



CITY OF SWEET HOME CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

November 13, 2023, 6:30 PM
Sweet Home City Hall, 3225 Main Street
Sweet Home, OR 97386

WIFI Passcode: guestwifi

PLEASE silence all cell phones – Anyone who wishes to speak, please sign in.

Mission Statement

The City of Sweet Home will work to build an economically strong community with an efficient and effective local government that will provide infrastructure and essential services to the citizens we serve. As efficient stewards of the valuable assets available, we will be responsive to the community while planning and preparing for the future.

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM.

Roll Call

PRESENT

Mayor Susan Coleman
President Pro Tem Mahler
Councilor Lisa Gourley
Councilor Dylan Richards
Councilor Angelita Sanchez
Councilor Josh Thorstad
Councilor Dave Trask

STAFF

Kelcey Young, City Manager
Megan Dazey, Library Services Director
Blair Larsen, Community & Economic Development Director
Adam Leisinger, Communications Manager
Jason Ogden, Police Chief
Cecily Hope Pretty, Administrative Services Director
Robert Snyder, City Attorney
Greg Springman, Public Works Director

GUESTS

Bill Gross, 6324 Lakepointe Way, Sweet Home, OR 97386
Madison Yock, Alyrica, 526 N 19th Street, Philomath, OR 97370

Consent Agenda:

A motion to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Councilor Richards. Councilor Trask seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

- a) Request for Council Action – Hiring for Janitorial Position

Approval of Minutes:

- a) 2023-10-24 City Council Meeting Minutes

The location of the meeting is accessible to the disabled. If you have a disability that requires accommodation, advanced notice is requested by notifying the City Manager's Office at 541-367-8969.

Recognition of Visitors and Hearing of Petitions:

City Manager Young asked the City's new Administrative Services Director, Cecily Hope Pretty, to introduce herself.

Old Business:

- a) Conversion of 10th and 13th Avenues between Main Street and Long Street to One-Way Traffic Only

Director Larsen stated that the sole change from the initial presentation of Resolution 30 during the City Council meeting on October 17, 2023, was to modify both 10th Avenue and 13th Avenue to be southbound rather than 13th Avenue to be northbound. He noted that staff were still working with property owners on a parking plan, but the parking plan did not require City Council approval as part of the resolution.

Councilor Gourley asked that the parking plan be shared with City Council when available. Director Larsen replied that the parking plans would be shared when available and approval authority rested with the City Manager.

Councilor Trask asked of the timeline for implementation of the conversion. Director Larsen replied that construction of an electric vehicle charging station on 10th Avenue was anticipated to begin soon, followed by striping of the streets.

Councilor Sanchez made a motion to approve Resolution 30. The motion was seconded by Councilor Richards. The motion carried by the following vote:

AYES: Coleman, Mahler, Gourley, Sanchez, Thorstad, Trask

NAYS: Richards

New Business:

The action item for Resolution 33 was heard at this time.

- b) Request for Council Action – Approving Resolution 33 to Declare a Continuous Commitment to Water Quality

Bill Gross of 6324 Lakepointe Way, Sweet Home, Oregon, noted his support for Resolution 33 and discussed potential future actions regarding water quality.

City Manager Young provided an overview of current water quality conditions at the City's water treatment plant following the drawdown of Green Peter Reservoir by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. She noted that Public Works staff adjusted their schedules to provide 24-hour coverage at the plant when needed and Sweet Home had been producing safe drinking water throughout the drawdown. She presented Resolution 33 and noted collaboration with community partners to explore solutions for the impacts to the environment and to water quality following the drawdown.

City Manager Young provided an overview of the legal history leading to the drawdown of Green Peter Reservoir and reviewed the timeline of the current drawdown. She announced a public information session with the City and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to discuss water quality and the drawdown on November 20, 2023

Councilor Sanchez asked when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers anticipated that the surface water levels of the Green Peter Reservoir would rise. City Manager Young replied that the Corps anticipated that precipitation and snow melt would begin to refill the reservoir after December 15, 2023 following a legally required maintenance period.

Mayor Coleman asked if turbidity would decrease when the reservoir was allowed to refill. City Manager Young replied that turbidity was anticipated to decrease in the short-term but higher levels of turbidity may be possible long-term. Director Springman added that turbidity typically increases with increased rainfall but the levels were unusually high this year and increased turbidity overall may be expected until the spring.

President Pro Tem Mahler made a motion to approve Resolution 33. Councilor Richards seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The action item regarding Building Board of Adjustment appointments was heard at this time.

a) Appointment of Individuals to the Building Code Board of Appeals

Director Larsen stated that due to an increase in Sweet Home's population to over 10,000 and the City's use of a contracted Building Official, State law required a mechanism allowing for appeals to the Building Official's decisions. He noted that a Building Code Board of Appeals (BOA) was already codified but had not been filled or utilized due to a lack of historical appeals. He stated that the Community and Economic Development Department recently received an appeal which necessitated the revival of the BOA. He reviewed requirements for appointment to the BOA and noted that staff had already identified three individuals willing to serve so that the BOA could begin meeting. He stated that staff would continue to seek qualified applicants and that the Code allowed for flexibility in structure and size of the board.

City Attorney Snyder added that it had been many years since a BOA had convened and previously, it also was comprised of three members.

Councilor Sanchez made a motion to approve the appointments as presented. Councilor Richards seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

c) Request for Council Action – Approving Resolution 32 for Multi-Family Recycling by Sweet Home Sanitation Service

City Manager Young stated that cities with a population over 10,000 were required by the State to offer recycling services for multi-family residences and provide education on the availability of such services. She noted that services were already offered by the City's provider, Sweet Home Sanitation, and that a resolution was required to commemorate said services in accordance with the law.

Councilor Richards made a motion to approve Resolution 32. President Pro Tem Mahler seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

d) Request for Council Action – Utility Assistance Program

City Manager Young stated that the community had requested staff to investigate options for utility assistance for low income families following approved rate increases in 2023. She noted that the City had recently received approximately \$525,000 in refunds through the Emergency Solutions Grant COVID-19 (ESG-CV2) that could be used in part to fund a new utility assistance program. She proposed two options for an initial annual program amount of \$15,000: (1) a maximum of \$10 in bill credits per month, or (2) a maximum of \$5 in bill credits per month. She noted that the formal process had not yet been established but staff would work with City Council to establish the final application and award mechanism.

Councilor Trask asked how many households could potentially take advantage of the program. City Manager Young stated that a program at \$5 per month would likely assist approximately 200 households; a program at \$10 per month would assist approximately 100 households. She noted that a similar grant-based program through the Community Services Consortium typically had 100-200 applicants.

Councilor Sanchez asked if the City's proposed program could be stacked with other assistance programs and if the proposed amounts would cover the average rate increases that were previously approved. City Manager Young replied that residents could utilize multiple relief programs and that the proposed amounts would cover the rate increases, which averaged \$3-5 dollars per month.

Councilor Gourley asked if the program and its funding levels would be reviewed in a future budget or rate change discussion. City Manager Young recommended that it be reviewed sooner, such as during a supplemental budget.

Councilor Trask expressed his preference to assist a greater number of households.

Mayor Coleman asked of the number of active utility accounts in Sweet Home. City Manager Young replied that there were over 3,000 active accounts.

Councilor Sanchez asked of opportunities for those in RV parks to apply if water charges were already included in their space rent. City Manager Young replied that RV parks typically only use one meter so additional investigation would be required.

Councilor Gourley expressed her support for the \$5 amount due its similarity to the average household rate increase.

Councilor Sanchez made a motion to approve the program at \$10 monthly. The motion died on the table due to lack of second.

Councilor Trask made a motion to approve the program at \$5 monthly. President Pro Tem Mahler seconded the motion. The motion passed as follows:

AYES: Coleman, Mahler, Gourley, Sanchez, Thorstad, Trask

NAYS: Richards

Ordinance Bills

Request for Council Action and First Reading of Ordinance Bills

Second Reading of Ordinance Bills

Third Reading of Ordinance Bills (Roll Call Vote Required)

a) Alyrica Franchise Agreement

Director Larsen stated that the proposed Ordinance contained minor edits since the prior reading based on City Attorney recommendation. He noted that Alyrica agreed to the changes and signed the agreement.

Councilor Trask asked how Alyrica's fiber network would tie into other networks. Director Larsen stated that there were fiber networks already established that could be utilized as connections.

Ordinance 16 was read by title only.

Councilor Richards made a motion to approve Ordinance 16. The motion was seconded by President Pro Tem Mahler. The motion carried unanimously.

Reports of Committees:

Youth Advisory Council

Councilor Sanchez stated that she had met with the Youth Advisory Council (YAC) the previous week and that the members were working on informational pamphlet designs for distribution in local schools.

Reports of City Officials:

City Manager's Report

City Manager Young thanked all who attended the Veterans Day celebration at City Hall and the Veterans Day Parade in Albany. She extended gratitude to the veterans of Sweet Home for their service.

City Manager Young reminded the City Council of the water quality information session on November 20th and stated that questions could be submitted by the public in advance of the meeting.

City Manager Young reported that the City would receive approximately \$500,000 to provide emergency family housing for houseless families and children, with a presentation at a future City Council meeting.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Coleman thanked City Manager Young and Director Springman for coordinating the City's participation in the Veterans Day parade and noted positive feedback in Albany for recent activities in Sweet Home.

Department Director's Reports

Library Services Director

- a) Sweet Home Library Monthly Report October 2023
Director Dazey did not give a verbal report.

Police Chief

- a) PD Monthly Report
President Pro Tem Mahler noted issues with the functionality of speed signs. Chief Ogden replied that staff were aware of the issues and was investigating more sustainable replacements. President Pro Tem Mahler asked of the status of creating a dedicated traffic enforcement position. Chief Ogden replied that the department was close to being fully staffed, at which point an officer could be dedicated to traffic enforcement. He added that the School Resource Officer position would be utilized to enhance traffic enforcement around school zones. City Manager Young added that tickets, citations, and warnings had increased as staffing improved.

President Pro Tem Mahler expressed concern with speeding downtown.

Council Business for Good of the Order

Councilor Sanchez asked of the source of \$500,000 for emergency family housing. City Manager Young replied that it was an award from the Governor.

Councilor Sanchez noted her concern with local water conditions following the drawdown of Green Peter Reservoir. She stated that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers would host a meeting in Salem on November 14, 2023 to discuss hydroelectric power at various Willamette Valley dams.

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 7:22 PM.

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Manager – Ex Officio City Recorder