



ORLAND CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by Mayor Chris Dobbs at 6:30 PM.

ROLL CALL

Councilmembers present:

Councilmembers John McDermott, Bruce T. Roundy, Jeffrey Tolley, Vice Mayor Matt Romano, and Mayor Chris Dobbs

Staff present:

City Manager Pete Carr; City Clerk Jennifer Schmitke; City Attorney Greg Einhorn; Police Chief Joe Vlach; Library Director Jody Meza

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. Warrant List (Payable Obligations)
- B. Approve City Council Minutes for February 6, 2024
- C. Receive and file Public Works and Safety Commission Minutes from October 10, 2023
- D. Approve And Adopt Second Reading of Ordinance 2024-01: Approval of Conditional Use Permit #2023-03 Location: An Existing Parcel Identified As APN: 046-080-016 And Located North of The Northern Edge of the Existing Orland City Limits and East of the Northerly Terminus of Modoc Street Application: Conditional Use Permit #2023-03
- E. Approve And Adopt Second Reading of Ordinance 2024-02: An Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Orland Approving the Pre-Zoning of an Existing Parcel of Land Identified As 125 Modoc Street (APN 046-080-016) With The R-1 – Residential One Family Zoning District
- F. Treasurer's Report

Councilmember Tolley pulled item 4.A to discuss the item.

ACTION: Councilmember Tolley moved, seconded by Councilmember McDermott, to approve all consent items except 4.A. Motion carried by a voice vote 5-0.

Councilmember Tolley expressed the importance of having City Staff provide insights on the matter, given its relevance to the City's finances. Mr. Carr briefly outlined the report provided by the City Treasurer. During the discussion, Councilmembers emphasized their trust in the Treasurer's commitment to the City's welfare. Mr. Romano clarified that most of the funds detailed in the report are restricted in use and allocated for designated purchases and projects, ensuring transparent financial management.

Orland resident Troy Le Donne inquired about the accessibility of a detailed breakdown of the report, emphasizing its importance for public transparency. Mr. Carr assured him that the breakdown is included in the annual report, which will be formally presented during a future City Council agenda.

Additionally, he mentioned that the information will be readily available on the City's website, ensuring easy access for all community members.

ACTION: Councilmember Tolley moved, seconded by Councilmember Roundy, to approve all consent items 4.F. Motion carried by a voice vote 5-0.

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

A. Proposed Sales Tax Increase Measure and Adoption Process

Mr. Carr provided a concise overview of the steps required to place the proposed sales tax measure on the November ballot. He recounted that the Council had engaged in discussions to identify the types of taxes deemed crucial for the City, such as those funding street maintenance, street improvements, and ambulance services. Additionally, he highlighted the Council's focus on supporting valued quality-of-life services, including parks and recreation, as well as library services, underscoring their commitment to enhancing the community's well-being.

Mr. Carr provided a concise overview of Measure A, detailing its structure and how it was introduced to the community. He also presented draft language of the proposed sales tax measure for the Council's consideration.

Mr. Carr discussed the proposal to increase the local tax rate from a ½ cent, as established by Measure A, to a full 1 cent. He provided draft language for this proposed sales tax measure, aimed for consideration by voters in the November general election as a general tax. Mr. Carr elaborated on the procedural steps required to introduce this measure to the community and secure its place on the ballot, including addressing the technical aspects of the election process. He clarified the approval requirements: a two-thirds majority of the City Council is needed to place the tax measure on the ballot, and subsequently, a simple majority (over 50%) of voter approval is required for the measure to pass on November 5, 2024. Additionally, Mr. Carr outlined the necessary steps for introducing a sales tax ordinance, including the City Council's approval of the ballot argument and any rebuttal argument.

Councilmember McDermott commended the transparency of the proposed tax measure's wording, highlighting its lack of ambiguity. He confidently assured that taxpayers would have a clear understanding of what they're voting for and emphasized his commitment to sharing information with the public.

Councilmember Roundy proposed rewording the proposed measure, suggesting that ambulance services be prioritized at the beginning, followed by streets, parks, recreation, and library services. Mayor Dobbs concurred with Councilmember Roundy, emphasizing the universal necessity of ambulance services and expressing his preference for them to be highlighted as the foremost consideration.

Orland resident Earl Megginson shared his opinion and support for the proposed sales tax measure.

Councilmember Romano emphasized the importance of addressing additional areas of need within the measure, emphasizing the critical funding requirement for city streets. He clarified that street consultants have estimated an \$18 million investment is necessary to adequately maintain the City streets and bring them up to fair condition. Additionally, Councilmember Romano highlighted the widespread community benefits received from recent upgrades in the library and recreation sectors, stressing that the city lacks resources for regular essential improvements. This highlights the justification behind the proposed tax increase.

The Council instructed City Staff to proceed with drafting the ordinance, placing ambulance services at the forefront, followed by streets, parks, recreation, library and other services. Mr. Einhorn indicated that the revised ordinance would be presented for Council's review in March, ensuring it would be ready for submission to the County for ballot inclusion.

B. Council Member Compensation: Proposed Ordinance

City Attorney Greg Einhorn presented a resolution to update the Orland Municipal Code (OMC) corresponding to recent amendments to Government Code §36516. This amendment represents the first allowance for an increase in city council member compensation in nearly forty years, setting the monthly compensation at \$950, effective following the November 2024 City Council Election. Mr. Einhorn outlined the Council's intention behind the increase, aiming to foster a more diverse pool of applicants for City Council service. Additionally, he clarified the necessary steps the Council would need to undertake whenever a compensation increase is desired.

Councilmember Tolley asked about the procedural aspect of raising council pay, noting that any desired increase must be formally placed on the agenda each year. Mr. Einhorn further clarified that voted-upon pay increases would not come into effect until after the succeeding election.

Councilmember Roundy reflected on the historical context of council pay, noting that it has not seen an increase in the past four decades, despite periodic adjustments during challenging economic periods. He underscored the Council's commitment to ensuring fair compensation for City Staff by maintaining comparable salaries. Councilmember Roundy expressed support for the proposed increase, suggesting that this presents an opportunity to catch up and encourage more community members to serve.

Councilmember Tolley recalled that no specific monetary figure was initially established. Mr. Carr explained that \$950 was initially suggested, but City Staff did not receive clear instructions to consider an alternative amount.

Councilmember McDermott shared he is for the increase to \$950 and hopeful the increase will bring more diversity to the Council.

Mayor Dobbs emphasized that depending on the outcome of the November election and whether candidates choose to run again, 3/5 of the current City Council may not see the increased stipend.

Orland resident Lloyd Green expressed his opinion that the proposed compensation increase, amounting to 300%, seemed excessively high for a single adjustment.

Mr. Le Donne conveyed his gratitude for the Council's time and suggested that they consider opting for a smaller increase rather than the maximum amount.

Orland resident Susie Smith shared her concerns with a compensation increase, clarified that an increase to \$950 is 217%, and questioned other benefits that Councilmembers receive. Councilmember Roundy said the Councilmembers can apply for reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses but receive no other benefits.

Mr. Megginson shared his support for the compensation increase.

Orland resident and Chamber of Commerce President Dee Dee Jackson shared her appreciation for all that the City Council does for the community and stated her support for the compensation increase.

ACTION: Councilmember McDermott moved, seconded by Councilmember Roundy, to introduce Ordinance 2024-03, An ordinance of the City of Orland amending section 2.04.015 of the OMC increasing Councilmember compensation to \$950 per month, to be effective after the November 2024 City Council Election.

Councilmember Romano emphasized that his motivation for serving on the City Council is driven by his genuine care for the well-being of Orland, not financial gain. He emphasized his desire for the city to thrive and be the best it can be. Councilmember Romano expressed his hope that the proposed increase would attract capable individuals to contribute to Orland's progress, particularly aiming to encourage younger residents to become involved. He stated that the goal of the increase is to expand the pool of applicants and bring fresh perspectives to city leadership.

The motion carried 4-1 by a roll call vote.

Ayes: Councilmembers McDermott, Roundy, Vice Mayor Romano, and Mayor Dobbs

Nays: Councilmember Tolley

ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Scott Studebaker requested an update from the Council regarding the ambulance agreement with the County. Mr. Carr confirmed the agreement was signed by the City and County in November. In response to concerns raised by Mr. Studebaker regarding necessary equipment and supplies for the ambulance, he suggested scheduling a meeting to discuss finances and Mr. Carr asked to be contacted regarding any purchases that need to be made.

CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

Councilmember Tolley:

- Nothing to Report

Councilmember McDermott:

- Attended the Fentanyl Town Hall Meeting;
- The Planning Commission meeting on February 15th was cancelled.

Vice Mayor Romano:

- Attended the Transportation and Transit Meeting February 15th and briefed the Council on agenda items;
- Shared that the Orland Varsity Basketball team would play against Gridley this week in the semi-finals;
- Commended the Recreation Department for helping with County School sports programs;
- Thanked all City Departments for doing a wonderful job for the community.

Councilmember Roundy:

- Commended the City Public Works Department for keeping flooding down in the last rainstorm;
- Will be attending the next LAFCo meeting;
- Will be attending a special water meeting Friday February 23, 2024
- Attended the Glenn Ground Authority meeting and provided an update.
- Shared that he spoke with Glenn County Supervisor Grant Carmon about getting the countywide feline voucher program onto the County Supervisors agenda, the City Council approved \$25,000 for cat vouchers at the November 7, 2023, meeting.

Mayor Dobbs:

- Nothing to Report.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:46 PM

Jennifer Schmitke, City Clerk

Chris Dobbs, Mayor