



# CITY OF OREGON CITY

## CITY COMMISSION WORK SESSION

### MINUTES

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Commission Chambers, Libke Public Safety Facility, 1234 Linn Ave, Oregon City  
Tuesday, February 13, 2024 at 6:00 PM

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#### CONVENE WORK SESSION AND ROLL CALL

*Mayor McGriff convened the meeting at 6:04 PM.*

**PRESENT: 5 -** Commissioner Mike Mitchell, Commissioner Adam Marl, Commissioner Rocky Smith, Commissioner Frank O'Donnell, Mayor Denyse McGriff

**STAFFERS: 11 -** City Manager Tony Konkol, Assistant City Manager Alex Rains, City Recorder Jakob Wiley, Assistant City Recorder Evan Lee, Economic Development Manager James Graham, Parks and Recreation Director Kendell Reid, Public Works Director John Lewis, Finance Director Matt Zook, Police Captain David Edwins, Community Development Director Aquilla Hurd-Ravich, Library Director Greg Williams

#### FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

##### 1. List of Future Work Session Agenda Items

*Tony Konkol, City Manager, reported that Work Session agenda items in March would include updates on the McLoughlin Boulevard Enhancement Project and on the Clackamette Park Master Plan RV Park alternative location. Agenda items for April would include the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update.*

*Mayor McGriff observed that the Youth Advisory Committee had requested a briefing on the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and Mr. Konkol responded that this briefing had been scheduled.*

*Commissioner Mitchell requested that a future agenda include discussion of a grant program to offset SDCs (System Development Charges) in targeted situations, particularly in light of the Bridge View building project. He also requested a discussion of inclusionary zoning and other possible measures, such as SDC incentives, to increase affordable housing options. Mayor McGriff replied that this topic was under discussion in the Development Stakeholders' Group and agreed that the City Commission ought to discuss it as well. There was consensus to add both items to future agendas.*

#### DISCUSSION ITEMS

##### 2. Downtown Oregon City Association Update

*James Graham, Economic Development Manager, introduced Julianna Allen, the new director of the Downtown Oregon City Association (DOCA), who provided the biannual update on the mission and activities of that organization. Mr. Graham added that DOCA and the Chamber of Commerce had been meeting to coordinate responses to the major issues facing the City's business community, including how*

*to help businesses navigate the surrounding houselessness situation, the prospect of tolling, downtown building vacancies, and planning ahead for natural disasters.*

*Ms. Allen gave a presentation covering DOCA's activities in Quarters 3 and 4 (July-December 2023), plans for 2024, the issues being expressed by the business community, and successes of the organization in 2023.*

*Commissioner O'Donnell asked for details about DOCA's interactions with the Houseless Resource Center and Ms. Allen explained that the discussion between these groups would be continued at an upcoming business social in March. Commissioner O'Donnell emphasized the need for clear communication between DOCA, the Economic Development Department, and the Chamber of Commerce. He also requested that DOCA do more to discover potential downtown building vacancies before they occur. Mr. Graham replied that Economic Development engages in Business Retention work that consists of visiting and checking in with businesses regarding matters such as this. Mayor McGriff added that lines of communication also exist between these organizations and realtors with downtown listings.*

*Commissioner Smith requested that the City and DOCA work together to revisit the topic of shared downtown parking, adding that maintaining cleanliness of the lots was a major obstacle to such schemes, and suggested that DOCA's Clean Team could be extended to address this. Mayor McGriff added that business owners ought to take responsibility for the cleanliness of the sidewalk in front of their entrances.*

*Commissioner Marl asked whether the Clean Team is mainly focused on the new public restroom and asked for an update on the restroom's success. Ms. Allen replied that the restroom is one of the Clean Team's multiple projects and that the rollout of the restroom has been successful and uneventful. Commissioner Marl also asked Ms. Allen, as she is a former downtown business owner, what the state of DOCA membership is and what challenges face downtown business owners. Ms. Allen replied that downtown retailers are struggling due to lack of foot traffic and rising rent, and that DOCA is working to increase foot traffic and business visibility. She added that DOCA has been fostering downtown business participation with e-newsletters, business socials, and person-to-person outreach.*

*Commissioner Mitchell emphasized the importance of encouraging downtown retail businesses, noting that retail was historically the hardest category to maintain there, but that small businesses looking to move from downtown Portland might be encouraged to consider Oregon City.*

*Mayor McGriff observed that some landlords are charging retail rents in downtown Oregon City which are more appropriate for the retail climate in Portland, and that rent ought to be more affordable in Oregon City. She also observed that some downtown property owners have unsold land because they have an inflated sense of their property's value.*

*Mr. Graham reiterated the importance of avoiding a vacancy of the courthouse and said that the County needs to either address this issue before an emergency arises or turn it over to the City so the City can address it. Mayor McGriff observed that she has been addressing this with the County for some time and that another meeting on the topic is scheduled to take place soon.*

*Commissioner Mitchell observed that judging from the new Courthouse's construction schedule, the old Courthouse would probably experience a period of vacancy before a solution is found and that an interim plan must be made and publicized. Commissioner Marl asked for clarity on whether the City wishes to acquire the building or whether they merely wish to have a say in its future, and the Mayor clarified that the City is seeking permission to solicit occupants for the building. She explained that the City would like to find an experienced developer who can take advantage of the tax credits available thanks to the building's historic status.*

*Commissioner Mitchell asked a question about a recent State grant that DOCA had wanted to apply for, but which the County had not approved. Mayor McGriff said that it would be possible to reapply for this grant.*

### 3. Oregon City 20-year Facility Master Plan

*Mr. Konkol introduced Margaret Wilson and Brandon Dole of Scott Edwards Architecture to present updates on the Facility Master Plan, building off the recent presentation at the December 12, 2024 Work Session, incorporating decision points from that occasion, as well as addressing additional items.*

*Mayor McGriff asked whether the End of the Oregon Trail building and the Pool building were in compliance with the Fire and Safety code, and Ms. Wilson replied that they are currently not up to code. She added that the pool's electrical mechanics are at the end of their usable life. Mr. Dole added that though a full code assessment on the buildings had not been done, if the City were to perform improvements on the buildings they would need to be brought up to code and that other changes like ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) upgrades would likely be triggered.*

*Commissioner O'Donnell suggested determining what the cost would be to refurbish the buildings versus the cost to replace them, in order to present a cost-benefit analysis. Mr. Dole agreed that this ought to be part of the City's next step in the project. Mayor McGriff observed that the buildings, for example the pool facility, should be optimized to serve Oregon City residents, not expanded to draw in users from other communities.*

*Commissioner Mitchell asked whether the forthcoming Parks and Recreation Master Plan would contain information that would help the Commission navigate decisions about these buildings. Kendall Reid, Parks and Recreation Director, and Mr. Konkol, explained that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan would touch on these topics but that actual cost estimates were not yet prepared, and that a cost-benefit analysis of the pool topic would grow out of two master plans as a next step.*

*Commissioner O'Donnell suggested analyzing the users and usages of the pool and the End of the Oregon Trail building to collect data toward plans for their futures.*

*There was consensus to move forward on studying refurbishment versus replacement for the pool facility and the End of the Oregon Trail Center building.*

*Regarding the Cemetery, there was discussion about the benefits of building one new building to be shared by the Cemetery and Parks and Recreation staff or building separate facilities for each department.*

*Commissioner Mitchell asked whether a two-building solution would be practical for the cemetery staff and the Parks and Recreation staff, and Mr. Reid said it could be if the staff of each department have their own spaces in the first building, and the second building is dedicated to heavy equipment. Commissioner O'Donnell asked how much square footage is needed for cemetery equipment and it was determined that this question would be researched.*

*There was consensus to plan for two separate buildings, whether as completely separate facilities for Parks and Recreation and Cemetery staff, or as a combined Staff building with space for both departments plus a separate building for heavy equipment.*

*There was discussion about the long-term location of the Community Development Department in light of ideas to eventually move City Hall. There was discussion about the community benefits of consolidating the locations of City services. Commissioner Mitchell observed that the current Community Development building had been invested in recently and that replacing it ought to be a longer-term priority, not an immediate one. Mr. Konkol explained that this discussion was indeed for the purpose of long-term planning, not immediate changes.*

*There was consensus to work toward consolidating services available on Fir Street but to delay considering building a new City Hall.*

*There was discussion about the possibility of vacating the Center Street site, which would require building*

*a new dewater decant facility. It was established that this facility would not be feasible as an addition to the Fir Street campus but could be built at Mountain View Reservoir.*

*Mayor McGriff suggested that the Center Street site and the Lower Yard area could be repurposed into sites for affordable housing.*

*Commissioner Smith expressed approval of the idea of adding affordable housing, but suggested waiting until a decision is made about the future of Waterboard Park, adding that the Upper and Lower Yards could potentially be connected with the Promenade.*

*There was discussion that both affordable housing and connecting the Upper and Lower Yards would be beneficial. Mr. Dole suggested incorporating a repurposing of the Cameron building into such a project as a community space. Alternatives to building an elevator were discussed.*

*Commissioner Marl mentioned the benefits of placing this property back on the tax rolls and suggested that workforce housing could be more useful than deed restricted affordable housing, adding that a current Metro project was already providing more affordable housing. Mayor McGriff clarified that workforce housing is what she had in mind for the Center Street site and that the City could place requirements on the site to help families enter the housing.*

*There was discussion about the plans for both the Mountain View Reservoir and the recently acquired Henrici site. It was established that the Henrici site still needed zoning and other work done before it is ready for final decisions, but that the Reservoir site would be sufficient for the proposed decant facility.*

*There was consensus to request a cost estimate for building the decant facility.*

*The Commission took a break from 7:52 P.M. – 8:06 P.M.*

*Commissioner Mitchell suggested treating the building side and parking lots side as two separate projects, citing the need for additional housing and the comparative ease with which the parking lots could be turned into housing. Mayor McGriff said that the west side lot presented fewer development difficulties than the east side so it could be beneficial to separate the sites as two projects. There was discussion about rezoning the two Center Street lots.*

*There was discussion about what to do with the 7<sup>th</sup> Street Fire Station after the Fire Department vacates it. Mr. Konkol suggested saving this topic to be a future discussion with Clackamas County Fire District so they can express their needs and their reasons for wanting to vacate the station.*

*There was discussion about the long-term future of the City Hall building if a new City Hall is built. Suggestions for its future use included a medical office or a library annex.*

*Commissioner Mitchell suggested changing the language about the future vacating of City Hall and the 7<sup>th</sup> Street Fire Station to refer to “if” the properties are vacated, rather than “when” they are vacated, to communicate the fact that a final decision to vacate them has not been made.*

*There was consensus to save long term decisions about City Hall and the 7<sup>th</sup> Street Fire Station for a later date.*

*There was discussion about the future of the Buena Vista Park, and there was discussion about the pros and cons of retaining and renovating the Buena Vista Clubhouse. Mayor McGriff suggested having a feasibility study done on the building. Commissioner Smith supported returning the building to its former use as a center for meetings and events, saying that the building had fallen out of use due to a lack of maintenance by the City. Commissioner O'Donnell and Commissioner Mitchell expressed skepticism about the cost and value of a renovation. Commissioner Marl expressed support for a feasibility study observing it would not incur immediate costs to the City, as it would be funded by privately organized match funds already raised for this purpose.*

*There was consensus to undertake a feasibility study on the Buena Vista Clubhouse, with the understanding that the study would not be funded by the City and that it would not obligate the City to respond with a specific course of action.*

## **CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

### **4. Update on City Projects**

*Mr. Konkol reported that the City is working with ODOT (the Oregon Department of Transportation) to create a Scope of Work and procurement process for the Quiet Zone project. He reported Staff are working with Bill Kabeiseman, City Attorney, to draft easement language for the Charter Parks.*

*Regarding the Cayuse Five Memorial, Mr. Konkol reported that a bid package had been sent out but had received no responses. Staff were seeking feedback from contractors to identify issues in the bid package and seeking to encourage more knowledge of and interest in the project. Commissioner O'Donnell suggested turning to the Tribes for insight on contractor candidates.*

*Mr. Konkol reported that he and Mayor McGriff would meet with the County Administrator the following week to discuss the relocation of the Courthouse and the effect of this relocation on downtown buildings.*

*Mr. Konkol reported that he would be arranging a work session with the tumwata Village staff to discuss their ideas for the property with the City Commission.*

*Mayor McGriff asked whether any other Commissioners were planning to attend the League of Oregon Cities meeting in April, and Commissioner O'Donnell said he would determine whether he could attend.*

## **COMMISSION COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **5. Commissioner O'Donnell**

#### **- South Fork Water Board**

*Commissioner O'Donnell reported that he would soon be undertaking a walkthrough of the South Fork Water Board's facility with West Linn City Mayor Rory Bialostosky and South Fork Water Board CEO Wyatt Parno to study maintenance issues. Mayor McGriff suggested that research should be done concerning the building's ability to withstand a major weather event, and whether there were backup arrangements in place. She expressed interest in attending the walkthrough.*

*Commissioner O'Donnell reported that he had recently attended a meeting on the water quality in the Cove, and a meeting with Metro Commissioner Christine Lewis, members of the commercial river cruise lines, and Willamette Falls Locks leadership, regarding an integrated approach to dock service.*

*Commissioner O'Donnell asked for, and obtained, support from the Commissioners to ask Staff to research whether Jon Storm Dock is structurally capable of handling commercial shipping vessels, and whether a waiver could be obtained for the 60-foot dock size requirement.*



**6. Commissioner Smith**

- Clackamas Heritage Partners
- Oregon City Tourism Stakeholder's Group
- South Fork Water Board

*Commissioner Smith reported that Clackamas Heritage Partners were to meet on the following Thursday, and would discuss facilities plans, including the future of the Clackamas Heritage Partners' own location.*

**7. Commissioner Marl**

- Citizen Involvement Committee Liaison
- Clackamas County Coordinating Committee (C4)
- Clackamas County I-205 Tolling Strategies Committee
- Youth Advisory Committee Liaison

*Commissioner Marl reported on CIC Board elections. He also reported that C4 had received updates on the implementation of the Forward Together transit plan and information regarding the legislative session. He reported that the I-205 Tolling Strategies Committee had had a meeting with stakeholders involved in a statistically valid poll on regional attitudes toward tolling that would hopefully be presented to legislators before the end of the legislative session. Commissioner Marl also reported that the Youth Advisory Committee had recently attended the Oregon Youth Advisory Summit at Willamette University.*

**8. Commissioner Mitchell**

- Clackamas County Coordinating Committee (C4) – Metro Subcommittee
- Clackamas County I-205 Tolling Diversion Committee (alternate)
- Metro Policy Advisory Committee (MPAC) (alternate)

*Commissioner Mitchell reported that the January 17<sup>th</sup> C4 Metro Subcommittee meeting had considered the balance between improving Transit service in areas that have it already, and expanding service to new areas, and had included discussion of priorities to the legislative session, including finalizing funding for the new courthouse.*

**9. Mayor McGriff**

- Clackamas Water Environment Services Policy Committee
- Clackamas Heritage Partners (alternate)
- Downtown Oregon City Association Board
- Metro Policy Advisory Committee (MPAC)
- Oregon City Tourism Stakeholder's Group
- South Fork Water Board
- Willamette Falls and Landings Heritage Area
- Willamette Falls Legacy Project Liaisons
- Willamette Falls Locks Authority
- Youth Advisory Committee Liaison

*Mayor McGriff offered further observations on the Oregon Youth Advisory Summit and added that there were plans for giving the Youth Advisory Committee tours of more City facilities. She said that the Youth Advisory Committee had considered a variety of potential projects, that they had settled on a clothing drive for their next project and were currently administering a poster contest.*

*Mayor McGriff reported that she would be speaking at an upcoming Clackamas Water Environmental Services meeting on outfall. The Mayor reported that the Downtown Association is working on recruiting, and also reported some MPAC board membership changes. She reported that MPAC are discussing the Urban Regional Plan and the possible expansion of urban growth boundaries, an idea that met with some resistance. The Mayor reported that MPAC also discussed the Expo Center and the possibility of bonds for it.*

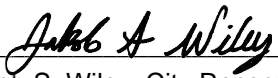
*Regarding the Willamette Falls Landings Heritage Area, Mayor McGriff reported that outreach to the Tribes was ongoing. She also reported that the Willamette Falls Locks Authority was working on perfecting the legal language for the upcoming transfer, and that they are working to reengage upriver users of the locks.*

*Mayor McGriff reported on a recent City meeting with Christine Lewis and that Ms. Lewis was in support of workforce housing initiatives but that she had not provided information about the use of hotels for transitional housing. The Mayor also reported that she had recently represented Oregon City at a reception with the Governor of Oregon in celebration of the birthday of the Emperor of Japan.*

## **ADJOURNMENT**

*Mayor McGriff adjourned the meeting at 9:36 P.M.*

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Jakob S. Wiley, City Recorder