



106 A Ave., PO Box 208
Seneca, OR 97873
(541) 542-2161
www.SenecaOregon.com



CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING March 10th, 2020

Council Present:

Brad Smith
Lilly Foster
Sue Holliday
Barb Northington

Public in Attendance

Shane Koppel
Josh Walker
Chad Holliday
Erica Holliday

**City Manager/Recorder Raamin Burrell
Minutes taken and recorded by Raamin Burrell and
Assistant City Manager Amanda Born**

Meeting called to order by Mayor Smith at 6:00 p.m.

Open Floor: Mayor Smith read the agenda item aloud and called for open floor items.

City Manager Burrell asked to rent the City's dump trailer. Council approved her request.

Josh Walker asked about the replat on Park Avenue for possible land trade with Kenny Miller. City Manager Burrell said the replat has been done, notifications were sent out last fall, the County Assessor has already given a value for the property, the next step would be to contact Kenny Miller and see if he accepts the County Assessor's value or if he would like an appraiser to value the property.

Lead Maintenance Koppel asked the council if it was a possibility to utilize the enclosed section of the machine shed at the City Compound as a storage for the fire trucks rather than building the new fire station. He explained that the machine shed would need to be insulated and heated and maybe a different gate system could be used for quicker access in emergencies. City Manager Burrell said the funding for the grant has to follow the specs of the original plan. Lead Maintenance Koppel said he understood, but since we were short in funding for the current fire station, he proposed this as a lower cost alternative. City Manager Burrell had Strux redo a cost assessment; City Manager Burrell said the cost of construction has increased about \$20,000 every year since the original proposal. Construction can't begin until we have all the funds. The cost is approximately \$225,000 now. Josh Walker said that coming up with the additional \$40,000 or \$50,000 needed to complete the funding for the current project and getting a \$240,000 building was a better deal in his opinion than spending \$25,000 to \$30,000 to remodel the machine shed. City Manager Burrell said she talked with Rural Development to find additional funding, whether it was a grant or grant/loan, and is working on the application. The Ford Family Foundation awarded a 3 to 1 challenge grant, so every dollar we raise gets multiplied and matched, but we've only raised approximately \$5300. \$11,000 more would have to be raised to get the full \$50,000

grant from them. The deadline is June 30th, 2020. City Manager Burrell explained that phase 1 is the main building; Phase 2 would be the finished interior walls. Phase 1 is the bulk of the project at approximately \$200,000. Councilor Northington speculated that another yard sale would potentially bring no more than \$1,000. Mayor Smith asked if we could get another extension and agreed with Josh Walker that it seemed a better deal to come up with \$40,000 and get the new building.

Approval of February 11th, 2020 Minutes: Mayor Smith read the agenda item aloud and asked for any corrections or changes. None were noted. Mayor Smith called for a motion to approve and sign the minutes.

-Councilor Foster made the motion to approve the minutes, Councilor Holliday seconded it. All in favor, motion passed to approve and sign the minutes.

Public Hearing: Ordinance #99- Adopting Regulatory Actions in Regards to Short-Term Rentals Within City Limits: Mayor Smith read the agenda item aloud and noted that the time the hearing began as 6:12pm. Mayor Smith asked if any Council Members have any ex parte contacts, a conflict of interest, or are biased in this matter. Council Members present stated 'no'. Mayor Smith explained that this topic has been under discussion by the City Council over the last several Council meetings with the result being the proposed formal adoption of the regulations contained in the Ordinance and opened it up for comments from the public. Erica Holliday said that they were renovating the old doctor's office into a short-term vacation rental and she wanted to know what the "safety-check list" that was referred to in the proposed ordinance entailed. Councilor Northington & City Manager Burrell explained that the safety-check list hasn't been developed yet, but would most likely pertain to things like fire-extinguishers and smoke alarms on the premises and would serve to show that short-term renters were offering a safe place to stay. Councilor Northington said that the idea behind the ordinance was not to have so many short-term rentals in town that they would compete with local business or make long-term rentals unavailable, thereby lessening the City's potential long-term residents, but the ordinance does not include a limit to the number of short-term rentals. With this ordinance the city would know how many short-term rentals were in Seneca and they would become part of a Grant County registry that would include an occupancy tax and would promote tourism. Erica Holliday asked if this ordinance was a precursor to an ordinance capping the amount of vacation rentals. Councilor Northington said at this time we didn't know if that was something the City could do given that the state of Oregon might pass a law preventing caps on short-term rentals. Josh Walker said that, since the building Chad & Erica Holliday are remodeling is zoned commercial, he didn't see how this ordinance would apply to their specific situation. Mayor Smith asked if there was any written testimony being submitted. The answer was no. Mayor Smith asked if the Council had any questions. The answer was no. Mayor Smith closed the public part of the hearing at 6:20pm and read the proposed ordinance in its entirety aloud. Councilor Northington asked that we could have the safety check-list done by the next meeting so that it could be included with the ordinance.

Update: Proposed New Aquatics Center: Mayor Smith read the agenda item aloud. Assistant City Manager Born gave an update on the meeting held March 9th, 2020. Asking the cities to approve a resolution supporting formation of the aquatic district. A separate taxing district would be created to fund the aquatic center. The proposed tax would be \$.20/\$1000 to fund the annual operating cost and \$.71/\$1000



for the \$6 million pool bond to construct the aquatic center. The total proposed tax would be \$.91/\$1000 which is less than the current hospital bond (\$1.18/\$1000). With the formation of the proposed new tax district (including the areas included in the JDCC Park & Recreation District, Cities of Seneca, Prairie City, Mt. Vernon, Prairie City Rural Fire Protection District, & Mt. Vernon Rural Fire Protection Districts). If all cities in the proposed tax district write a resolution to allow their citizens to vote on the measures, they figure that the county would then put it on the ballot. Both measures (the approval of the Aquatic Center & the \$6 million bond) would have to pass for the Aquatic Center to be developed. They asked that the city pass a resolution by June.

-Councilor Northington made the motion to have the City Manager write a draft resolution, Councilor Holliday seconded it. All in favor, motion passed.

Discuss Backup Well Pump: Mayor Smith read the agenda item aloud. Lead Maintenance Koppel explained the current fittings and check valve to release air are not designed for an artesian well like the City's well. We had Marciel Well Drilling fix some of this issue, and while he was here, he asked if we had a backup pump in case the current pump needed to be replaced and asked how many days the water supply would last in the dead of summer if the pump failed. Lead Maintenance Koppel estimated about 3 days. The supplier that sells the backup pump will not sell directly to the city, but estimated the cost of the pump to be \$3500. We can't find a record of when exactly the current well pump was installed but estimate it was late 70's or early 80's. Lead Maintenance Koppel proposes that we have a backup pump on hand so that, if we need to replace it, we could in 2 days rather than the 2 weeks it could take to order a pump, have it delivered, and then installed. Mayor Smith suggested that we install the new pump now and use the current pump as a backup. Lead Maintenance Koppel said he would have quotes by next month's meeting. Josh Walker suggested we wait until after June 30th so that we could budget for it in the next fiscal year.

Annual Oregon SEI Filing: Mayor Smith read the agenda item aloud. City Manager Burrell explained that the SEI filings are due April 15th, 2020. Notifications should be emailed shortly to councilors with directions on how to complete the SEI filing.

Review & Sign Amendment #2 for 2017 SCA Grant Agreement: Mayor Smith read the agenda item aloud. Assistant City Manager Born explained that this is to extend the chip-seal project agreement to December 31st, 2020. Mayor Smith asked for a motion to approve the 2017 SCA Grant Agreement Amendment #2.

-Councilor Foster made the motion to approve the 2017 SCA Grant Agreement Amendment #2., Councilor Northington seconded it. All in favor, motion passed.

Review & Sign Lease Agreement: Mayor Smith read the agenda item aloud. City Manager Burrell explained this new lease was needed between the City and

the Bear Valley Store because the Bear Valley Store sold and the State required the lease agreement to be in the new owners' name due to OLCC regulations.

-Councilor Northington made the motion to sign the lease agreement with the new owners Melvin & Sandra Herburger, Councilor Holliday seconded it. All in favor, motion passed.

Bills Before Council/BEO Signatures: Mayor Smith read the agenda item aloud and called for a motion to pay the bills and sign signature cards for the Bank of Eastern Oregon. City Manager Burrell explained the Bank of Eastern Oregon requires new signature cards to be signed every time there is a change of staff or councilors.

-Councilor Holliday made the motion to approve the bills, Councilor Northington seconded it. All in favor, motion passed, bills signed.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:57 p.m.

Attest: _____
Mayor