

COBURG CITY COUNCIL WEEKLY REPORT

TOPIC: City Administration

Report Date: Friday, June 2, 2022
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Just a few updates regarding items that will be coming to the City Council and items of discussion at the City.

Zoning Code Update (Also known as the Development Code)

The Ad-hoc Committee has wrapped up their work and will hold one more committee meeting in order to form a formal recommendation to the Planning Commission and City Council. Once their final recommendation is made it will be reviewed by the City Attorney and Planning for possible challenges or other tasks that must take place in order to bring it for adoption and hold public hearings. Planning staff are working on this as fast as they can. However, we have to adhere to state laws regarding these kinds of updates which include specific noticing requirements. It is likely to be heard by the Planning Commission in July.

Funding for Street Projects – OTIB

The City has been informed that we have been approved for funding as requested. I will be bringing a request to the Council to approve my signing of a commitment letter for the loan. This will allow for us to go ahead and get started on projects for which will want to submit reimbursement. Formal loan documents will come after that point which will require an additional resolution of the Council to approve the documents and give permission for signature. The commitment letter will be in your packet for the June City Council meeting.

Noise control fencing at Water Booster Station

The City consistently gets complaints regarding the industrial noise coming from Coburg Industrial North. We manage these complaints to the best of our ability and if a business is working outside of the City Ordinance we make them aware of it. We have a good relationship with the businesses and they do their best to comply. However, we can't change the fact that we have a residential neighborhood abutting an industrial zone. Staff recently spoke with a sound expert regarding the possibility that the City Water Towers are exacerbating that noise by creating an echo effect off of the metal tanks. We asked them to make a recommendation if there is anything the City could do to help alleviate some of the noise. They made a recommendation that the City could install a sound fence at the Water Booster Station on the North and Eastern fencing. This could be a simple fix but it can also be an expensive one. Staff see this as not just a decision about whether to spend funds on this issue, but also a policy decision. Does the City have a responsibility to create a buffer or sound fence between an industrial zone and residential communities over and above what is required in our zoning code? Staff will be bringing a report on this to the July City Council meeting.

Coburg Bottom Loop Designation

Coburg Bottom Loop is a County road with some parts of it within the City's jurisdiction. The County is amending their transportation plan and in their attempts to align with ODOT road designations, they wanted to change this road from a local street to a collector street which is what ODOT has it listed as. City staff were made aware of this from the County staff and they asked Coburg's opinion on this. Commissioner John Marshall, Mayor Smith and City staff met this week with the County and ODOT to discuss this week. The result of the meeting was that we are uncomfortable with this change at this time and the County has agreed to remove the change from their TSP amendment at this time. Thank you to John Marshall who did raise red flags about this and how it could impact transportation in Coburg. We are also deeply grateful for John's expertise in transportation and for the partnerships that we have with the County and ODOT in order to have these tough conversations and come away with solutions we can all be comfortable with.

Goodbye to Erin Brown

It is with sadness we say goodbye to Erin Brown who has been serving as our utility billing clerk at the City. Erin has accepted a job at a local private utility company. This company's pay scale and benefits far exceed what we are able to offer for this position. This is a challenge we face as a small City when we can at times serve as a training ground for employees that we will lose to private industry or a larger governmental entity. An exist interview with Erin was extremely positive and she shared she loved working at the City of Coburg. She had great leadership in Sammy Egbert, and she loved the culture of Coburg staff. However, she had to make a decision that was in the best interest of her family at this time.

Sarah Athey will be stepping up to train with Erin as the Utility Billing Clerk and we will be doing a needs analysis for the administrative office before advertising a new position this summer. At this time, Erin is returning to the City on Fridays to train Sarah on the Utility Billing System. Sarah is very capable and we are very happy to have her stepping into this role as well as taking on some of the front office management of the City.

Questions regarding anything in this report can be sent to Anne Heath via email at anne.heath@ci.coburg.or.us.