

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.
Paul Bertagna PW Director
Scott Woodford CDD Director
Rebecca Green Deputy Recorder

The meeting recording is available here:

<https://www.ci.sisters.or.us/bc-citycouncil/page/city-council-workshop-meeting-0>

1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Preedin at 6:45 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

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

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Council President Blum 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

Karen Rugg, Sisters, discussed how specific updates to the downtown commercial zone section of the Short-Term Rental code might affect her family's efforts to establish a unique short-term rental that she believes will enhance the community. She requested Council take into consideration those projects in the midst of development when deciding to whom the new code applies.

Peter Hoover, Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity, Sisters requested a letter of support from Council for their application to Oregon Housing and Community Services for funds that will enable Habitat to work with the city on Affordable Housing and Workforce Housing projects.

Central Oregon Builders Association submitted a letter to Council responding to the proposed Water and Wastewater System Development Charges.

Rosemary Vasquez submitted an email to Council regarding houselessness during cold weather storms.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Minutes
 1. January 10, 2024 - Regular Meeting
 2. January 10, 2024 – Workshop

- B. Approve changes to the 2024 City Council Meeting Schedule: Cancel the July 24th, November 13th, November 27th, and December 25th meetings and add meetings on November 7th and 20th.

- C. Approve Resolution 2024-03: A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF SISTERS DECLARING A STATE OF EMERGENCY AND AUTHORIZING TEMPORARY SHELTER FACILITIES DURING SEVERE COLD WEATHER CONDITIONS.

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. **Discussion and Consideration of Resolution 2024-02:** A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF SISTERS AUTHORIZING AN INTERFUND LOAN OF \$500,000 FROM THE GENERAL FUND TO THE SISTERS' URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY.

Director O'Neill reviewed the staff report. He explained that the Urban Renewal Agency's (URA) Project Fund lacks funds to accomplish the design and construction of the US20/Locust Roundabout and other projects, as the tax revenue funds for URA exist in the Debt Service Fund and cannot be directly transferred to the project fund. Therefore, the resolution requests a loan from the City of Sisters General Fund directly to the URA Project Fund, that will be paid down through the URA Debt Service Fund.

Councilor Ross made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-02. Councilor Letz seconded the motion. Preedin, Blum, Letz, Ross, and Cobb voted aye; the motion carried 5-0.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

- A. Staff Comments

City Manager Wheeler

- Wheeler thanked the Public Works crew for their great work during the first significant winter storm of the season.
- Wheeler thanked the Sisters Cold Weather Shelter, the many volunteers, and the Oregon Office of Resilience and Emergency Management, each for their role in establishing the City's 291 E. Main Street building as an Emergency Shelter during the storm. Wheeler, Assistant City Manager Prosser, and Councilors Cobb and Ross attended a debrief meeting, discussing what went well, as well as lessons learned.

The Resolution passed this evening places the Emergency Shelter program in effect for future cold weather storms.

- City Council's January 22, 2024 Goal Setting Open House was a success, with approximately 30-35 participants. The community's feedback will be consolidated, along with results from the recent Goal Setting Survey, to be available for Council's February 6, 9 a.m. 2024-25 Goal-Setting Workshop to be held at 291 E. Main Avenue.

Assistant City Manager Kerry Prosser:

- RFPs for the lease of 291 E. Main Avenue will close on February 9. It was determined Mayor Preedin and Councilor Cobb will review the RFPs with staff, with Council President Blum the designated alternate.

Finance – Director O'Neill:

- O'Neill thanked Council for investing in the right equipment over the last few years so that Public Works crew can respond well to cold weather storms.
- The [Urban Renewal Agency's Annual Report](#) is complete and posted on the City's website.
- The audit for the City's finances is in progress and close to completion. The Budget Committee is engaged and doing good work.

Community Development Department – Director Woodford:

- Work continues on updating Development Codes; including Short-Term Rentals, and establishing specific language for Building Hardening and Defensible Space codes that will help mitigate the threats of fire in Sisters.
- Community Development received an application for a text amendment to the Tourist Commercial Zone. That potential change will be brought before both the Planning Commission and City Council.
- After passing Ordinance 536 amending the City's Dark Sky Standards, the next step is to pursue Dark Sky Certification. It is recommended to set up a citizen committee to work out the details, and a request was made to Council to draft a letter of support.
- The Community Development area of the City's website now has a section titled "Growth Management" that provides resources outlining background information and context for growth in Sisters. Anyone interested in knowing more about these efforts are encouraged to peruse the website.

Public Works – Paul Bertagna:

- There is a revised design of the East Portal Mobility Hub that takes into consideration the preservation of old growth trees. The new design sacrifices several parking spaces, but saves multiple trees.

- Both the East Portal Mobility Hub and the Barclay Avenue Improvements projects will be presented at the Public Works Advisory Board, then go before the City Council for approval before budgeting for construction.
- Bertagna acknowledged that the Public Works crew did a great job in the face of many challenges during the winter storm.

8. MAYOR/COUNCILOR BUSINESS

Mayor Preedin verified all Council members were in favor of sending a letter of support for Habitat for Humanity. Preedin asked whether Council wanted to further discuss Short-Term Rentals, specifically in the Commercial Zone to address tonight's Visitor Communication.

Council discussed whether they provided Principal Planner Martin with enough direction on short-term rentals for the next meeting. It was acknowledged that Martin would return to Council with legal analysis and strategies used by other communities, and that there were many more questions to answer. Council will forward additional comments to Martin, with copy to City Manager Wheeler, and further discuss Short-Term Rentals at the next Council Workshop.

Councilor Ross briefly discussed the debrief of Emergency Cold Weather Shelter efforts, saying that most of the feedback was constructive and positive.

Councilor Letz stated she recently attended several Economic Development for Central Oregon meetings where challenges to increasing power was discussed. Letz said the Council's Goal-Setting Open House went well and what stood out was the discussions with parents about the lack of indoor activities for small children.

Mayor Preedin stated the Council's Goal-Setting Open House went very well and he would like Council to have them three times per year. He shared that District 53 Representative Emerson Levy approached him about having a Town Hall open house meeting hosted by the City of Sisters, which will take place on Wednesday, January 31, 4 p.m. Preedin clarified that a letter of support for Dark Skies certification is supported by Council. Finally, Preedin thanked staff for their efforts in establishing the Emergency Shelter.

9. ADJOURN: 7:52 p.m.



Rebecca Green, Deputy Recorder



Michael Preedin, Mayor