



MINUTES

Monday, April 12, 2021
Work Session
Remote

Approved: June 23, 2021

Call to Order

Mayor Alex Johnson II called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Councilors present: Mayor Alex Johnson II and Councilors Dick Olsen, Matilda Novak, Stacey Bartholomew, Ray Kopczynski, Bessie Johnson, and Marilyn Smith

Councilors absent: None.

Business from the Public

4:01 p.m.

None.

Public hearings process

4:01 p.m.

Development Services Manager Matthew Ruetters said that the planning commission has been looking into ways to improve the public hearings process. He said the commission recommends that the council direct staff to analyze time limits on applicant and public testimony and bring the analysis to the planning commission and landmarks commission for their recommendations.

Councilor Dick Olsen objected to the study and to applying time limits on public testimony. The other councilors indicated support for the study.

Weekly yard debris service

4:05 p.m.

Julie Jackson from Republic Services shared a PowerPoint* and spoke about adding weekly organics pickup to the services Republic offers Albany.

Jackson gave the following responses to questions from the mayor and council:

- Republic Services has been doing weekly organics pickup in Corvallis since 2010 and has not heard any complaints about smells or rodents.
- There are now many domestic market options for recyclable material.

Jackson said she will return to the regular council meeting on Wednesday, April 14, 2021, for a final decision.

Water/sewer/stormwater utility rate report

4:26 p.m.

Public Works Operations Director Chris Bailey shared a PowerPoint* detailing the utility rate report.

Bailey gave the following responses to questions from the mayor and council:

- The last time that the utility rate was raised was Fiscal Year 2019-2020. The annual increase in operating cost is about five percent.
- The DEQ permit is issued to enforce the Clean Water Act for cities with a population greater than 50,000. The city contested an earlier version of the DEQ permit.
- Customers who use the sewer system but have wells are charged 8 units of sewer use per month and are not charged the water fee. Customers are allowed to meter their wells to adjust their bills.
- Staff can look into implementing low-income assistance programs for sewer and wastewater utility rates.
- The restaurant rate shown in the PowerPoint is just an example from one restaurant in town. A restaurant's utility rate is dependent on the amount of water the restaurant uses.
- Bailey spoke about how growth affects income and SDC rates.

The council indicated support for holding a public hearing at a regular meeting in June on a resolution to adjust the rates.

Albany transit development plan

5:22 p.m.

Transit Manager Barry Hoffman shared pictures* of new transit buses, shared a website* that displays real time bus location information, an image* of the two bus routes currently in operation, and presented a PowerPoint* about the transit development plan.

Transportation Manager Nick Meltzer and Transportation Planner Stephanie Nappa, from the Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG), spoke about the work of the Albany Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO) and planned improvements to the Albany transit system. Hoffman and Nappa invited councilors and the public to participate in an Albany transit system virtual open house that will go live April 26th, 2021.

Johnson II said that there is a need for bus stops nearer West Albany High School. Councilor Bessie Johnson said she would like to see more bus stops in the southern and eastern parts of town and that she is happy that the routes are being changed.

Curt Sorte easement agreement follow-up

5:47 p.m.

Matthew Ruetters shared map images* and provided background on the easement request. He said that the property in question is zoned for open space, but a provision in the code allows one single-family residence to be built.

The council asked that staff return to a future meeting with a written report and a draft proposal of the easement.

Recess

6:02 p.m.

Johnson II recessed the meeting for a short break.

Reconvene

6:10 p.m.

Johnson II reconvened the meeting.

Updated AMC language for human relations commission

6:10 p.m.

Parks & Recreation Director Kim Lyddane presented the proposed Albany Municipal Code (AMC) amendments.

Johnson said the definitions laid out in the proposed language are vague, and "language" should not be included in the accessibility section. She also has concerns with the definition of inclusion.

Human Relations Commissioner Robyn Davis spoke in favor of the language and commented that gender and gender expression should be included in the diversity section.

Councilor Ray Kopczynski thanked the work group for the proposed language and said that he supports it as proposed.

Johnson commented on the amount of staff time that the committee has required, and said that she believes this commission is a social vehicle that should not be hosted by the city.

Responding to a question from Councilor Matilda Novak about the purpose of the HRC, Lyddane said that the commission would help create accessibility and bridges between the city and the community. Johnson II said that the HRC will also provide education to the city and to the public, as well as sponsor events.

Councilor Marilyn Smith spoke about the social aspect of the HRC and ensuring that the people who have chosen to live in Albany feel welcome and safe.

Human Relations Commissioner Leslie Chartier spoke about perceived power.

Johnson said that she thinks the roles of the HRC should be taken up by the private sector.

Councilor Stacey Bartholomew said that she got involved in Albany government through the HRC. She said that she is happy to support the proposed changes to the code and the work that the HRC is doing.

Olsen said that if groups or individuals feel they are being mistreated, either by businesses or the city, there should be a committee for them to go to and to voice concerns. Olsen said that he is in favor of the changes and the council should proceed.

Bartholomew asked that the language about gender and gender expression be included as suggested by Davis.

Kopczynski, Smith, Olsen, and Bartholomew recommended that Lyddane bring the suggested code changes to the April 14, 2021, council meeting for approval.

MOTION: Johnson moved to table the discussion of the updated municipal code language until the May 24th, 2021, work session. The motion died for lack of a second.

Business from the council

6:56 p.m.

Johnson read two letters* into the record.

City Manager Report

7:01 p.m.

City Manager Peter Troedsson spoke about the possibility of holding hybrid meetings and responded to comments recently made on social media.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Reviewed by,

Gabriel Shepherd
Recorder

Peter Troedsson
City Manager

**Documents discussed at the meeting that are not in the agenda packet are archived in the record. Documents from staff are posted to the website after the meeting. Documents submitted by the public are available by emailing cityclerk@cityofalbany.net.*