

MEMBERS PRESENT

Michael Preedin Mayor
Andrea Blum Council President
Jennifer Letz Councilor
Susan Cobb Councilor
Gary Ross Councilor

STAFF PRESENT:

Jordan Wheeler City Manager
Joe O’Neill Finance Director
Kerry Prosser Assistant City Mgr.
Scott Woodford CDD Director
Jackson Dumanch PW Project Cord.

GUEST:

John Barentine Dark Sky Consulting

The meeting recording is available here:

<https://www.ci.sisters.or.us/bc-citycouncil/page/city-council-workshop-meeting>

1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Preedin at 6:36 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

A roll call was taken, and a quorum was established.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilor Letz made a motion to approve the agenda. Councilor Ross seconded the motion. Preedin, Blum, Letz, Ross, and Cobb voted aye; the motion carried 5-0.

4. VISITOR COMMUNICATION

- Madelyn Stasko, Sisters, asked what progress the Council had made in caring for the homeless.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes

1. November 29, 2023 - Regular
2. November 29, 2023 – Workshop
3. December 13, 2023 – Regular
4. December 13, 2023 – Workshop

B. Approve Minor Updates to the Employee Handbook.

Council President Blum made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Councilor Letz seconded the motion. Preedin, Blum, Letz, Ross, and Cobb voted aye; the motion carried 5-0.

6. COUNCIL BUSINESS

A. Public Hearing and Consideration of Ordinance 536: AN ORDINANCE OF CITY OF SISTERS AMENDING SISTERS DEVELOPMENT CODE CHAPTERS 2.15– SPECIAL PROVISIONS (SECTION 2.15.2400 DARK SKIES STANDARDS).

Mayor Preedin opened the public hearing.

Director Woodford reviewed a [presentation](#) and staff report on amending the Development Code on Dark Skies standards.

The Council asked questions of the staff, regarding security lighting and the proposed regulations on string lights.

Mayor Preedin asked for public comment.

- Paul Bennett, Sisters, expressed concerns about the global impact of artificial lights on night skies, particularly the adverse effects on wildlife and bird migration patterns. He asked if the residential or business lighting code would be used for a business near a home. Mr. Bennet had sent Council a survey but had yet to hear back from anyone and expressed frustration about the lack of dialogue in the current format of the meetings. He proposed including a question-and-answer session within the allocated time for public comments. He would like more transparent communication to ensure that community members feel heard.
- Rima Givot, Sisters Country, acknowledged the time and effort invested by staff, the Planning Commission, and the City Council over the past couple of years on the Dark Skies updates. She supported the proposed revisions, specifically the five-year timeframe for compliance. Regarding string lights, she thought it was important to turn them off to avoid creating unnecessary light at night.

Director Woodford clarified that a business in a residential zone was subject to the residential lighting requirements. The Council asked staff to investigate how neon was regulated and if signs with letters illuminated by unshielded light bulbs were covered in the code. Director Woodford replied he would look into the sign code.

Mayor Preedin closed the public hearing.

Mayor Preedin noted the importance of education before enforcement in implementing the Dark Skies code. He was happy with the five-year timeframe for compliance and encouraged a collaborative approach rather than pitting neighbors against each other.

Council President Blum preferred to keep holiday lighting special and limit the timeframe it was allowed. She did not favor string lighting outlining commercial buildings year-round,

and she agreed that string lights should be turned off at a reasonable time of night, regardless of their placement. Council President Blum did not think we needed to regulate where the string lights were placed on a property.

Council President Blum was happy with the overall ordinance and noted the importance of clear implementation goals. She said there might be a need to consider funding assistance for implementing the ordinance.

Council discussed amending sections 3(d) and 3(g) regarding string lighting. They amended 3(d) to read: When used for purposes other than holiday lighting, string lights shall consist only of white light sources with a CCT not to exceed three thousand (3000) Kelvin; and 3(g) to read: In residential zones, string lighting may be used to delineate or outline the edges of patios, porches, decks, and similar structures. String lighting must be completely extinguished by 11:00 pm.

Councilor Cobb made a motion to have the Assistant City Manager (ACM) read Ordinance No. 536 by title only. Council President Blum seconded the motion. Preedin, Blum, Letz, Ross, and Cobb voted aye; the motion carried 5-0

ACM Prosser read Ordinance 536 by title.

Councilor Ross made a motion to approve and adopt Ordinance 536, city file TA 22-03, subject to the proposed changes as indicated in the record. Council President Blum seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken. Preedin, Blum, Letz, Ross, and Cobb voted aye; the motion carried 5-0.

- B. **Discussion and Consideration of a Motion** to Approve a Professional Service Agreement with Harper Houf Peterson Righellis Inc. for the Design of the Westside Pumpstation Project in an amount not to exceed \$232,375 and Authorize the City Manager to Execute the Agreement Subject to Minor Legal Revisions.

Project Coordinator Dumanch reviewed the Westside Pump Station project, which was a high-priority project in the 2023 Wastewater Master Plan. The project would collect wastewater from the city's west side, channel it through an 8-inch, 4500-foot pressure main, and then intercept into the 12-inch pressure main at Jefferson and Locust Streets before proceeding to the wastewater treatment plant. Harper Houf Peterson Righellis Inc. was selected for the design process and had extensive experience designing pump stations, particularly in Central Oregon. Periodic cost estimates were anticipated throughout the process.

Councilor Cobb made a motion to approve a professional service agreement with Harper Houf Peterson Righellis Inc. for the design of the Westside Pumpstation Project in an amount not to exceed \$232,375 and authorize the City Manager to execute the agreement subject to minor legal revisions. Councilor Ross seconded the motion. Preedin, Blum, Letz, Ross, and Cobb voted aye; the motion carried 5-0

C. Discussion and Consideration of Resolution 2024-01: A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF SISTERS DECLARING A STATE OF EMERGENCY AND AUTHORIZING TEMPORARY SHELTER FACILITIES DURING SEVERE COLD WEATHER CONDITIONS

ACM Prosser reviewed this emergency declaration, which allowed any entity with a facility to establish an emergency shelter if they complied with fire codes and other regulations outlined in the resolution. The resolution included stringent weather-related criteria, specifying conditions for the activation of temporary nighttime cold weather shelter facilities. The stipulations were aligned with guidelines from the National Weather Service for the region. This declaration begins on January 10th and runs until January 25th; during this two-week time frame, the city expected to see heavy winter weather. A new resolution extending the emergency declaration could be reissued at the Council meeting on January 24th if needed.

Councilor Cobb made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-01. Council President Blum seconded the motion. Preedin, Blum, Letz, Ross, and Cobb voted aye; the motion carried 5-0.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Staff Comments

Finance – Director O'Neill

- Campground reservations for the new year went live on January 2nd and had a successful start. There was a significant increase in reservations compared to the previous year, with almost \$73,000 on the first day.
- We hired a deputy recorder, Rebecca Green, who comes with high qualifications and previous experience in the role.

Community Development Department – Director Woodford

- The Request for Proposals (RFP) for a UGB consultant has been released.
- The final plat for Sunset Meadows had been approved.
- A work session on January 24th would address short-term rentals.

Public Works – Project Coordinator Dumanch

- The city-contracted snow removal service had mobilized for the recent snowfall. The Public Works crew was scheduled for early morning road widening and cleanup.

- Staff would monitor the weather forecast to stay prepared for additional snowfall.
- The 2023 goal of reaching net zero in the Environmental Sustainability plan was not achieved; we reached about 95%.

City Manager's Office - ACM Prosser

- An RFP was issued for the Main St. building, with submissions due by February 9th.
- The City Council open house was scheduled for January 22nd from 4:30 to 6:30 pm.
- Goal setting was scheduled for February 6th at 9:00 am
- The Civic Leadership Academy application process, led by C4C, will open in late January.

8. MAYOR/COUNCILOR BUSINESS

Council President Blum reviewed the Public Works Advisory Board meeting, which was focused on upgrades to McKinney Butte Road between the high school and the new elementary school. She said the new members brought valuable experience and perspectives to the Board. Councilor Blum noted the importance of having an advisory committee composed of specialists who could thoroughly review topics, providing a second level of assurance for City Council decisions.

Councilor Ross commented that he received a lot of solicited surveys, and if he did not know the purpose of the survey or the entity sending it, he did not fill it out. He would have liked Mr. Bennett to stay and hear these comments. Councilor Cobb said it was unclear whether we were being asked to take the survey or it was already going out to the public.

Councilor Letz attended the annual luncheon for the Central Oregon Cities Organization (COCO), where they discussed regional topics such as water regulation changes and juniper reduction projects. She said there was discussion and a shared concern about the lack of substance abuse programs, transitional housing support, and mental health resources in the region. Other meetings she attended included:

- The Sisters Economic Development Board was working on goals for the Sisters area.
- At the Superintendent Coffee, they discussed the Youth Career Connect program and engaging high school interns with business partners.
- Deschutes County Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee was working on goal setting and was planning to host a future meeting in Sisters.

Councilor Cobb attended a League of Women Voters meeting on the Deschutes County Crisis Center. She noted individuals in a mental health crisis could call 988 to connect with someone who could assess and assist them, including coordinating with law enforcement and determining the need for shelter.

Councilor Cobb met with Lou Blanchard of the Sisters Cold Weather Shelter. They discussed the need to revisit the city's approach to providing solutions for the unhoused population, specifically regarding waste disposal from trailers in the winter. She was concerned about the high percentage of unhoused individuals with children and the challenges of the 14-day stay limit on forest service land.

Councilor Cobb was in favor of looking into updating the signage code.

Mayor Preedin shared he was no longer the chair of COCO. However, he remained the Sisters representative on COCO and held the position of Co-chair of the Water Subcommittee.

Mayor Preedin acknowledged the community's desire for better engagement and said efforts were being made for improvement.

9. ADJOURN: 8:51 pm.


Kerry Prosser, Recorder


Michael Preedin, Mayor