

CITY OF JEFFERSON
Council Worksession
January 12, 2017
6:30pm

COUNCILORS PRESENT: Walt Perry, Dave Beyerl, Bob Burns, Cyndie Hightower, Brad Cheney, Stan Neal, Mike Myers

COUNCILORS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Sarah Cook, City Recorder

I. COUNCIL MEETING CALL TO ORDER/FLAG SALUTE – Mayor Cyndie Hightower called the meeting to order at 6:30pm and led in the flag salute. She read the rules of the meeting at the top of the agenda as a reminder to all and since it was the first meeting of a new year.

II. WORKSESSION TOPICS

A. Swear-In Mayor Cyndie Hightower

Good friend, Priscilla Hamlin, performed the swearing in ceremony, with Cyndie Hightower repeating the oath of office before those in attendance. Applause and congratulations were shared.

B. Swear-In Councilors Robert Burns, Brad Cheney and Stan Neal

One by one, each new Councilor came forward and recited the oath of office, given by new Mayor Cyndie Hightower. Applause and congratulations were shared with each one.

C. New Council President Election

Councilor Beyerl nominated Mike Myers as Council President. Councilor Perry seconded. Mayor Hightower called for any other nominations. Hearing none, she called the question. All in favor: Ayes – 6, Opposed – 0. **APPROVED.**

D. 2017 Liaison Appointments

Mayor Hightower went down the list of committees provided and Councilors volunteered openly for those that interested them, or that they had already invested much time into and wanted to stay involved with. Councilors were appointed as liaisons to the various committees as follows:

Friends of Library – Mike Myers; MPO – Dave Beyerl & Walt Perry; Chamber – Walt Perry; Library Board – Bob Burns; Planning – Bob Burns; Building Comm – Davey Beyerl & Brad Cheney; Fire Board – Stan Neal; School Board – Bob Burns; Landmarks Advisory – Walt Perry; Parks & Rec – Mike Myers; MWACT – Walt Perry

E. 2017 Calendar for Worksession Topics

The City Recorder explained it was not the intent to fill in all the blanks on the calendar that evening, but to maybe include some high priority topics the Council wanted staff to research or investigate soon and get those scheduled. The calendar would be provided each month to Council so items could be added or moved often if needed.

Councilor Myers spoke about the need for parks within the City, the status of the old gas station property, and improvements to Main Street, as just some things he'd like to look at over the coming year; in general, to make the town more appealing to the eye. Councilor Beyerl noted that the subject of the gas station had been discussed by Council in the past and at one point he was authorized by the Council to contact DEQ about the property. He was told somebody could do things on the surface, but could not dig or disturb the ground in any way. There was brief open discussion amongst Council to share some history with the new members regarding the likelihood of contaminated soil, the death of the owner and his heir, soil testing, DEQ mitigation, and that the State would love for somebody else to take responsibility of the problematic property. While Councilor Beyerl agreed, he'd love to see the area improved too, he had great concerns given past investigation of it and cautioned them to step lightly. Myers understood and commented that the answer may be that the City can't do anything right now and that was fine, but he thought it was worth exploring options.

Councilor Neal summarized, noting it sounded like perhaps establishing an overall vision could be a worksession topic all its own and individual Councilors could bring forth their ideas to put on a list. Then, the Council could prioritize them and decide where to go. After some thought about which date might be best, Council decided to move the annual rate review, which was typically held in February, to the March Worksession and use the full February worksession as a visioning/brainstorming session. Councilor Burns noted that one of the platforms the new members had all ran on was the beautification of the City center and some of them had been in touch with folks that had some great ideas. At the appropriate time, he'd love to hear from those people.

The City Recorder informed the Council that the Landmarks Advisory Commission had requested some time with the Council, as a joint session as well, and that was also scheduled for the March worksession. Councilor Beyerl suggested stopping there, as they'd see the calendar monthly and after the visioning session they would likely have more topics to add; all agreed.

F. Bank Letter Re: Authorized Signers

Councilor Beyerl moved to forward the letter to the bank adding the new Mayor as a signer on the accounts held at Umpqua Bank. Councilor Perry seconded. All in favor: Ayes – 6, Opposed – 0.

APPROVED.

G. Appointment to Planning commission

Councilor Beyerl moved to adopt staff's recommendation to appoint David Jones to Planning. Councilor Perry seconded. Discussion: Councilor Burns would like to see the matter put off longer, as he'd like to see newer faces volunteering, though he knew Dave Jones was well qualified. Sarah Cook responded to Councilor Perry's question, indicating the position had been vacant for a month and

flyers had been posted in town, on the reader board and on Facebook. Councilor Neal was not aware of the opening and agreed with Councilor Burns, adding that more should be done to get the word out. He suggested that staff go door to door with flyers and volunteered to do as well. Councilor Burns thought perhaps expanding the boundaries of the commission would bring in more interested people and understood at one time the City did allow individuals from outside the City on the Planning commission thought he was not aware of the stipulations surrounding it. Councilor Beyerl reminded the Mayor that there was a motion on the table.

Allowing audience participation, Mayor Hightower called upon Chris Giffin, 207 Main St., who indicated the vacancy had also been posted on the water bills.

William Brobst, 675 High Ct., commented that he was on Facebook all the time and had never seen it. He felt in the age of social media and technology not many people even looked at their water bill and with newer people moving in, it needed to be made easier. Councilor Beyerl responded that on the other hand, not many people in town used social media and it would have to be posted to his specific site of interest for him to see it.

Councilor Cheney commented that updating the media site for the City was one of the things he considered bringing up for a worksession topic.

Bryon Peterson, 266 Harold Ct. – directed his comment to Councilor Beyerl questioning why he used the term “yours” or “ours”, indicating that he was creating a divide amongst the people and in his position, should be open to new things.

Audrey Webster, 170 8th St. – commented that Facebook reached a really big audience of all ages and was a great way to talk to the community. She offered her assistance in helping the Council expand their communications if needed.

Ron Cairns, 720 S. 2nd St. – indicated the school district had the same issue with advertising, noting it was hard to hit everybody. Printed flyers and ads came with an expense and at some point, he felt a line needed to be drawn.

Scott Paul, 14886 Parish Gap Rd. – commented that through normal practice, a position was advertised in the same way every position had been advertised for. Through that process, an individual person came forward who was qualified and deserved a vote. Establishing a practice of going door to door was more chaotic, and begged the question of would it just be for some committees, all committees, even staff. He felt that if a person was actually interested in getting involved with the City it would be their obligation to look for the information, noting at some point the citizen has to take some responsibility

Councilor Cheney agreed with Mr. Paul, noting the City probably could have done a better job getting the info out, but there was a certain amount of apathy that had gone along with people wanting to join on and become involved. He read Dave Jones application and was pleased he wanted to come back, adding that if he wanted to do it, then God bless him.

All in favor: Ayes – 5, Opposed -1 (Neal) **APPROVED.**

Following up, Councilor Myers added they should perhaps look into how to advertise going forward, but should not open up reciprocation of online debate. The City Council was the deliberative body, but then for 3 or 4 to be reviewing all of it, discussing or commenting electronically, opens up public meeting law violations. Moving forward, he cautioned Council in their disseminating what Council had discussed, noting that decisions of the body needed to be discussed and made right at that table.

Councilor Beyerl apologized to Mr. Peterson, as his statement was not intended in the way he took it and agreed with him that social media was for all of them that chose to use it; he chose not to, but to each their own. Councilor Burns added that he agreed with the gentleman too, noting one of the biggest problems was that people were not involved in their local governments and he did not have the answers right then to fix it, but it was one of his main focuses.

III. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS PAYABLE – 1st half for January

Councilor Perry moved to approve. Councilor Beyerl seconded. There was no discussion. All in favor: Ayes – 6, Opposed – 0. **APPROVED.**

IV. VISITORS

Dennis Persons, Talbot Rd. – referring back to the topic of creating a forum to communicate with the public, he felt that would be a great session to attend.

Bryon Peterson, 266 Harold Ct. – came forward and handed out a sample resolution. He said the City had been embroiled in a disagreement over voter rights that forced the hand of citizens to move on legislative acts for the right to vote on annexations. He recommended a special meeting following an executive session with the City's attorney to adopt his proposed resolution. There were no Council comments.

Audrey Webster mentioned the topic of fiber to the home, which the City Council had left off with at the end of last year. She wondered what the status of it was and hoped the new Council had plans to continue moving forward with it, as it was really important for the community. There was brief discussion amongst Council about when would be best to hold the Town Hall, with the general consensus being about 60 days or so. Sarah Cook would give the Peak rep a call the next day and get something scheduled.

Linda Baker, 1287 Filbert, came forward to welcome staff, continuing Councilors, new Mayor and Councilors while passing out candy, indicating it was going to be the year of the "big dig" for the Library.

V. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Walt Perry presented a brick order to Linda Baker from the Chamber.

Bob Burns commented that he was deeply honored to be on Council and that he took the position incredibly serious. He hoped to accomplish a lot of positive things over the next 4 years.

Stan Neal also considered it an honor and was thankful for the opportunity to serve on the City Council. He felt he was working with a great bunch of people and appreciated all the hard work that Councils had done in years past.

Brad Cheney echoed similar comments of thankfulness and also noted one thing he felt could be done better was communication. He thought the City website could be improved to make communication easier between Council and the community.

Dave Beyerl welcomed all the new members, noting it was not a frivolous position and they often times had to do things that weren't always popular; however, they had to follow all the laws as the oath stated and there need not be any personal grudges or intentions, as it was about what was good for the entire City.

Cyndie Hightower thanked everybody for the honor of being the Mayor. She commented that she wanted to see big things happen in Jefferson that would bring others in, making it inviting and beautiful.

Dave Beyerl shared that many big things had already occurred in Jefferson, where other cities looked at Jefferson as an example of the great things done with the little we had.

Mike Myers shared that even when all are pulling oars in the same direction, government was a process, which was often frustrating and maddening. If they kept their focus moving in the right direction, doing the right things, and not giving up on the process mid-way, it would all work out. He encouraged them all to be positive about the progress even when it didn't seem like there was any.

Walt Perry welcomed the new Mayor and Councilors and also was looking for a long prosperous movement towards the wellbeing of Jefferson, not just for a few, but for all. He shared a couple great moves that had already been done, noting that through the City's diligence they had reduced the crime rate, gave Jefferson a voice, and regained a lot of lost friendships with higher governments and agencies, such as ODOT. He was confident the diligence could continue.

VI. ADJOURNMENT – Councilor Perry moved; Councilor Beyerl seconded. All were in favor and the meeting closed at 7:34pm.

MINUTES APPROVED this 26th day of January, 2017.

Cyndie Hightower, Mayor

ATTEST:

Sarah Cook, City Recorder