



CITY OF OREGON CITY

JOINT WORK SESSION WITH THE CITY OF WEST LINN

MINUTES

Commission Chambers, Libke Public Safety Facility, 1234 Linn Ave, Oregon City
Tuesday, November 07, 2023 at 6:00 PM

CONVENE WORK SESSION AND ROLL CALL *Mayor McGriff convened the meeting at 6:08 PM.*

PRESENT: 10 - Commissioner Adam Marl, Commissioner Frank O'Donnell, Commissioner Rocky Smith, Commissioner Mike Mitchell, Mayor Denyse McGriff, West Linn Council President Mary Baumgardner, West Linn Councilor Leo Groner, West Linn Councilor Carol Bryck, Councilor Scott Erwin, West Linn Mayor Rory Bialostosky

STAFFERS: 9 - Library Director Greg Williams, Communications Manager Jarrod Lyman, City Engineer Dayna Webb, Community Development Director Aquilla Hurd-Ravich, Chief of Police Shaun Davis, Finance Director Matt Zook, City Recorder Jakob Wiley, City Manager Tony Konkol, West Linn City Manager John Williams

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. I-205 Tolling

Rory Bialostosky, Mayor of the City of West Linn, reported that the Joint Committee on Transportation's Subcommittee on Transportation Planning's Work Plan had been released, and that the Subcommittee planned to hold community meetings. He reported that Oregon City, West Linn, and Gladstone would be offered a joint community meeting on the first Saturday of December from 10:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. Mayor McGriff added that she had heard that Oregon State Representative Annessa Hartman was making tentative arrangements for the event to be held at Clackamas Community College. Mayor Bialostosky expressed concerns about the Oregon Department of Transportation's (ODOT) lack of transparency regarding the proposed tolling scheme, expressed appreciation for the upcoming opportunity for local communities to voice their concerns, and emphasized the importance of suggesting alternatives to tolling.

Mayor McGriff agreed particularly with Mayor Bialostosky's objection to the fact that all questions about the tolling scheme are currently routed through ODOT. Mayor McGriff also expressed objection to the Subcommittee's plan to split up the cities of Clackamas County into separate meetings. She also expressed skepticism about ODOT's willingness to consider changes, and added that ODOT had not properly considered suggestions of alternatives to tolling in the past.

Commissioner Mitchell reported that he had been present to represent Oregon City at the Metropolitan Policy Advisory Meeting on October 25 when the information from the Subcommittee on Transportation Planning was presented, and suggested that the public meetings proposed by the Subcommittee would be the best opportunities available to express concerns about tolling. He also expressed concern with the Subcommittee's failure to consider tolling alternatives.

West Linn City Council President Mary Baumgardner asked for information about the online accessibility of the planned public meetings and whether public comment would be available at them. Mayor Bialostosky reported that that information had not yet been given but that inquiries would be made. Council President Baumgardner suggested insisting upon these measures. Mayor McGriff added that she had asked about public comments at the meetings and had not received an answer.

Mayor Bialostosky observed that the public meetings would be a valuable opportunity to interact with the legislature rather than with ODOT.

Commissioner Adam Marl expressed concern that the recent tolling pause may have distracted citizens from the urgency of the tolling matter, and suggested education of the public on this topic. He also emphasized the importance of continuing to communicate the City's concerns about tolling to legislators, for example, through communication of the C4 Tolling Values document.

There was consensus that the Mayors write a joint email to the Subcommittee on Transportation Planning expressing concerns about the public meeting process and requesting opportunity for public comment.

Commissioner Mitchell asked whether each Commissioner ought to prepare their own comments for the public meeting, or whether, with Staff's help, joint remarks should be coordinated. Mayor McGriff said that a preamble would express opinions of the Commission as a whole, and that it would be helpful for individual commissioners to comment on how the tolling scheme would affect their own constituents. Both Mayors added that they would research details about the presentation arrangements at the meetings.

Commissioner O'Donnell suggested discovering which legislators supported the tolling pause and addressing those legislators directly. Commissioner Marl responded that the legislators who supported the pause were not necessarily in support of tolling.

Mayor Bialostosky suggested that cities in Clackamas County collaborate to conduct a survey to gauge regional public opinion on tolling. He reported that the polling agency DHM Research had quoted \$33,000.00 for a ten-minute survey.

Commissioners Smith and O'Donnell expressed support for conducting a poll. Commissioner Marl observed that public opinion on tolling was already known, and questioned whether legislators would pay attention to this poll, as they had already received a considerable amount of feedback from Clackamas County. However, he suggested that a poll would be a worthwhile investment if it could be completed soon enough to affect legislative decisions.

Commissioner Mitchell asked whether the proposed poll would do better to concentrate on the south metro area instead of the entire metro area. He also asked how long the survey would take to complete. Mayor Bialostosky said he expected that the survey would be complete in time for next year's legislative session. He said that every participating city would have a chance to weigh in on the survey area.

Commissioner O'Donnell emphasized the importance of expressing Oregon City citizens' points of view. Mayor Bialostosky clarified that the survey proposal was quoted to cover Washington, Clackamas and Multnomah Counties, and that it was more affordable to survey a wider area rather than just one city.

West Linn Councilor Groner suggested that the poll include questions about whether residents were aware that the tolling pause was temporary, about whether they had faith in information provided by ODOT, as well as questions gauging interest in various tolling alternatives.

Mayor McGriff asked which jurisdiction had already offered \$5,000.00 toward the survey, and Mayor Bialostosky said that Tualatin had made this offer.

West Linn Council President Baumgardner suggested that a poll would be particularly useful if it covered alternatives to tolling. Regarding alternatives to tolling, Mayor McGriff observed that another survey she had seen asked whether participants would support an increase in the gas tax or an increase in the cost of auto registration.

Commissioner O'Donnell asked whether it was likely that the cities' opposition to tolling could become a court issue, suggesting that if that were to occur the poll would provide objective evidence. Commissioner Marl suggested that discussion of that possibility would be best left until after the new Environmental Assessment is released in June of 2024.

Mayor McGriff asked for details from a recent news article covering the issue of tolling, and West Linn City Manager John Williams reported that United States Representative Lori Chavez-DeRemer had written a letter on October 16 outlining areas of concern about ODOT's tolling plans. He offered to distribute the letter to those present.

There was consensus in support of conducting a survey according to Mayor Bialostosky's suggestion and Mayor McGriff said that details for pursuing this course of action could be decided at a future regular meeting.

2. Statewide Housing Production

There was discussion about how West Linn and Oregon City would both be addressing State mandates regarding housing production. Mayor Bialostosky observed that more information relevant to this issue may come out of the next legislative session, including items like proposed House Bill 3414. Mayor McGriff observed that she had been communicating with legislators to ask why the cities are being held responsible for housing production when they control neither the land nor the cost of production. Mayor McGriff observed that many developers were producing high end housing rather than affordable housing.

Commissioner Marl asked if there was an update on the lawsuit against the Climate Friendly and Equitable Communities (CFEC) Policy. City Manager Konkol said that the most recent update he had heard involved a request to reconcile the requirement of CFEC with those coming from the State Legislature.

3. Regional Homelessness

There was discussion about addressing regional homelessness. Mayor McGriff said that she had been working with lobbyists to suggest direct funding to cities for this issue, as each city has individual needs. She also stated that she had spoken with Chair Peterson about concerns regarding the use of housing bond money, and she shared Oregon City's Housing Strategy.

West Linn Council President Baumgardner observed that as Oregon City is the County seat, a disproportionate burden of providing homelessness services falls on Oregon City, and it would be beneficial if West Linn could assist more with this issue.

Mayor McGriff discussed various issues with communication with the County that had led to a lack of resource assistance for regional homelessness in Oregon City, including issues in which persons in need of assistance had been dropped off and left in Oregon City when service facilities were not open.

Illustrating the communications problems, Commissioner Marl recounted that he had recently heard second hand, through Metro Councilor Christine Lewis, about a Metro plan to fund a resource center in Oregon City via the Supportive Housing Services Bond, and that County staff had had the incorrect impression that Oregon City had been involved in this plan. Commissioner Marl observed that Oregon City does want to assist those needing homelessness services but that other cities should provide services as well.

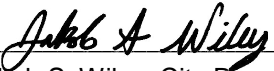
Mayor McGriff observed that the city of Hillsboro, another County seat, was also burdened with a disproportionate amount of responsibility in homelessness services. She praised the navigation center in the city of Salem, adding that its success is partly due to cooperation from, and satellite facilities in, neighboring cities.

West Linn Councilor Scott Erwin observed that West Linn lacks its own affordable housing programs due to budgetary restrictions, and that more could be done to help direct that federal, state, or nonprofit funds to existing organizations addressing such issues.

ADJOURNMENT

West Linn Mayor Bialostosky adjourned the meeting at 7:06 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Jakob S. Wiley, City Recorder