

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Paul Helenberg called the March 25, 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****Cowlitz Fire District #6**

Fire Chief Eric Koreis presented a Chief's Accommodation to the Castle Rock Police Department in recognition of support and assistance of Cowlitz Fire District #6 operations at emergency scenes. Police Chief Bob Heuer stated that the relationship between these departments is truly unique. They have partnered together on many occasions.

**Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments (COG)**

Director Steve Harvey provided an overview of the COG 2012 Annual Report Card. The Housing First Coalition began in 2006 with a goal of 50% reduction in the homeless population by 2015. A ten year plan to end homelessness was developed, funded through a document recording fee for affordable housing. The Housing First Coalition began identification of existing barriers between agencies and funding programs to address the homeless situation. The 2012 Point In Time Count of homeless persons showed a 42% decline in homelessness in our community since 2006. The reduction in the homeless population is an ongoing process to bridge gaps and coordinate services to achieve a common goal. Homeless populations are heavy users of emergency services: police, courts, hospitals, etc. The annual cost of emergency services for a chronically homeless individual is \$40,000 annually. When the chronically homeless individual is connected with housing first services the cost is reduced to \$20,000 for housing and services. Everyone benefits with a reduction in jail, court and other emergency expenses.

COG and the Cowlitz-Lewis Economic Development District are partnering to address regional economic concerns. Three top priorities were identified as:

1. Job creation and opportunities;
2. Infrastructure improvements and
3. Improved economic planning and grant applications.

The Fire and Ice Scenic Loop Project is underway to improve tourism by providing a connection between State Route 504 and State Route 503 through Forest Service road improvements.

COG has secured a grant from the Broadband Office of Washington State Department of Commerce to provide a technology feasibility analysis of the region surrounding Mt. St. Helens to meet emergency and tourism needs.

COG is providing project management services for the update of Cowlitz County's 35 year old Shoreline Master Program. This is a collaborative planning effort between Cowlitz County and the cities of Castle Rock, Kalama, Kelso and Woodland led by consultant Parametrix. The Washington State Department of Ecology provided a three year grant to complete this update.

Harvey noted the demise of the Cowlitz Substance Abuse Coalition due to dwindling funds. This energetic program began in 1989 to address substance abuse and violence in the community. These issues and conditions are not diminishing.

Harvey thanked the City of Castle Rock forepersons, elected officials and staff for many years partnering with COG on community concerns. He commended Castle Rock leaders for implementing wonderful economic development projects.

Mayor Helenberg congratulated Steve Harvey on his retirement. Mayor Helenberg adjourned the meeting at 7:53 p.m. for a five minute refreshment break in appreciation of Harvey's many years of dedicated service.

Mayor Helenberg resumed regular session at 7:58 p.m.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **E-Verify Program**

Jack Tipping, Onalaska, requests that Castle Rock require all contractors to join the E-Verify Program as a condition of contract. E-Verify is an Internet-based system operated by Homeland Security that allows businesses to determine the eligibility of their employees to work in the United States. This is a free program that will protect citizens from being displaced by undocumented workers and help reduce identity theft. Currently, 18 states require state contractors to use E-Verify.

Janice Montgomery, Lewis County, stated that the massive entrance of undocumented workers has been fueled by the expectation of employment. Undocumented workers take entry level jobs from lawful citizens. Criminals and terrorist have discovered this vulnerability.

Jerry Montgomery, Lewis County, stated that the United States General Accounting Office reports the annual cost for the federal government to incarcerate illegal aliens is \$1.6 billion and \$176 million for the State of Washington.

Mayor Helenberg noted this request will be taken into consideration at a future council meeting.

## **DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

City Attorney Frank Randolph

Randolph reports that City Planner TJ Keiran submitted Environmental Impact Statement comments to the Army Corps of Engineers on the preferred route for the Bonneville Power Administration I-5 Corridor Reinforcement Project. After extensive research, Keiran provided information to the office of U.S. Congresswoman Herrera-Beutler, who also submitted comments. These comments include concerns over the co-location of power lines over existing gas lines, which have had a history of exploding, on steep slopes with known slide hazards. Congresswoman Herrera-Beutler's comments include a request to reconsider the Pearl Route.

Mayor Helenberg was impressed with the wonderful job that Keiran did on this project. Keiran's research of the slide area, health hazards and other concerns is exemplary. Mayor Helenberg pointed out that comments faulting the Environmental Impact Statement were also submitted by Cowlitz County Commissioner Dennis Weber, Castle Rock School District Superintendent Susan Baker, Pacific Corps and the Washington State Department of Natural Resources among others. The same environmental concerns that the City is required to address before beginning any project, are not being addressed by BPA. Mayor Helenberg expressed appreciation for the outstanding statement on behalf of the City of Castle Rock that was submitted by Keiran. Hopefully BPA will review route options and revise the project scope.

Police Chief Bob Heuer

Heuer reports that a fifth arrest has been made in the burglary ring that was operating in Castle Rock. Additional arrests are pending. Some of the perpetrators have an extensive criminal history.

City Engineer Mike Johnson

Johnson provided a project status report. The Front Avenue NW Improvement Project and the Safe Routes to School Project have been awarded and preconstruction meetings are scheduled for next week.

Public Works Director David Vorse

Vorse reports that stormwater improvements on Cowlitz View Court are 90% complete, Cherry Street stormwater improvements are 80% complete and the Little Avenue Water Main Replacement Project is 70% complete. Sewer main repairs have been completed on both Cherry and Barr Street NW. Tomorrow sewer main repairs will begin on both Sixth Avenue and Aden Street.

In response to a question from Councilmember Pingree, Vorse detailed that river view 'windows' were cut as part of the Riverfront Trail Extension Enhancement Project. A valuable asset was lost when the cottonwood trees reached a height where the view of the river was obstructed. The city used Cowlitz County jail crew to clean the debris to ready

these 'windows' to be planted with low growing beneficial vegetation that will retain the view; while also providing food for wildlife. The cost for this work will be recouped through grant funding. Vorse noted that Leroy Bonkowski did an amazing job cutting these 'windows' and has donated his labor as grant match.

Vorse reported that the annual city Cleanup Day is scheduled for May 4<sup>th</sup>. Waste Control has donated the use and hauling of the dumpsters. However, due to budget constraints, Cowlitz County will no longer be paying the tonnage to dump the waste, which is estimated to be approximately \$400.

#### Clerk-Treasurer Ryana Covington

Covington reviewed the February 2013 Cash and Investment Activity Report. All funds are solvent. The Exhibit Hall Fund is being monitored for Hotel/Motel Tax revenue amounts to maintain make sure there are sufficient funds to meet insurance and operating expenses.

#### COUNCIL AND AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORTS

##### Councilmembers

Councilmember Queen attended a 911 Meeting. There are a lot of problems with the new CAD system. Additional costs could be levied to work through issues with this new system.

#### CONSENT AGENDA

Councilmember Pingree made a motion, seconded by Rose to approve the minutes of the March 11, 2013 Regular Council Meeting. By roll call vote, unanimous Aye.

#### NEW BUSINESS

##### Library

Councilmember Queen made a motion, seconded by Davis to approve Resolution 2013-01 asking qualified voters to fund by Special Excess Levy the furnishing of Public Library Services to the citizens of Castle Rock and to submit the following questions to voters; 'Whether or not a special excise levy on real property shall be had for the purpose of funding library services during the year 2014, on first reading.

Discussion: Councilmembers Rose and Teter would like alternative options to fund Library services researched. An annual levy cannot be expected to attain supermajority approval every year. Vorse added that Cowlitz County Commissioners are no longer seeking to establish a Metropolitan Park District. Councilmember Teter feels that a regional library system may be appealing to residents outside city limits that currently do not have access to a library. Mayor Helenberg added that voter approval would be required to form a North County Library District. Formation of a library district would require research from a dedicated person or group that could determine how to accomplish this goal and build momentum to obtain that objective. In addition, the tax would be less for a regional library district as the expense would be shared by more users. Covington suggested that school

district boundaries could be used to establish a library district boundary. Councilmember Teter believes that this would be a more viable solution for funding library services. Vorse cautioned that when the taxing limit is reached, funding of junior tax districts can be reduced or eliminated by higher priority taxing districts such as fire districts.

Councilmember Pingree clarified that this levy will be in the August Primary Election and if that fails, the levy will run a second time in the November General Election. City Attorney Frank Randolph stated he has researched State law and this would be permissible.

In response to a question from Councilmember Teter, Covington stated that election costs are dependent upon the number of items on the ballot. In the past, library election costs have averaged \$3,000 to \$5,000. Last year the Friends of the Library paid for those costs. Councilmember Teter pointed out that annual election costs are 10% of the Library budget.

Vote on motion: By roll call vote, unanimous Aye.

#### Transportation Benefit District

Covington requests that agenda items relating to the Transportation Benefit District be tabled to allow the Washington State Auditor time to respond to a query.

#### Budget

Councilmember Pingree made a motion, seconded by Teter to approve Ordinance 2013-04 amending the budget for the City of Castle Rock fiscal year 2013, on first reading. By roll call vote, unanimous Aye.

#### ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Helenberg adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

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Mayor Paul Helenberg

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Clerk-Treasurer Ryana Covington