



CITY OF SWEET HOME CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

August 27, 2024, 6:30 PM
Sweet Home City Hall, 3225 Main Street
Sweet Home, OR 97386

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 & Pledge of Allegiance

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

Roll Call

PRESENT

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

STAFF

Jason Ogden, City Manager Pro Tem
Cecily Hope Pretty, Assistant City Manager
Megan Dazey, Library Services Director
Ray Grundy, Building Permit Technician
Blair Larsen, Community & Economic Services Director
Adam Leisinger, Special Projects Manager
Robert Snyder, City Attorney
Greg Springman, Interim Assistant Public Works Director

MEDIA

Sarah Brown, The New Era

VISITORS

Chelsea Augsburger, 1051 1st Avenue, Sweet Home, OR 97386
Gavin Doner, Citizen Honoree
Frank Gallagher, 1420 First Avenue,
Dave Holley, 607 7th Avenue, Sweet Home, OR 97386
John Jackson, 1335 1st Avenue, Sweet Home, OR 97386
Rob Lambert, 4615 Long Street, Sweet Home, OR 97386
Dawn Miller, 331 8th Avenue, Sweet Home, OR 97386
Jeff Parker, 1300 1st Avenue, Sweet Home, OR 97386
Brandy Wysong-Frick, 4680 Long Street, Sweet Home, OR 97386

Mayor Coleman thanked those in attendance for their commitment to the community and called for a moment of silence.

Recognition of Visitors & Hearing of Petitions

a) Citizen Recognition

City Manager Pro Tem Ogden recognized Gavin Doner for his service picking up trash voluntarily in Sankey Park. He read a letter of recognition and gratitude and presented Gavin with gifts from the City.

Mayor Coleman invited those registered for Public Comment.

Brandy Wysong-Frick expressed concern with traffic safety due to the placement of a new stop sign at 47th Avenue and Long Street.

Chelsea Augsburger requested removal of the stop sign at 47th Avenue and Long Street due to traffic safety concerns.

Dawn Miller expressed concern with the future appointment of the City Attorney.

Jeff Parker expressed support for the temporary closure of First Avenue based on public safety concerns.

John Jackson expressed support for the temporary closure of First Avenue based on public safety concerns.

Rob Lambert requested removal of the stop sign at 47th Avenue and Long Street due to traffic safety concerns.

Dave Holley discussed transitional housing and the importance of setting clear time limits for residents.

Old Business

a) Request for Council Action – Resolution No. 21 for 2024 – First Avenue Traffic Modifications

City Manager Pro Tem Ogden stated that First Avenue had a long history of traffic safety complaints. He noted that the issue had been raised by the Public & Traffic Safety Committee which requested a temporary closure of one side of the street. He reviewed traffic data for the area and noted concerns with the width of the street for passing traffic through the neighborhood safely. He reviewed four options for Council consideration:

- Installation of speed tables
- Partial restriction of southbound access at Highway 20
- Temporary, six-month full closure of First Avenue at Highway 20 (staff recommendation)
- No changes

Assistant City Manager Pretty stated that the City Council was provided with copies of a petition submitted by the Chair of the Public & Traffic Safety Committee with signatures from area residents.

Mayor Coleman asked the Council Liaisons to the Public & Traffic Committee, Councilors Richards and Thorstad, to provide additional comments. Councilor Thorstad stated that the majority of the committee was in favor of the temporary closure.

Councilor Gourley asked what would be used to ensure a temporary closure was not disregarded by vehicular traffic. City Manager Pro Tem Ogden stated that staff would research the best option to prevent access.

Councilor Trask stated that he did not take issue with a detour to allow a trial period at the request of the neighborhood.

Mayor Coleman stated she frequently encountered commercial vehicles on the road.

President Pro Tem Mahler expressed support for installation of speed tables and noted concerns with a temporary closure.

Mayor Coleman stated that ODOT indicated to her that they would be in favor of the closure.

Councilor Richards stated he was not in favor of any type of closure.

Councilor Sanchez requested a traffic impact analysis be performed prior to any closure and expressed concerns with the potential diversion of traffic to other areas.

Councilor Gourley expressed support for a temporary closure if a review could be brought back to the City Council after four months.

Councilor Gourley moved to approve a six-month trial period for a complete closure of First Avenue at Highway 20. Mayor Coleman seconded the motion. The motion failed by the following vote:

AYE: Coleman, Gourley

NAY: Mahler, Richards, Sanchez, Thorstad, Trask

Councilor Sanchez moved to approve the purchase of temporary speed tables. Councilor Richards seconded the motion.

Mayor Coleman expressed concern with prioritizing convenience over safety.

The question was called. The motion carried by the following vote:

AYE: Mahler, Richards, Sanchez, Thorstad, Trask

NAY: Coleman, Gourley

Discussion ensued regarding improved signage or other means to restrict commercial vehicle usage on First Avenue.

Mayor Coleman invited Frank Gallagher, Chair of the Public & Traffic Safety Committee to speak.

Mr. Gallagher stated that the committee voted to bring the proposed temporary closure to the full City Council. He expressed concern that convenience was being prioritized over safety.

New Business

- a) Request for Council Action – Resolution No. 20 for 2024 – Appointing a City Attorney

City Manager Pro Tem Ogden stated that the current City Attorney, Robert Snyder, had indicated his intent to retire and had been operating under a contract extension while a new City Attorney was selected. He reviewed the recruitment process to date. He noted that there was consensus following an Executive Session to bring the selection of Blair Larsen forward.

Councilor Gourley moved to table the discussion until an Executive Session could be held to discuss the details of the employment contract. Councilor Trask seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

NAY: Richards

Mayor Coleman requested that the Executive Session be scheduled prior to the next City Council meeting.

Reports of Committees

Mayor Coleman requested that Committee Liaisons provide available reports. There were none to be heard.

Reports of City Officials

City Manager's Report

City Manager Pro Tem Ogden stated that staff had performed a significant cleanout of the space next to Council Chambers in preparation for a future tenant. He highlighted the heavy effort of Public Works in assisting with the removal of materials. He stated that staff would prepare an update on requested food truck information at the next City Council meeting. He noted that the Santiam Feed store was now in the position of the City and staff was assessing quotes for needed repairs. He stated that Ridgeway Health had moved into the previous City Hall and that mold remediation had been performed. He reminded the community of the upcoming Harvest Festival.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Coleman stated that the Siletz Tribe provided a grant to the City in the amount of \$6,000 to support the installation of murals. She highlighted the Community Health Committee's successful support of the annual Sweet Home Health Fair.

Department Director Reports

Community & Economic Development Director

- a) Community & Economic Development Director Report - July 2024

Public Works Director

Police Chief

- a) Police Chief Report - July 2024

City Manager Pro Tem Ogden stated that traffic citations increased 42.9% from June to July in support of the recent focus on traffic violations. He highlighted a significant decrease in property crimes.

Council Business for Good of the Order

Councilor Gourley highlighted that the Ad Hoc Committee on Arts and Culture was successful in negotiating with ODOT to do a project with the Sweet Home High School to provide cutouts that could be installed on Highway 20.

Councilor Richards expressed support for removal of the stop sign at 47th Avenue and requested that it be added to the next agenda. There was Council consensus for same.

Councilor Sanchez expressed her gratitude to the City Manager Pro Tem for his work to date, especially for ensuring the remediation at the former City Hall site was performed. She expressed concern that Facebook as the City's primary method of communication was insufficient if comments were not allowed. City Manager Pro Tem Ogden stated that monitoring comments was taking up an undue amount of staff time and it was an industry best practice to turn off comments. He reminded City Council and citizens that they were able to share the information and engage on their own pages and community groups. Councilor Sanchez requested that staff investigate the cost of additional communication options such as mailers.

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 7:48 PM.

ATTEST:

Mayor

City Manager Pro Tem – Ex Officio City Recorder