

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Paul Helenberg called the June 26, 2017, regular meeting of the Castle Rock City Council to order at 7:30 pm., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. The following councilmembers were present: Art Lee, Lee Kessler, Earl Queen, Paul Simonsen and Ellen Rose.

DEPARTMENT REPORTSSergeant Scott Neves, representing Castle Rock Police Department

- reported the Active Patrol Training will be held at the High School next week.

City Engineer Tom Gower

- reported Carol, from Gibbs and Olson, participated in the Walkability audit. Gower stated staff appreciated being able to hear different perspectives on accessibility options.

BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

1. Jeff Lockwood, resident on Maple Street NE stated there are twelve Hawthorne trees located on city right-of-way that have not been taken care of. He stated on November 3, 2011 he filed a claim against the city for damages to his truck caused by branches from the same trees. Lockwood stated the city's insurance claim representative told him the city was going to trim the trees; which was not done. He noted that on January 1, 2017 wet snow caused eight tops to break from the Hawthorne trees. Lockwood stated he called the Public Works Director several times and was told last week that the city would not be able to address the tree issue until August. Lockwood voiced dissatisfaction that it had been six years since he first had issues with the trees and he now considers the trees a hazard. He demanded the trees be cut down to make his front yard safe again. Lockwood noted there are also three power lines running through the trees, which also makes them unsafe.

Mayor Helenberg stated it was his understanding that when the city initially offered to take the trees down, Mr. Lockwood did not want them removed. The city had the trees evaluated by an arborist; who determined them safe; it was the nature of Hawthorne trees to shed limbs periodically. The mayor stated the city does intend to address the issue; however it would be August or September before this is done. In response, Lockwood asked if the city intends to leave 'widow maker' branches in the trees; and he is putting the city on record that the issue is unsafe. Lockwood felt it did not take an arborist to determine when loose branches are unsafe. He added the trees are also beginning to uproot. Lockwood stated one-half of his front yard is unusable because of the trees.

Public Works Director Dave Vorse clarified that the trees are entirely on right-of-way and are not a part of Mr. Lockwood's front yard. Vorse noted caution tape was placed around the trees. He also added that Mr. Lockwood continues to park his vehicles under those trees, even though Lockwood feels they are a danger. Vorse stated in March he brought this issue in front of city council and offered for Mr. Lockwood to appear and provide input. Vorse stated that neither Lockwood nor any of his neighbors chose to attend that meeting. City Council agreed the trees were a nuisance, not a hazard and approved removal for later this year. Vorse stated he must coordinate with Cowlitz PUD to drop the wires and to arrange for Washington State Department of Corrections workers to be available to clean the site after the trees are removed. The city cannot leave the debris because it could create a fire hazard. Vorse stated he had apologized to Mr. Lockwood about not calling him back sooner and noted he did explain issues pertaining to the tree removal to Lockwood.

In answer to Councilmember Kessler's question; Vorse stated that when there is any issue with power

lines in trees, the city has called Cowlitz PUD and they have taken care of the problem. Vorse stated he does not know if their policy has recently changed because the PUD only responded and removed branches surrounding the power lines. In addition, the PUD did not clean up the debris after they were done working. Mr. Lockwood stated putting up caution tape is an admission there is a hazard. Mayor Helenberg noted that Mr. Lockwood has continued to his pile firewood under the trees. He noted the firewood needed to be removed before the city can begin work. Lockwood stated the firewood has been there for over six years and he would remove the firewood when the city eliminates the hazard.

In response to Councilmember Kessler's question, Mr. Lockwood stated the 'widow maker branches' are located over the area where he parks his vehicles on city right-of-way. This is next to the path to his front door.

Councilmember Simonsen noted that he had lived in that house years ago and stated there were two alternative entrances that could be used by Lockwood until the trees are removed in August. He asked Lockwood if he would be agreeable to using the alternate driveway for his access until the trees are removed. Lockwood stated he has already been using that driveway.

In answer to Councilmember Kessler's question, Mr. Vorse stated his crew could try to take out some of the loose limbs, provided they are not within the power lines and that the manlift is able to climb the grade of the hill. Mr. Lockwood stated the loose limbs are his main concern. Vorse stated he cannot fully address the problem without the PUD dropping power lines.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS, continued

Public Works Director David Vorse

- announced he attended the Association of Washington Cities conference where the city received an award from Association of Washington Cities RMSA Insurance Pool for the most improved liability claim record in 2016. Of the 95 cities represented by AWC RMSA, Castle Rock was one of four cities that showed it had less claims than the other 95 covered cities. This shows the city is being proactive in addressing liability issues to reduce claims. City programs include playground assessment, sidewalk management programs, and staff training on liability issues. Castle Rock City Transportation Benefit District also received a certificate of excellence for claims management.
- stated the city has received funding for the Exit 49 Phase 2 Project in the amount of \$223,000. Councilmember Kessler was able to represent the city at the RTPO meeting. Funding will come from the Transportation Alternative Funds administered by Washington State Department of Transportation. Estimated total cost of the project is \$261,000. There is a 13% grant match, which is the city's responsibility; however Vorse does not anticipate any need for General Fund contributions.
- announced the city was approved \$823,393 for the Huntington Avenue South Overlay project. This is federal funding from Surface Transportation Funds (STF) managed by Washington State Department of Transportation. Total project cost is over \$900,000. The city's grant covers the project costs, with the exception of a 13.5% required match.

Vorse stated these projects will begin in 2018 and credited Gibbs and Olson with being instrumental in securing those funds.

Council And Ad Hoc Committee report

- Mayor Helenberg attended the Walkability Audit conducted today in Castle Rock. He also attended the

summary meeting tonight hosted by Pathways 2020 and Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments. Vorse also attended both functions. Helenberg stated the consultant was very inspiring and had several good ideas.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Councilmember Queen made a motion, seconded by Lee to approve the minutes of the June 12, 2017 regular city council meeting. By roll call vote, unanimous 'Aye'.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Councilmember Kessler made a motion, seconded by Rose to adopt Resolution No. 2017-06 relating to the Six Year Transportation Plan for calendar year 2018-2023, on second reading. By roll call vote; unanimous 'Aye'.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Public Works Director Dave Vorse presented the Park Board's recommendation to name the park area containing the historic jail as 'Old Jail Park'. Vorse stated this park has never had a name designation and the city is in the process of developing signage for the parks. Councilmember Queen made a motion, seconded by Rose to accept the Park Board's recommendation for the name. By roll call vote, unanimous 'Aye'.
2. Councilmember Kessler made a motion, seconded by Rose to approve Resolution No. 2017-07, a resolution asking voters to approve a special excise levy to fund library operations in 2018, on first reading. By roll call vote; unanimous 'Aye'. Mayor Helenberg stated this resolution is intended for the General Election in case the initiative does not receive passing votes in the Primary Election.
3. Councilmembers reviewed the request submitted by Richard Ferguson for an adjustment to his utility bill due to a leak in his water line. Public Works Director Dave Vorse explained city policy does not allow for an adjustment until the leak has been repaired. Vorse noted the leak is in the same location of the leaks Ferguson had in 2014, 2016 and 2017. The issue is a water line that extends to a hose bib under their deck. In very cold weather, the line freezes and breaks. Vorse did not feel comfortable approving an adjustment for a problem that had not been fully resolved and is continuous. For this reason, Vorse is asking council to review the request in accordance with CRMC 13.06.130. In answer to Councilmember Simonsen's question, Covington stated the leak adjustment request includes the months of March and April. Staff has not calculated the amount of the adjustment because it did not appear to have been permanently repaired. Councilmembers reviewed pictures provided by Mr. Ferguson of the pipe and repair. Councilmember Simonsen made a motion, seconded by Rose to deny the leak adjustment requested by Mr. Ferguson. By roll call vote; unanimous 'Aye'.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Helenberg adjourned the meeting at 8:03 p.m.

Paul Helenberg, Mayor

Ryana Covington, Clerk-Treasurer