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May 7, 2024

TO: Rio Dell City Council
FROM: Kyle Knopp, City Manager
SUBJECT: Study Session to Develop Priorities for FY 2024-25

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE CITY COUNCIL:

Receive a presentation from staff and discuss top priorities for the City over the coming year.

If the Council would like more time for this discussion, it is recommended the item be continued to the end of tonight’s meeting agenda.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

This is an opportunity for the Council to discuss individual priorities and develop the collective priorities of the City Council for the coming year. Councilmembers are asked to eventually develop a list of five such priorities that are then collectively arranged and presented to the Council at the following meeting for approval.

Attached are the minutes from last year’s prioritization that serves as a good summary of those discussions. Below is the summary chart of the priorities from the last five years.

Priorities				
2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Code Enforcement	Street Planning & Work	Economic Development	Economic Development Plan Implementation	Economic Development Implementation
Police Employees	Code Enforcement	Code Enforcement	Measure U/J Extension	Community Development
Street Work	Public Safety	Staff Turnover Reduction	Personnel	Public Works - Underground Infrastructure
Water Sewer Study	Economic Development	Cannabis Expansion	Todd Property	Personnel
Economic Development	Personnel	SB 1383-Organic Waste	Infrastructure	Public Safety

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**RIO DELL CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MAY 2, 2023**

The study session/regular meeting of the Rio Dell City Council was called to order at 5:03 p.m. by Mayor Garnes.

ROLL CALL: Present: Mayor Garnes, Mayor Pro Tem Carter, Councilmembers Orr, Wilson and Woodall

Others Present: City Manager Knopp, Finance Director Sanborn, Chief of Police Allen, Water/Roadways Superintendent Jensen, Wastewater Superintendent Taylor, Senior Fiscal Assistant Maciel, and City Clerk Dunham

Absent: Community Development Director Caldwell

STUDY SESSION – 5:00 P.M.

City Council Priority Setting Session for FY 2023-24

City Manager Knopp provided a staff report and said at the last meeting, the City Council held a priority setting session to evaluate individual and collective priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. The item was continued to this meeting to further define the top five priorities with an exercise where individual councilmembers would write their top five priorities on colored post-it notes for placement on a board under the corresponding categories.

Mayor Garnes questioned whether implementation of SB 1383 should be listed as a priority since it was essentially state mandated and something the City is required to do anyway.

City Manager Knopp explained that one of the things coming up that will be a major transition for the City is consideration of implementing universal collection and going through that process. He noted that staff already has pretty clear direction from the Council with unanimous support to move in that direction. As such, SB 1383 could be left off of the priority list because the Council is basically already moving in that direction. He said that is going to be a major structural community change because only about 50% of households in Rio Dell currently subscribe for waste collection. In looking at some initial cost projections, it appears that there will be a significant uptick in the rates.

He further explained that the Council does have the option of utilizing the 5-year waiver the City qualified for and not participate until that expires (in 2027) however, the City will eventually have to do it anyway.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter asked Chief Allen for his priorities since he was not present at the last priority setting session.

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Chief Allen indicated that his main priority is staffing. Another critical issue is Measure Z funding which has historically funded the half-time records clerk position in the police department. It is unlikely that this position will be funded this year from Measure Z funds. He commented that both the cities of Eureka and Arcata came out with \$50,000 signing bonuses for officers so there is a chance the City will lose two officers this year.

He said the second priority is security fencing where the police vehicles are parked on the south end of City Hall. He noted that they have numerous people coming to the back door of the department and have access to the police vehicles. He said that most police departments have a secure back entrance into their departments.

Councilmember Woodall referred to completion of the initial reports for earthquake damages and said that the City won't know whether the State will be reimbursing 75% or 100% of the project costs until after the projects are complete. She asked Finance Director Sanborn if the reimbursements could go beyond the next fiscal year.

Finance Director Sanborn explained that some of the projects and reimbursements could likely extend past the current and upcoming fiscal year as staff and the engineers continue to explore the best ways to tackle some of the bigger infrastructure projects.

City Manager Knopp said with almost certainty that the projects will extend into the next fiscal year or beyond.

Finance Director Sanborn said that 75% of the earthquake damage repairs will be covered for sure; the remaining 25% will be on a case by case base as projects are completed.

Councilmember Wilson identified his list of priorities for the year and said that his first priority is to survive as a City. Another was the need to recruit new businesses, mentioning the empty store fronts downtown and said that the City needs to find a way to counteract that. He noted that the Humboldt Rio Dell Business Park is defunct; partially due to the collapse of the cannabis industry with little doubt for resurgence. He commented that the indoor cannabis market seems to be doing okay but it still doesn't create enough revenue to the City to subsidize the needed infrastructure projects. He said that the City has accomplished a lot of street paving projects over the past few years but needs to focus now on underground infrastructure projects. He said that getting red and yellow-tagged houses repaired is also a priority as well as moving toward a plan for repairing Second Ave. on a minimal scale.

He asked Chief Allen what it would take to get his department fully staffed.

Chief Allen said that provided that nobody leaves and with the newest officer completing the academy followed by 10-12 weeks of field training, the department will be fully staffed, although it will still not provide for 24-hour coverage.

The priorities for FY 2023-24 were as follows (in no particular order of importance):

Mayor Garnes

- Underground Infrastructure – PG&E
- Long-Term Plan for Avenues
- Wastewater Rehaul
- Economic Development
- Labor Retention

Mayor Pro Tem Carter

- Code Enforcement
- Long-Term Plan for the Avenues
- Underground Infrastructure – Wastewater Collection System
- PG&E Blocks to Economic Development
- Employee Retention

Councilmember Orr

- River Access – Great Redwood Trail
- Public Works Training
- Law Enforcement Staffing
- Recruitment of Family-Style Businesses

Councilmember Wilson

- Survive as a City
- Business Recruitment
- Wastewater Infrastructure
- Repair of Red and Yellow Tagged Homes
- Plan for Second Ave. Repairs

Councilmember Woodall

- Staffing for Police Department – F/T Records Clerk Position
- Extra Position – Management Analyst
- Infrastructure – Earthquake Recovery
- Rental Inspection Program
- Security Fencing for Police Department

The results on the number of items under each category were as follows:

- Personnel 3
- Public Safety 3
- Finance 1
- Economic Development 4
- Transparency 0
- Public Works 7
- Community Development 6
- Organization/Administration 0
- Planning/Building 0

City Manager Knopp said that staff would collate the priorities and bring the list back to Council at the next meeting for final approval.

At the conclusion of the study session, the meeting was recessed for a short break prior to the start of the regular meeting.

The Council reconvened into open session with Mayor Garnes calling the regular meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

CEREMONIAL MATTERS

Proclamation Declaring May as Older Americans Month

Mayor Garnes read the proclamation declaring May as Older Americans Month urging every resident to celebrate our older citizens, to help to create an inclusive society, and accept the challenge of flexible thinking around aging.

Maggie Kraft, Executive Director of Area I on Aging was present to receive the proclamation.

Mayor Garnes expressed special thanks to Maggie for everything she did for the City and residents of Rio Dell during, before and after the earthquake.

Maggie Kraft said that she especially wanted to come tonight at the beginning of Older Americans Month to recognize this community for everything the City is doing for the elderly who live here which is a large part of the population. She indicated that she came down to Rio Dell on December 20th after the first earthquake and went to the Fire Hall to see what she could do to help the elderly and what she witnessed was a community that pulled together to help their neighbors with volunteers delivering meals and other services to those in need. She said that the Area I on Aging wants to continue to provide support to the older adults in the community and encouraged the City to reach out and let them know what they can do to help.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS