

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Paul Helenberg called the May 13, 2013 regular meeting of the Castle Rock City Council to order at 7:30 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. The following councilmembers were present: Ray Teter, Glenn Pingree, Earl Queen, Mike Davis and Ellen Rose.

BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Jack Davis, requests city council consider installing a four-way stop sign at the intersection of C Street SW and Roake Avenue. He feels this would be a good safety improvement for people taking their children to school. Councilmembers Pingree and Davis stated they have discussed this concern with the city engineer. Dave Vorse, Public Works Director explained that additional signage will be placed at that intersection, including a radar readout sign. The city will be trying this first to inform motorists of safety issues and if this is not effective, the city engineer will be re-evaluating other options. Mr. Davis thanked the contractor and everyone involved in the Safe Routes To School sidewalk construction project. Davis stated he would have liked to see the blacktop extended curb to curb, instead of the gravel. City Engineer Mike Johnson advised that no drainage is located in that area and the city did not have adequate funding for installation of drainage catch basins. The Safe Routes To School grant funding only included construction for sidewalks. Mayor Helenberg requested Chief Heuer schedule more patrols until the electric speed signage is installed.

In answer to Councilmember Pingree's question, Vorse stated that installing stop signs at that intersection would create traffic congestion by requiring all motorists to stop at the intersection. Vorse noted that a portion of the Safe Routes To School grant also includes enforcement and education components.

Nancy Chennault – distributed a map and provided a Power Point presentation of the draft landscaping redesign plan for Lions Club Memorial Park, located at the Front Avenue/Huntington Avenue intersection. She has also presented this plan to the Castle Rock Park Board for their input. Currently contractors are working on the Front Avenue reconstruction project, which provides the city with a good opportunity to evaluate the use of this park facility and to redefine the park boundaries. Chennault also noted new bulbout areas created by the street construction also provide an opportunity for additional landscaping. Chennault showed pictures of current plantings and trees in the park that have either outgrown their aesthetic value, or are diseased and need to be removed. Locally, people use the park for family picnics. However other uses could include a dog park, visitor kiosk, opening the existing gazebo for music groups or creating recreation areas. She noted that any landscape upgrades should serve as a continuation of the Cowlitz Street business district landscaping theme that was completed last year.

The existing Noble fir tree will remain. Electrical outlets could be installed to allow for

lighting of this tree during the Christmas season. As discussed at a previous council meeting, the diseased cherry trees have been cut at the graft and potted planters placed on the trees. These tree trunks could be used for chain saw artwork; which is estimated to last 20 – 30 years, if treated with preservative. Future needs for this park also include a restroom facility and water access. This park will always have restrictive parking opportunities, however additional parking options are available adjacent to this park. Dave Vorse stated the Park Board felt that adding recreation activities would not be appropriate due to the close proximity of two main arterial streets. The Park Board felt that uses such as public gatherings, the use of the gazebo or a place for reading would be a welcome addition. Chennault stated that landscaping could be used to create spaces for specific uses.

Mr. Vorse advised that the Castle Rock Park Board had expressed interest in relocating the Harry Truman Memorial, currently located near the park gazebo. Cowlitz County has expressed interest in relocating the Harry Truman Memorial closer to the Mt. St. Helens area. If the memorial is relocated, this would open up the park gazebo for other uses. In response to Councilmember Queen's comment, Vorse stated when the city obtained this park from the Castle Rock Lion's Club; they did not have any issues with the city relocating the Harry Truman Memorial. By consensus, councilmembers supported the draft design as presented.

Councilmember Teter asked Ms. Chennault the status of the proposed landscape design for the Interstate 5, Exit 48 intersection. Vorse stated the city is working with Washington State Department of Transportation for approval of the design. If approval is obtained, this project would not happen until the late fall.

PROCLAMATION – NATIONAL POLICE WEEK; May 12th through 18th.

Mayor Helenberg presented the proclamation to Police Chief Bob Heuer. A moment of silence was held in honor of police officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Mike Johnson, City Engineer

Provided an update of current projects as follows:

- Safe Routes To School sidewalk project; almost completed, the contractor is currently working to complete the final punch list items.
- Front Avenue Reconstruction; sewer lines are in north of Cherry Street. Contractor is working on the storm drain system. Next contractors will begin working on the water lines.

Clerk-Treasurer Ryana Covington

Provided councilmembers with the first quarter utility report showing profit/loss for the water and sewer utilities. There is currently a combined net loss of \$47,228; which means that fund balances for the Water/Sewer Fund are required to meet operating expenses.

She noted this is not unusual for the first quarter when usage is lower.

COUNCIL AND AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mayor Paul Helenberg

- Reported on the success of the city-wide clean-up day, held on May 4th. Over one hundred volunteers participated in the event and many projects were completed. He is very proud of the community's accomplishments.
- Announced that preliminary budgets must be turned into the mayor by July 1st. He asked department supervisors to submit three versions of their budgets; one with a 3% increase, one with no increase and one with a 7.5% decrease. It is his intent to have the budget process completed earlier than last year.

Councilmember Ray Teter

Reported that 1500 people have signed up to compete in the Ash Kicker Benefit Obstacle Run scheduled for May 18th at Toutle River RV Park, near Exit 52. Another event will be held September 14th for children to participate. Proceeds from that event will benefit local area schools.

Councilmember Glenn Pingree

Participated in the Clean-Up Day and also attended the Park Board meeting.

Nancy Chennault, city representative to Cowlitz Economic Development Council (CEDC)

- CEDC board meetings have evolved to emphasize more small business development. At their annual meeting, executives did mention Castle Rock as an example for how small communities can work toward economic development.
- provided a city wide tour with Alice Dietz, from CEDC
- America In Bloom project; today planters were filled on Cowlitz Street. Additional plantings were done throughout the business areas. Chennault thanked Mayor Helenberg for his work in helping to mix the soil. Hanging baskets will be put up on Thursday. This year the city will be experimenting with water saver baskets, which include a water reservoir system in the basket.
- again this year, there will be a Street Art project. This year the theme will feature barn quilt type squares. For \$25, participants can pick up the wood forms at the Exhibit Hall and then return the completed project, which will be hung on Cowlitz Street. Proceeds from this project will benefit future street art opportunities.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Councilmember Queen made a motion, seconded by Pingree to approve the minutes of the April 22, 2013 regular Council Meeting. By roll call vote, unanimous Aye.
2. Councilmember Pingree made a motion, seconded by Teter to approve payment of the April invoices in the amount of \$540,251.21 as described on the Fund Transaction

Summary Report as check numbers 43702 through 43806 for general expenditures, check numbers 23519 through 23569 for payroll expenditures, EFT Payroll 4/30/2013 and adjustment number 280. Councilmember Teter reviewed all invoices prior to the meeting. Vote on the motion; unanimous 'Aye'.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Councilmembers reviewed a summary of volunteers who signed up to participate in the Spring Clean-Up Event. Mayor Helenberg also thanked Linda Bauska and her volunteers for providing a free lunch for all participants.
2. Discussion regarding speed bumps on access road to the boat launch. Vorse stated he has obtained cost estimates for both a speed hump and speed bump. Mike Johnson, city engineer stated the standard for slowing traffic in residential areas is installation of a speed hump. These are usually 12' long and four inches high. This slows traffic to a range of between 15 to 20 miles per hour. Speed bumps are still seen on private streets or parking lots and these are usually four to six inches high and traffic would need to slow to five miles per hour to navigate over the bumps. Speed bumps are acceptable in some applications, but usually are not used for regulating street traffic. For speed humps, the cost range is between \$3,000 to \$9,000. Speed bumps cost around \$1500. He noted that the use of speed humps typically accomplish the slowing down of traffic, with the least amount of risk to the community. Councilmember Queen felt that the existing speed bumps going to the boat launch are too aggressive and he has received complaints from boat owners. Mayor Helenberg noted these speed bumps were installed as a temporary fix to slow traffic. The mayor stated Lakeside has told him that speed bumps can only be installed in August or September to allow them to adhere to the pavement. Councilmember Queen suggested this could be added to one of the street projects that are proposed for completion this year. Vorse noted he cannot add this replacement of the traffic control bumps to the overlay work that will be completed later this year by Cowlitz County. In addition, public access using speed humps and speed bumps must use thermal plastic markings; which is an additional expense. Vorse estimated that replacing the three existing speed bumps would cost approximately \$4,500 to \$5,000. The grant funding current boat launch improvements is on hold until a determination is made on what mitigation will be needed. This determination will be based on comments submitted by federal agencies. Vorse states he continues to monitor the project and if the city is able to combine this with another project, he will advise council.
3. Councilmember Pingree recommended the city take another assessment of viable access points to Larsen Lane commercial and industrial zoned properties. He noted that neighbors have expressed concern over the road condition and the possibility of added traffic. Pingree suggested researching possible grant funding opportunities to allow for this property to be better marketed for the zoned use. The city engineer

stated that Larsen Lane is a city road up to the point of where it narrows. Years ago the right-of-way was determined to be based on what had been maintained. As such, the road narrows from a forty foot right-of-way to a twelve foot right-of-way near the end. Johnson added that prior to purchase of the property, the developer had researched the option of accessing the property from Huntington Avenue. Covington added that staff has researched several different funding options, including ones for private/public partnerships. These options require the developer to have secured investors for the project; ready to break ground. Unfortunately, due to a lack of private investors for this site, the city has not been able to qualify for this funding.

Greg Meakin, resident at 2542 Larsen Lane SW spoke on behalf of himself and property owner Mike Canton. He questioned the city's vision for this property and he agreed that the best access to that property would be from Huntington Avenue and not Larsen Lane. He stated that Larsen Lane is unique in that 118 acres are available, but access is only through a narrow road. He also expressed concern over safety issues on Larsen Lane. He suggested the speed limit be lowered from 20 miles per hour to five miles per hour. He also requested Public Works inspect the right-of-way to see if visibility could be increase by trimming overgrown vegetation. Covington stated the city's vision for that property is addressed in the current Comprehensive Plan.

Meakin stated he has made a recommendation to Mr. Canton to suspend any plans for public access to that property until they have a plan in place for development. He feels that any plans that are made for this property would be hindered due to adequate access to that property.

NEW BUSINESS

1. By consensus, city council approved the notice of intent to sell fireworks in the city limits submitted by Heather Wilbur, representative of Castle Rock Scouts #313.
2. Mayor Helenberg stated the City of Castle Rock is the only city within Cowlitz County that has not formally designated city parks as 'smoke free'. Vorse stated the Park Board has discussed this issue and concluded that if current signage is working, why institute an ordinance that would be difficult to enforce. Councilmember Queen and Pingree agreed with the Park Board recommendation. Councilmember Davis stated unless the city receives complaints from citizens, he feels signage is adequate. By consensus, councilmembers agreed not to institute an ordinance at this time.
3. Councilmembers tabled action on Cowlitz County Building and Planning's request to amend the interlocal agreement to transfer project management responsibilities for the Cowlitz County Shorelines Master Program Partnership project from Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments to the county's building and planning department. Vorse stated he has been involved in the project; however he does not have any

knowledge of why this request is being made. Council requested staff contact Cowlitz County and Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments to obtain more information.

4. Mayor Helenberg announced that due to the holidays, the next city council meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 28th.
5. Librarian Vicki Selander requested council call back laid off staff, restore janitorial services and increase library operating hours. Mayor Helenberg expressed concern over this request noting the library levy will not be voted on until this fall. He does not want to restore staffing until after voters decide on funding of a library levy for fiscal year 2014. He does not want to enter into a cycle of passing an excess levy and expending it when future funding has not been secured. He commended the efforts from the Friends of the Library who worked hard to assure continuation of library services last year when the levy failed.

Selander felt that supporters of the levy expect additional hours. Her budget was adopted by city council to include the voter-approved excess levy proceeds. She voiced concern that library supporters will diminish if services are not restored to expected levels. Mayor Helenberg stated an increase in hours for the summer months may be justified, however he is concerned over expending all of the available funds. Selander stated that alternative funding sources are being researched.

Councilmember Teter supports establishing a more dependable source of funding for library services. Councilmember Davis stated he would need more information before making any decision. He requested Selander provide information on the proposed extended hours, number of personnel to be added and costs for added personnel.

Councilmember Pingree stated he agrees with Selander in concept, but also agrees that a formal proposal outlining her specific request should be provided to the city council for their review. Selander stated she would provide that information for the next council meeting.

Councilmember Teter stated at the last council meeting he provided information on rates if a Library District were to be formed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Helenberg adjourned regular session at 9:00 p.m. for a ten-minute Executive Session to discuss potential litigation. No council action will be anticipated.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Helenberg reconvened regular session at 9:07 p.m. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

Mayor Paul Helenberg

Clerk-Treasurer Ryana Covington