Olsen)** Do you find Albany an enjoyable place to live? If so, what makes it that way and what will you do to keep it that way?

Mr. Ray Kopczynski said that he has been in Albany since 1995. He said that he loves the community. He said that there are a number of people who want to get involved with Albany to make it a more livable community. He said that he values the opportunity to give input and participate in the process.

2. **(Coburn)** Why do you want to be on the City Council? What experience and expertise do you bring the Council?

Kopczynski said that he has taken part in the Leadership Albany Program and that he was intrigued with the government portion of the program. He said that he became a member of the CARA Advisory Board and he has enjoyed his time. He said that he believes he can bring experience from his background and by using common sense.

3. **(Christman)** What do you consider to be the three top issues facing the City of Albany and how would you solve them?

Kopczynski said that getting the jobs process going again and working together to get more jobs in Albany. He said another issue is maintaining the infrastructure we have in place. He said that Albany has some phenomenal assets here in Albany; this is a very livable community. He said that the third issue would be more collaboration with Linn County for shovel-ready sites in Albany.

4. **(Konopa)** As decision makers, we should all have a vision for Albany and the mid-Willamette Valley's population and how the landscape will look for the next century. In order to achieve a vision of great neighborhoods, quality water, and a healthy environment, it takes regulations to achieve that vision. What is your opinion of government regulations? Can you support standing up to special interest groups to require regulations to meet that vision?

Kopczynski said absolutely and he has stood up to special interest groups in the past. He said having his name out there in the public doesn't bother him. He said that regulations are required and to what degree will depend on costs.

5. **(Johnson)** Do you feel it would be beneficial for the Council to have yearly combined meetings with the Chamber of Commerce, the Albany Downtown Association, AMEDC, the Albany Visitors Association, and any other applicable organizations to get their views and ideas regarding what's happening in Albany?

Kopczynski said that it would be beneficial because it is valuable to get that type of input. He said his question is where to draw the line. He said that as long as it is set up on a regular basis then it could be valuable.

6. **(Collins)** What is your opinion of and experience in dealing with Oregon's land use laws?

Kopczynski said that a lot of it is hinged on federal regulations and is a long-term process.

7. **(Olsen)** Should our CARA urban renewal plan be used to entice new development or to enhance what's already here?

Kopczynski said that if we can use it to attract a new business which is considering moving into the defined boundaries, this would be a great deal. He said that he values that we have nearly an eight to one private to public dollar ratio. He said that he would definitely use it to encourage new business.

8. **(Christman)** The economy and economic development are issues in Albany; what are your thoughts about improving Albany's economy and encouraging economic growth?

Kopczynski said that whatever we can do to help new businesses come into town we should help with that. He said that we need to get information to potential businesses to get them to come to Albany.

9. **(Konopa)** Supporting the need to expand public infrastructure is a huge cost to cities—expanding streets, water and wastewater systems, and parks. The demand to expand systems is due to new development/growth. Do you think all residents of Albany should carry the burden of higher taxes or fees to support new development, or do you think new development should pay for the costs to expand public systems?

Kopczynski said that he has never seen a company indicate that they lost a project simply because of an SDC fee. He said that the fees should mainly be borne by those developers.

10. **(Johnson)** What are your feelings regarding public and private sectors working together on projects?

Kopczynski said that he is in favor of it. He said that his only concern is to tighten up some of the rules. He said that what he has seen happen in the CARA district in the last ten years has been amazing. He said that the community does benefit from it.

11. **(Collins)** What differences are there between private sector and public sector budgeting and financial planning?

Kopczynski said that the things that we want to have and see in a community aren't going to necessarily be seen in the bottom line right away, but it benefits the livability. He said that it is hard to compare the two.

12. **(Coburn)** As a city councilor, you are representing all of the citizens in your ward. How would you propose to do that?

Kopczynski said that he would reach out to the folks in his ward. He said that he values the opportunity to go out and talk to everybody. He said that his primary responsibility is to represent the folks in Ward II and, secondly, to represent the citizens in Albany.

13. **(Konopa)** Do you have any questions or comments for us?

Kopczynski said that he appreciates having the opportunity to participate in the application process.

Discussion/Deliberation

Konopa asked the Council if they would like to have second interviews or if they would like to make a decision tonight. It was decided that they would make a decision tonight and that they would first narrow it down to two candidates.

First Vote: Ray Kopczynski received six votes, Wolf Dyer received four votes, Terry Crook received one vote, and Larry Tomlin received one vote.

Discussion followed and they decided to take a second vote between Kopczynski and Dyer.

Second Vote: Ray Kopczynski received five votes and Wolf Dyer received one vote.

MOTION: Collins made a motion to ratify the final 5-1 vote to appoint Ray Kopczynski to the Ward II-a City Council position; Coburn seconded the motion and it passed 6-0.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Special Session adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Eilers
Administrative Assistant I