

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Paul Helenberg called the October 13, 2014 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, Lee Kessler, Earl Queen, Mike Davis and Ellen Rose.

BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Patricia McVay announced there will be a meet and greet event for Sheriff Mark Nelson at 6:00 p.m. on October 16th. The event will be held at Lacey Rha's Café.

McVay also reported information has been distributed for her Castle Rock 'Rocks' campaign. McVay asked if the Exhibit Hall is available for rent for an upcoming event. Mayor Helenberg stated the building is not available until after city council determines the use for this building.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

City Attorney Frank Randolph – requested clarification from councilmembers on their intent to designate the High Banks area as leash free dog zone. He noted changing the municipal code is relatively easy; however defining the area may be an issue. Randolph distributed copies of aerial views showing parcel numbers WJ1502001, which is city-owned property on the west side of the Cowlitz River; located between the Castle Rock fairgrounds property and Arkansas Creek. Outside of this parcel is property the city leases from Washington State Department of Natural Resources. He noted if the city designates this area as leash free; the city would be creating a risk that the city does not currently have. This is an open area, which needs to be defined to users and the city will need to develop a means to control the use. Randolph stated if city council is still interested in this concept; he would do further research with the city's liability carrier (AWC RMSA) for their recommendations. He also suggested the city could erect a fence to define the leash-free area and use Arkansas Creek and the Cowlitz River as natural barriers to the south and east of the property. Vorse stated a third natural barrier also exists at Whittle Creek. It is his opinion that if the city signs the area as leash free; liability for the area would be covered under the Washington State Open Recreation Law, which minimizes liability for the city.

In answer to Councilmember Kessler's question, Randolph stated ultimately the dog owner would be responsible for their dog and the dog's safety. Once the city designates the area as leash-free, the city is increasing their risk. If this risk is covered by insurance; then the city would have some protection. Councilmembers Kessler and Queen suggested the property use be left 'as is'. Already there are people letting their dogs run loose on that property. In addition, the canine groups use the property for AKC dog trials events; and these events are off-leash. Councilmembers Teter, Davis and Rose suggested allowing the city attorney to contact the city's risk insurer to ascertain potential liability coverage. By consensus, councilmembers directed the city attorney to do more research with AWC RMSA and to provide a follow-up report to council.

Police Chief Bob Heuer – reported the school zone crosswalk enforcement blitz was a success. His department also plans to conduct a crosswalk blitz on A Street SW. He felt the blitz was successful by raising awareness of motorists in school safety zones. Vorse added that part of the blitz was funded from the city's Safe Routes To School grant.

Dave Vorse, Public Works Director– reported eighteen of the base bid residential streets have been completed. Currently the contractor and public works staff are working to resolve some issues that remain. The remaining portion of the projects included within the bid, are pending notification from USDA Rural Development of the city's loan application. If the city is awarded the loan, weather conditions may require the city to delay the additional street work until 2015.

Clerk-Treasurer Ryana Covington – noted the preliminary fund balance report for September will be provided to councilmembers and the public at the upcoming Special Budget Workshop meeting scheduled for Saturday, October 18th. This workshop will begin at 11:00 a.m. and will be located at the Welcome Center, 147 Front Avenue NW.

Council and Ad Hoc Committee Reports

1. Mayor Helenberg reported this morning he met with Vorse, Covington, Chief Heuer and Sergeant Neves to discuss the 2015 preliminary budget. He felt this meeting was very productive.
2. Councilmember Teter reported the Little Squatch fundraiser held at Toutle River RV Park, was very successful. Approximately \$2,500 was raised to benefit Castle Rock School programs.
3. Councilmember Kessler stated he is firming up costs estimates for a new computer server to address several technology issues.

Presentation:

Nancy Chennault and Dave Vorse provided a presentation on the America In Bloom (AIB) Symposium, which was attended by a delegation from Castle Rock. The symposium was held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, October 2nd through 4th. Chennault stated thirty-three cities (representing twenty-one states) participated in the AIB program this year. Castle Rock received national recognition for their floral displays, the national award for Best Container/Hanging Baskets Program (for all populations), and Chennault received the Community Champion Award for her work with volunteers in the community.

Chennault stated AIB judges evaluate communities on six different categories; floral displays, landscaped areas, urban forestry, environmental efforts, heritage preservation and overall impression (which includes maintenance of open spaces, maintenance of hardscape, appropriate use of signs/banners/murals, and maintenance of curbs, ditches and vacant lots/buildings). The judges also provide a written evaluation to each participating city.

Chennault noted this year's evaluation showed that Castle Rock has improved in several categories; receiving a total score of 730 (out of 1000 total points). The evaluation also provides recommendations for improvement; which is very beneficial to the city. Chennault noted that Castle Rock already has several international and national visitors visiting the community. She recommended that councilmembers go to Lacey Rha's Café to see their guest book and the comments made by these visitors.

Chennault noted the focus of AIB is to create economically sustainable communities. Vorse and Chennault showed several pictures of the event, which included tours showing examples of several successful economic development projects that transformed unused warehouse space into vibrant commercial areas. They also attended seminars on art projects, murals, volunteer recognition, community award program, mentorship programs, sponsorship programs for floral baskets and development of pocket park areas and urban vegetable gardens.

Vorse stated when people visit communities; they develop a 'first impression' on how they perceive the community to be. He noted this 'first impression' has a significant value to the community. Visitors form an opinion of the 'livability' and progress of a community based on what they see and how 'welcome' they feel. This opinion has a direct relation to business relocation to the area, and new residents. Vorse stated he has several pieces of literature that councilmembers can review, on how to create 'welcoming' communities; and the direct benefit to economic growth, crime reduction and mental health improvements.

Chennault stated Castle Rock is now designated as a Proven Winners community. Proven Winners is a plant supplier that contributes to the city's floral success. This company also has been promoting the city through their advertisements and other promotions. Chennault showed pictures of how local volunteers work together to develop the street baskets. These volunteers include students, Bloom Team members and corporate sponsors.

Vorse noted this year the city used baskets that were designed to conserve water use; which significantly reduced the manpower hours needed to water. Compared to last year, Vorse stated there was a 45% decrease in watering time needed this year. Considering the summer drought conditions; this was a significant savings. The city continues to become more efficient; while continuing to add more street baskets each year.

Vorse outlined several economic benefits to the city; visitors are again making Castle Rock a destination; storefront vacancies significantly have reduced and businesses are looking to locate to the city. Not all of these are directly related to the city's participation in the AIB program; however continued city improvements are making a difference.

Vorse outlined several benefits that the city has received from participation in the AIB program. These include an annual community assessment, information on funding options,

development of community programs and access to ideas for more efficiency of programs.

Chennault credited sponsorships from regional and local businesses, local business support, city leadership and the commitment of local volunteers for Castle Rock's successes. The city would not look the way it does without the strength of our community volunteers.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Mayor Helenberg stated approval of the September 22, 2014 council meeting will be deferred until the October 27th regular meeting.
2. Councilmember Kessler reviewed September invoices and did not note any issues. Councilmember Kessler made a motion, seconded by Queen to approve the September expenses in the amount of \$503,510.79 and further described as check numbers 45268 through 45355 for general expenditures and check numbers 24230 through 24259 for payroll expenses, adjustment numbers 363-9/14, 367-9/14 and 368-9/14, EFT Payroll Draw 9/15/14 and 9/30/14 and NACHA Batch#1680223 and 1681938. By roll call vote, unanimous 'Aye'.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Councilmember Kessler made a motion, seconded by Davis to approve Resolution No. 2014-13, a resolution designating the 1999 Ford police vehicle as surplus, on second reading. By roll call vote; unanimous 'Aye'

NEW BUSINESS

1. Councilmember Queen made a motion, seconded by Davis to approve Ordinance No. 2014-06, an ordinance amending the 2014 fiscal year budget for the Transportation Benefit District, on first reading. By roll call vote; unanimous 'Aye'.
2. Shauna Rose, requested an adjustment to her utility bill for Second Avenue SW in the amount of \$438.05 due to a leak. In accordance with city code, the leak has been repaired and the Public Works Director has recommended approval of an adjustment. Due to the amount of the adjustment; council approval is required. Councilmember Teter made a motion, seconded by Davis to approve the leak adjustment requested by Shauna Rose in the amount of \$438.05. By roll call vote, unanimous 'Aye'.
3. Councilmembers reviewed the leak adjustment request submitted by Kathleen Campbell, Fifth Avenue SW. Public Works Director Vorse stated he has been in discussion with the property owner and they are in the process of providing additional information to him. Vorse stated he is not ready to recommend an adjustment at this time. Mayor Helenberg tabled this issue until complete information has been provided

by the property owner.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Helenberg recessed regular session at 8:30 p.m. for a ten-minute Executive Session to discuss evaluation of performance of public official, pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(g). Regular session was resumed at 8:40 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Paul Helenberg adjourned the regular meeting at 8:42 p.m.

Mayor Paul Helenberg

Clerk-Treasurer Ryana Covington