



CITY OF SWEET HOME CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

February 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 and 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 Angelita Sanchez
Councilor Josh Thorstad
Councilor Dave Trask

ABSENT

Councilor Dylan Richards

PRESS

Shayla Escudero, Albany Democrat-Herald

GUESTS

Calvin Ames, 1188 55th Avenue, Sweet Home, OR 97386
Heather Kelly, 1188 55th Avenue, Sweet Home, OR 97386
John Wilson, 4465 Long Street, Sweet Home, OR 97386

Councilor Sanchez moved to excuse the absence of Councilor Richards. President Pro Tem Mahler seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

AYE: Coleman, Gourley, Mahler, Sanchez, Thorstad

NAY: Trask

ABSENT: Richards

Mayor Coleman recognized those in attendance for public comment at this time.

John Wilson expressed concern with System Development Charges (SDCs) related to Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and requested a fee waiver.

Mayor Coleman stated that the matter would be discussed for the Good of the Order later in the meeting.

Old Business

a) Request for Code Compliance Abatement Liens

Director Larsen reviewed the code enforcement history at 1188 55th Avenue and the associated staff request to place a lien on the property. He noted that he and the City Manager had investigated allegations against the City's Code Compliance Officer and found no evidence to substantiate the claims and no evidence of legal or policy violations. He stated that he attempted to obtain phone recordings of alleged violations mentioned at the previous City Council meeting but did not receive a reply from the complainant.

Councilor Sanchez asked of the determination process for condemnation. Director Larsen replied that it was a collaborative process between himself, the Code Compliance Officer, and the City's contracted Building Official. He added that the contracted Building Official did not have the sole authority to approve condemnations and therefore the Director was responsible for providing the final directive to staff.

President Pro Tem Mahler asked of how the exterior and interior conditions of the building contributed to the condemnation. Director Larsen replied that the Municipal Judge signed off on an administrative search warrant due to the outside condition, which allowed the Code Compliance Officer to search the interior of the property in the company of the Sweet Home Police Department. He added that the search resulted in additional violations and the property was deemed unfit for habitation.

Councilor Trask asked of police response to the property. Chief Ogden replied that police responded to complaints at the property regularly over the course of several years.

Heather Kelly stated that she was unaware of staff's request to view the aforementioned complainant's footage and could provide video from her phone. She noted that she had been staying on the property and intended to perform repairs prior to the condemnation.

Mayor Coleman asked if permits would be required to reverse the condemnation status. Director Larsen replied that the nature of the code violations would require permits to remedy.

Calvin Ames, 1188 55th Avenue, Sweet Home, expressed concern with the investigation process and requested a continuance of the item.

Councilor Sanchez expressed support to give the complainants additional time to provide footage. She moved to continue the item to the next regular City Council meeting. President Pro Tem Mahler seconded the motion.

Mayor Coleman offered a friendly amendment requesting that the City Attorney review any footage provided.

The motion carried unanimously as amended by those present.

Ordinance Bills

Third Reading of Ordinance Bills (Roll Call Vote Required)

a) 3rd Reading for Zone Map Amendment ZMA23-04, Ordinance Bill No. 2 for 2024, Ordinance No. 1325

The third reading of Ordinance Bill No. 2 for 2024 by title only was conducted.

President Pro Mahler motioned to approve Ordinance Bill No. 2 for 2024. Councilor Trask seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously by those present.

Good of the Order

Mayor Coleman highlighted the first committee meeting since the codification of the Community Health Committee on February 28, 2024, and the Sweet Home Chamber Annual Awards Banquet on March 9, 2024.

Councilor Trask requested an Executive Session to discuss City Council conduct. There was consensus to convene said meeting at a future date.

Councilor Gourley stated that she would take a brief leave of absence due to health reasons after March 15, 2024.

Councilor Trask requested the City Council to assist with soliciting donations for improvements at Sankey Park.

Councilor Thorstad requested a staff report regarding SDCs for ADUs.

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 7:27 PM.

ATTEST:

Mayor

City Manager – Ex Officio City Recorder

DRAFT