

CITY OF WHEELER

CITY COUNCIL – JULY MEETING MINUTES

July 16th, 2024

Call to Order

Mayor Kemp called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

Roll Call

Present onsite:

City Council: Heidi Stacks, Gordon Taylor, Deanne Ragnell, Walt Porter, Clif Kemp

City Staff: Wes Wootten

Guests: Mike Anderson, Edith Rohde, Ken Ulbricht, Mary Leverette, Dennis Cozart

Dorothy Cozart, Courtney Banks, Ron Emineth

Present via Zoom:

City Council: Karen Matthews

Guests: TJ Fiorelli

Consent Calendar

Councilor Stacks made a motion to approve minutes from June 18th, 2024. Councilor Ragnell seconded the motion. Councilor Stacks recommended approving the minutes of June at the August council meeting because amendments need to be made. The motion to approve was tabled.

City Manager Wootten read the June Financial Summary prepared by Finance Director Madi Chesnut.

Presentations, Guests, Announcements

TJ Fiorelli – Urban Renewal Districts

- Councilor Stacks asked how many bonds the City of Wheeler has out.
- TJ said no one will be paying higher tax rates.
- Councilor Stacks asked if the “Shared Portion” aspect could go toward the new clinic being built in Wheeler.
- Councilor Matthews asked about the Frozen Base if it includes real property and property improvements.
- Mary Leverette asked how privately owned buildings in the Wheeler Business District fit into a URD, if the City has to acquire private buildings from the owners to develop, and if development depends on non-governmental developers.
- Ms. Leverette asked if there were additional funds to offer developers or property owners further incentives to undertake improvements that would benefit the entire URD.
- Ken Ulbricht asked if the City has to carve out any owner’s prior bonded indebtedness. He also asked if the defined caps are set by state statute.
- Mike Anderson asked if public service bonds are part of the frozen base.
- Mary Leverette asked if the average length of a URD is 20-30 years; and if that is fast

enough to keep us afloat. She also asked about the repayment of the loans and how that works with the tax increase the City is expecting to get from newly developed properties.

City Manager and Public Works Department Report

Wes Wootten read out the City Manager and Public Works Department reports. *Copies are available on the city website.*

Public Hearings

None.

Old Business

- a. Nuisance Updates – Councilor Stacks mentioned that she followed up on all current nuisances and will share the list with the City Manager and Council. She mentioned that most have been resolved, and others are in the process of abatement.

Council Stacks asked if the Council would like to post the list of nuisances on the city website. Councilor Matthews recommended continuing to report nuisances at City Council meetings to remain consistent. Mayor Kemp stated that he disagrees with publicly publishing nuisances.

- b. Ordinance No. 2024-01 – Water Leak Billing Adjustments – Councilor Matthews moved to adopt 2024-02, Councilor Stacks seconded the motion. **The motion was passed 5-0** (Yes: Matthews, Ragnell, Taylor, Stacks, Porter; No: none).

New Business

- a. Juneteenth Holiday addition to Employee Handbook – Discussion was held about adding the Juneteenth Holiday to the Employee Handbook. The motion was previously voted down by the council. Mayor Kemp recommended reviewing the past council record and returning to the issue at a later council meeting.
- b. Resolution No. 2024-02 - Authorizing DEQ Water Loan – Councilor Ragnell moved to adopt the resolution, Councilor Taylor seconded the motion. **The motion was passed 5-0** (Yes: Matthews, Ragnell, Taylor, Stacks, Porter; No: none).

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

Dennis Cozart asked about nuisances and the updated code.

- Mayor Kemp responded that the council has reviewed and updated the Nuisance Code. The updated version will be shared with the public and open for comment soon. He also mentioned that he did not want to get into neighborhood squabbles.
- Dennis Cozart detailed the ongoing dispute with his neighbor, which he says has worsened. Dorothy Cozart gave additional testimony on the dispute.
- Dorothy Cozart asked the council to include the neighbor’s behavior in the updated nuisance code.
- Councilor Taylor responded to Dennis Cozart that he understands how serious the

situation is and wants to ensure that the new nuisance code covers this type of situation.

Mike Anderson asked questions about the Botts Marsh Lawsuit

- Mayor Kemp responded by reading parts of Ken Ulbricht's recent Conditional Use Application with the city.
- Mayor Kemp stated that the city wants to come to a resolution and accept a development that works for both the city and Ken Ulbricht
- Councilor Matthews commented that the council must prescribe to certain procedural rules since the city is currently in litigation.
- Ken Ulbricht commented that Mayor Kemp summarized the case and current situation well. He also mentioned that he is looking forward to resolving this situation.

Ken Ulbricht stated his support for an Urban Renewal District in Wheeler and that he would like to be on that committee if one was established.

Committee Reports

- a. *Waterfront Development Citizens Advisory Committee* –
Councilor Matthews said that the committee has put together standards and drawings on the waterfront district and is close to presenting them.
- b. *Parks & Recreation* –
Councilor Matthews said she has recently been out of state, but loyal volunteers have continued working with city staff. She has been putting in shrubs and starting the irrigation in Waterfront Park, but signs cannot be put up until the restroom reconstruction project is complete.
- c. *Salmonberry Trail* –
Councilor Matthews mentioned that Wes recently met with the Executive Director of the Salmonberry Trail Foundation. The committee is helping plan a celebration at the Tillamook Creamery in August.
- d. *Business Roundtable Meetings* –
Councilor Stacks said that at a recent meeting, business representatives discussed continuing to work on “Welcome to Wheeler” signage and other ways to encourage people to visit Wheeler. Ken Ulbricht attended the meeting and introduced himself and his vision for the Botts Marsh property. Councilor Stacks mentioned that the business owners were excited to hear firsthand information on how they could work together. Work will be continued on traffic problems, kiosk improvements, and what business owners would like to happen in winter.

Councilor Stacks and Mayor Kemp discussed the need for an active and formalized business council/organization.

- e. *WET* –
Mary Leverette reported that four to seven neighborhood pop-ups are being

assembled in Wheeler to bring neighbors together to assess what emergency materials are available and to get to know each other. The committee is looking for coordinators for each cluster. WET will begin outreach to Paradise Cove to inform them about emergency preparedness.

f. Port of Nehalem – No updates.

g. Planning Commission –
Wes read the Planning Commission Report.

Adjournment

Mayor Kemp called the meeting to close at 8:17 PM.

Dated: July 16, 2024

Clif Kemp, Mayor

Wes Wootten, City Manager/Recorder

Recorder: Wes Wootten