



CITY OF OREGON CITY

URBAN RENEWAL COMMISSION

DRAFT MINUTES

Commission Chambers, Libke Public Safety Facility, 1234 Linn Ave, Oregon City
Wednesday, August 16, 2023 at 6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Mike Mitchell called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: 5 - Commissioner Denyse McGriff, Commissioner Frank O'Donnell, Commissioner Adam Marl, Vice Chair Shawn Cross, Chair Mike Mitchell

EXCUSED: 2 - Commissioner Doug Neeley, Commissioner Rocky Smith

STAFFERS: 9 - City Manager Tony Konkol, City Recorder Jakob Wiley, Economic Development Manager James Graham, Public Works Director John Lewis, Community Development Director Aquilla Hurd-Ravich, IT Director Mike Dobaj, Communications Manager Jarrod Lyman, Finance Director Matt Zook, Human Resources Director Patrick Foiles

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Karla Laws, resident of Oregon City, expressed her support of and appreciation for the work undertaken by the Urban Renewal Commission (URC), particularly the projects to ameliorate the blue algae infestation in Clackamette Cove and the collaboration with the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde to develop the Blue Heron Paper Mill site and nearby areas.

DISCUSSION ITEM

1. Information for Discussion and Direction Related to Clackamette Cove

Tony Konkol, City Manager, reported that City staff had been asked to investigate the acquisition of a dredging permit to improve water quality in the Clackamette Cove area, and investigate the possibility of working within, or creating an exception to, the Three Basin Rule, to allow the highest treated water type from Water Environmental Services (WES) to be released into the Cove. He reported that WES had expressed concerns over the efficacy of that proposal.

Mr. Konkol also introduced two documents which had been requested for discussion. The first document was the minutes from a July 28, 2023 meeting of a committee discussing water quality issues at Clackamette Cove and possible solutions. The second document was the Request for Qualifications for the Confluence at Troutdale project.

Mr. Konkol reported that a meeting was scheduled for the following week with a representative from the Department of State Lands to discuss the possibility of renewing or acquiring a dredging permit. He also reported that staff had reached out to the Lake Corps in Lake Oswego for insight on aeration systems, should aeration be considered a solution at the Cove. The Lake Corps had offered a tour and meeting, and Mr. Konkol suggested Commissioner O'Donnell might wish to participate.

Regarding other Urban Renewal properties, Mr. Konkol reported that James Graham, Economic Development Manager, had reached out to consultants for quotes to review the studies and sampling already done on the Stimson property, and of the no further action permit that the State had issued. He reported entering a contract for survey work on the residential properties on Tumwater Drive and South Second Street to identify possible encroachments.

Chair Mitchell invited Commissioner O'Donnell to discuss the minutes of the July 28, 2023 meeting of the committee discussing solutions for the Cove's water quality. Commissioner O'Donnell expressed confidence in the expertise of the committee and explained that they were investigating three possible solutions to the water quality at the Cove, all of which had been reflected in Mr. Konkol's report: pursuing a dredging permit, water exchange in collaboration with WES, and aeration. He added that a work session should be called to discuss these items more fully.

Richard Craven, resident of Oregon City, and an Environmental Consultant, recommended that a water quality expert be consulted to determine if aeration would be effective in the Cove. He observed that, even if it were possible to add water from the treatment plant in light of the Three Basin Rule, the water might well be of a similar temperature to that already in the Cove, meaning that it would not significantly alter the Cove's water temperature or improve the water's quality. Furthermore, he observed that the size of the Cove would require a large volume of water to affect the water of the Cove. Lastly, Mr. Craven encouraged the city to inquire whether permits acquired for this project three years ago were still valid or could be reissued. He observed that changes in seasonal water levels meant that more water volume would be needed than had been expected when the original permit was issued.

Commissioner McGriff noted that RestorCap's previous study had suggested that aeration would be ineffective in the Cove. She advised that previous research on the Clackamette Cove water situation be included as resources for the current discussion. Commissioner McGriff also suggested that obtaining a dredging permit for the Cove in its current state could be more complicated than the last time such a permit was obtained. Commissioner O'Donnell responded that the proposed solutions were a first pass at the problem and that if they were not successful other solutions would be explored.

Mr. Konkol observed that although RestorCap had not recommended aeration or dredging in their report on the Cove, it is possible that this was because their parameters were limited to solutions that did not require long-term maintenance.

Commissioner O'Donnell pointed out that funding sources in addition to Urban Renewal were being considered, such as federal funding connected to the Clean Water Act, adding that these funding options should also be discussed in a work session.

Commissioner Marl expressed enthusiasm for improving the Cove and observed that previous research on Cove solutions had not ruled out aeration or dredging in certain circumstances.

Commissioner Mitchell observed that there were many benefits to improving water quality at the Cove, including public safety and water access, and that this variety of justifications for the project would allow for the exploration of a variety of funding sources. Mr. Konkol observed that though the project has traditionally been viewed as an Urban Renewal project, the Cove's connection to parks, habitat restoration, and other components could be an opportunity for collaborations with other City departments, or it could be reassigned to a different department. He observed that there could be funding benefits to these courses of action. Commissioner O'Donnell suggested considering this in a work session as well.

Commissioner McGriff agreed with Mr. Konkol that this project encompasses more components than Urban Renewal and that it was a good opportunity for collaboration with other departments.

Commissioner Marl suggested the Commission bear in mind any restrictions that could come with various funding sources: for example, he suggested selecting funding sources that would not restrict future recreational use of the area.

There was consensus that the city would have a discussion with WES regarding a dredging permit and how the Three Basin Rule would affect aeration at the Cove, and that the city would obtain insight from the Lake Corps. There was also consensus that a work session should be scheduled between the Urban Renewal Commission and the members of the committee that had met with Commissioner O'Donnell to discuss Cove water solutions.

Commissioner McGriff asked for more information on the Troutdale project, adding that she had been unable to speak with Mayor Lauer at the recent Oregon Mayor's Association meeting.

Seth Henderson, resident of Portland, replied that Troutdale had completed the Request for Quotes (RFQ) process, had awarded the project to Capstone, and were currently negotiating an agreement.

There was discussion about how Troutdale's project could be a good practical example of a local project similar to the one the URC is pursuing. There was consensus that the city should request a meeting with Troutdale to learn more about the project after their development negotiations are complete.

The Commissioners asked to be kept apprised of opportunities to take a tour with the Lake Corps.

2. Minutes of the July 5, 2023 Urban Renewal Commission Meeting

Motion made by Commissioner McGriff, seconded by Commissioner Cross, to approve the Minutes of the July 5, 2023 Urban Renewal Commission Meeting as submitted.

The motion passed by the following vote:

Yea – 5: Commissioner McGriff, Commissioner O'Donnell, Commissioner Marl, Vice Chair Cross, Chair Mitchell

COMMUNICATIONS

There were no additional communications.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Mitchell adjourned the meeting at 6:44 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jakob S. Wiley, City Recorder