



ALBANY CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES

Wednesday, August 7, 2024

Meeting

Council Chambers, City Hall

Approved: September 25, 2024

Call to Order and pledge of allegiance

6:00 p.m.

Mayor Alex Johnson II called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The mayor led the pledge of allegiance.

Roll Call

Councilors present: Mayor Alex Johnson II and Councilors Steph Newton-Azorr, Matilda Novak, Jackie Montague, Ray Kopczynski, and Marilyn Smith

Councilors absent: Ramycia McGhee (excused)

Business from the public

6:01 p.m.

Jessica Becker, the interim executive director of Albany Helping Hands, said Albany Helping Hands is willing to take ownership of the properties being vacated by Marvin's Garden and revitalize the properties to help those who are unhoused.

Cory Van Treager spoke about acquiring properties and creating low-income housing.

Max Bunker spoke about Marvin's Garden and said he was disappointed in how the City is handling the dissolution of the campground.

Emma Deane, executive director of Community Helping Addicts Negotiate Change Effectively (C.H.A.N.C.E.), spoke in support of the proposed ordinance amending AMC 7.20 camping regulations.

Johnson II granted Mike Quinn a total of six minutes to speak during business from the public about two different topics. Quinn spoke about three streets in poor repair: in front of the hospital, by the library, and 5th Avenue. Quinn also spoke about the cost of fees to construct accessory dwelling units.

Nelson Osoria spoke about the Pacific Power conversion downtown that was approved by the council at the work session.

Second reading of ordinances

- a. Proposed AMC 7.20 camping regulations amendments

6:23 p.m.

City Attorney Sean Kidd read the ordinance for a second time in title only: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ALBANY MUNICIPAL CODE (AMC) CHAPTER 7.20, CAMPING REGULATIONS

MOTION: Councilor Ray Kopczynski moved to adopt the ordinance. Councilor Marilyn Smith seconded the motion, which passed 4-1 with Councilor Steph Newton-Azorr voting no. The ordinance was designated Ordinance No. 6049.

Adoption of resolutions

- a. 2023-2025 supplemental budget

6:25 p.m.

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Finance Director Jeanna Yeager spoke about the proposed changes to the budget.

Yeager and Parks and Recreation Director Kim Lyddane answered questions from Councilor Matilda Novak related to budget line items. Novak requested that staff change the line-item name of Senior Center Foundation to reflect the building's name change to the Riverfront Community Center. At the end of the meeting, Yeager responded to a request from Newton-Azorr for details regarding the Mayor and City Council budget line items.

MOTION: Councilor Jackie Montague moved to adopt the resolution. Smith seconded the motion, which passed 5-0 and was designated Resolution No. 7351.

Award of contracts

- a. Award contract for a fire training tower **6:35 p.m.**
Fire Chief Chris LaBelle and Training Division Chief Scott Cowan shared about the need for an Albany fire training tower and information about the proposed contract. Responding to questions from Montague and Newton-Azorr, LaBelle said the new facility would not improve the City's insurance rating and that the training tower would be open to other departments and outside agencies for training at no charge.

MOTION: Smith moved to award the contract. Kopczynski seconded the motion, which passed 5-0.

Approval of agreements

- a. Albany community pool lease and intergovernmental agreement (IGA) renewal **6:39 p.m.**
Lyddane spoke about the history of the IGA with Greater Albany Public Schools for the pool. Responding to a question from Johnson II, Lyddane updated the council on the status of the project to improve the therapeutic spa.

MOTION: Smith moved to adopt the IGA. Newton-Azorr seconded the motion, which passed 5-0 and was designated Resolution No. 7352.

- b. Pacific Power conversion **7:02 p.m.**
This item was approved by the city council at the August 5, 2024, work session and was struck from the agenda.

Adoption of consent agenda

7:08 p.m.

Adoption of consent agenda

- a. Approval of minutes
 - 1) July 10, 2024, city council meeting
- b. Recommendations to OLCC
 - 1) Approve annual liquor license renewals
- c. Adoption of resolutions
 - 1) Apply for Transportation Safety Office grant funds to hire a DUII police officer
- d. Approval of agreements
 - 1) Intergovernmental agreement for emergency water purification trailer
- e. Approval of meeting schedule
 - 1) November and December 2024 City Council Meetings

MOTION: Montague moved to adopt the consent agenda as presented. Kopczynski seconded the motion, which passed 5-0.

Staff reports

- a. Oregon Community Paths grant pre-application **6:46 p.m.**
City Engineer Staci Belcastro spoke about the opportunity of the community paths grant. Responding to a question from Novak, Belcastro said that the City's matching funds would come from the Transportation System Development Charges Fund.

MOTION: Montague moved to authorize pre-applications for the four projects listed in the staff report. Smith seconded the motion, which passed 5-0.

- b. Street maintenance funding direction and potential ordinance **6:53 p.m.**
Belcastro presented slides*, reminding the council of the information they have heard and the decisions they have made so far.

Kopczynski said the City can no longer delay addressing street maintenance and should start to address those needs by adopting a street maintenance fee.

Smith said that a street maintenance fee is equitable and would be a sustainable source of funding for roads. Smith also said the city should probably give up on the idea of a gas tax and she would be interested in pursuing a bond for major street projects

Newton-Azorr said she was uncomfortable adopting an ordinance to create a street maintenance fee before having the methodology written.

Novak said she is uncomfortable with a street maintenance fee. Troedsson responded to questions from Novak about the size of the current city biennial budget. Novak suggested that, rather than creating a new street maintenance fee, the city council cut the budget by ten percent and use the money on streets. Troedsson said that, by state law, much of the money in the City budget is in restricted funds that can only be used for specific purposes. About eighty-five percent of the general fund, which can be expended as the council sees fit, currently funds public safety. A ten percent cut to the general fund would divert about eight million dollars from public safety. Novak said she thinks the whole budget could be reworked, not just taking money from the general fund. Troedsson said this is not the case because most City funds are restricted by state law.

Novak spoke in favor of cutting city staff in every department by ten percent to pay for street maintenance. Johnson II and Smith spoke against Novak's proposal. Smith said that adopting the proposed ordinance gives staff permission to work on the methodology for implementing the street maintenance fee.

Montague said, looking at the history of street funding attempts in Albany, it looks like the city council repeatedly has not taken action over the previous decades. Montague said she is in favor of trying a street maintenance fee; she believes that, with some public education, the city would pass a gas tax, and that a bond measure will be needed to address large issues.

Newton-Azorr spoke in support of putting a gas tax on the ballot and conducting a public information campaign about the measure. Newton-Azorr said she would be comfortable directing

staff to establish methodology for a street maintenance fee but does not feel like that is what the proposed ordinance does.

Novak proposed cutting all city staff salaries and benefits by ten percent and direct the savings towards street maintenance. Troedsson expressed concern that such cuts would harm staff recruitment and retention. Johnson II said there would be a mass exodus of staff.

Kidd read the ordinance a first time in title only: AN ORDINANCE CREATING ALBANY MUNICIPAL CODE (AMC) CHAPTER 14.30, STREET MAINTENANCE FEE

MOTION: Montague moved to read the ordinance a second time in title only. Kopczynski seconded the motion. The vote on the motion was 3-2 with Newton-Azorr and Novak voting no. The motion failed. A motion to read an ordinance a second time in title only must be unanimous to pass. This ordinance will come back for an automatic second reading at the September 25, 2024, city council meeting.

Novak said she supports a \$0.10 gas tax over a street maintenance fee. Novak said that a \$0.10 gas tax would likely charge individuals less money per month than a street maintenance fee and include more drivers.

MOTION: Montague moved that city staff pursue additional street maintenance funding through a local fuel tax. Newton-Azorr seconded the motion.

Kopczynski said he believes a fuel tax would be a futile effort given the city's history of unsuccessful fuel tax measures.

VOTE: The motion passed 4-1 with Kopczynski voting no.

MOTION: Montague moved that city staff pursue additional street maintenance funding through a general obligation bond. Smith seconded the motion, which passed 4-1 with Novak voting no.

Business from the council

7:55 p.m.

Councilors discussed the Pacific Power conversion approved at the August 5, 2024, work session. Community Development Director Matthew Ruetters said staff is looking for ways to mitigate the cost of the utility undergrounding.

Smith asked that Helping Hands return to an upcoming meeting with more information about their offer to purchase property from the City for shelter purposes.

Johnson II spoke about recent and upcoming community events. Responding to a question from Johnson II, Kidd said there is a City ordinance regulating door-to-door solicitations.

City manager report

8:05 p.m.

Troedsson spoke about the cost of developing accessory dwelling units. The council confirmed Smith as the delegate and Johnson II as the alternate for the League of Oregon Cities Conference.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Reviewed by,

Gabe Shepherd
Deputy City Clerk

Peter Troedsson
City Manager

**Documents discussed at the meeting that are not in the agenda packet are archived in the record. Documents from staff are posted to the website after the meeting. Documents submitted by the public are available by emailing cityclerk@albanyoregon.gov.*