

WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES
SISTERS CITY COUNCIL
520 E. CASCADE AVENUE
AUGUST 9, 2007

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Brad Boyd Mayor
Bill Merrill Council President
Sharlene Weed Councilor
Shawna Bell Councilor

STAFF PRESENT:

Eileen Stein City Manager
Lisa Young Finance Director
Susanna Julber Interim Plng Director
Brad Grimm Public Works Director
Laura Lehman Assistant Planner
Kathy Nelson City Recorder

ABSENT:

Lon Kellstrom Councilor

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Mayor Boyd.

1. Discussion on Letter from 64 Concerned Citizens

Mayor Boyd stated the purpose of the discussion was to talk about how and if the Council should respond to an unsigned letter sent to the Mayor, Council, Planning Commission and City Management from “64 Concerned Citizens”. He stated the letter was the result of a community meeting held on July 19th to voice concerns with the City.

Councilor Weed distributed a copy of a letter she had received from Peter Storton in response to her request for the names of the concerned community members. She stated that 11 community members had signed the letter as well as Peter Storton, Bill Willitts and Curt Kahlberg, the three individuals who organized the community meeting of July 19th.

Councilor Merrill stated that he feels the Council should respond by mail in a courteous, respectful manner. He stated he feels it is unfortunate that community members are reluctant to come to Council or staff members to ask questions and that it is important to change the atmosphere so community members realize they can approach the Council and staff. He added that phone numbers and e-mail addresses are readily available for anyone wishing to contact a councilor or staff member. He added he wants community members to have confidence that they will receive an answer to any questions they pose.

Councilor Weed stated that she agreed that the response should be in writing. She stated that the Council needs to take a closer look at management, staff morale and planning service. She suggested that when the new Planning Director comes on board it would be an appropriate time for that individual to meet with the development community to see how their needs can be better met. She requested that individuals bring specific issues to the Council so that they may respond as some of the concerns raised did not give enough detail and background for the Council to

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respond. She stated that other concerns such as the Council micro-managing City staff and her conflict of interest are separate issues to be discussed at a different time.

Councilor Bell stated it is very powerful to get input from that many people and the feedback it provides to the City. She suggested putting some of the requested information regarding response and turn around time on the web-site if it is not already there. She stated that some of the requested items have already been performed by the City, such as the wage study which may not be understood by the public. She agreed that the formal response should be in writing.

Mayor Boyd stated that it was clear the Council was in agreement to respond by means of a letter. He stated that he, City Manager Stein and staff will prepare a draft letter for the Council to review. He stated the final letter will be sent to Mr. Kahlberg, Mr. Storton and Mr. Willitts, as representatives of the "64 Concerned Citizens" group. He added that the City has received applications from four very qualified individuals for the position of Planning and Community Development Director and those interviews will take place very soon. He stated that after a new Planning and Community Development Director has been hired it would make sense to have a meeting with development community, adding that the new director will be made aware of the history of the concerns raised.

Councilor Bell informed the Council that she had written comments from Councilor Kellstrom that can be incorporated into the response letter.

Manager Stein introduced Susanna Julber, Interim Planning and Community Development Director to the Council, stating that most councilors were familiar with Ms. Julber in her capacity as a contract planner for the City since February 2006.

Councilor Merrill reiterated that if an individual does not get a response to a call or email within a 24 hour period to contact him, Manager Stein or any other Council member.

2. City Manager Update

Manager Stein reminded the Council of the League of Oregon Cities Annual Conference that will take place September 27 – 29 in Bend. She stated City Recorder Nelson would register Council members if they wish to attend.

Manager Stein confirmed that Council members had received a copy of the letter from the Jefferson County Commissioners in response to the Council's letter requesting to be involved in the early planning stages of any destination resorts in Jefferson County.

Manager Stein informed the Council that Councilor Merrill, Public Works Director Grimm and she had attended a meeting regarding the reintroduction of steelhead into the Deschutes River system. She stated the steelhead had been placed in Whychus Creek in the spring and there are

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plans to place steelhead into the Crooked River next spring. She stated that hatchery fish are also now considered endangered and that efforts to protect them will be taken. She stated that civil as well as criminal penalties can be imposed due to direct or indirect actions that impact fish habitat with the fines as high as \$10,000 to \$20,000 per fish as well as exposure to third party lawsuits. She stated that Central Oregon cities and counties will need to pay attention to impacts because of liability concerns until a Habitat Conservation Plan for steelhead is developed. She stated that how the City of Sisters fits into all of this is unclear at this time but that additional attention to the matter will need to be spent in the coming years. **Councilor Merrill** stated that storm water can have a major effect on habitat. **Manager Stein** stated that it will be important to document the City has consulted with National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) on capital projects and mitigation of those projects.

Councilor Merrill stated that presently conservation efforts are cooperative but the future may show there are competing demands for the waterways. **Manager Stein** added that at present the conservation efforts are being driven by the irrigation districts and that the meeting had been to educate cities as to what the irrigation districts have been involved with. She stated it makes sense to work cooperatively and suggested organizing a summit with cities from the valley that have already dealt with this issue. She stated that finding grant funds will be difficult to devise a Habitat Conservation Plan as the City is already considered in regulatory duress and not eligible.

Mayor Boyd asked if this will be a Public Works or Planning Department oversight issue. **Councilor Merrill** stated he feels it is too early to determine without additional information. **Manager Stein** added that determining the City's risk as it relates to the Lazy Z will be a Public Works function but that ultimately the burden of oversight will be shared by both departments. **Councilor Merrill** stated that the City also needs to determine the scope of the issue. **Interim Director Julber** stated that the new Flood Plain ordinances to be adopted on August 23rd will be the first step in providing more protection for the City. **Manager Stein** stated that a master plan for Whychus Creek will fit into the larger Habitat Conservation Plan that encompasses the entire Deschutes River watershed.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Nelson, City Recorder

Brad Boyd, Mayor