

Public Works Advisory Board (PWAB)

Regular Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, December 12, 2023

Approved 1/9/24

Board Members Present:

Bill Kelly, Chair

John Herman, Vice Chair

Rachel Ruppel

Dane Zehrung

City Council Representative Present:

Andrea Blum, Council President

Staff:

Paul Bertagna, Public Works Director

Jackson Dumanch, Public Works Project Coordinator

1. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

Chair Kelly called to order the Public Works Advisory Board meeting at approximately 4:02 PM and staff confirmed a quorum was present.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 12, 2023

Chair Kelly informed the board that minutes from the previous meeting would be reviewed during the next scheduled meeting.

3. Visitor Communication

Chair Kelly asked if there was any visitor communication, there was none.

4. Board Business

5. Other Business

a. Project Updates

Chair Kelly asked Director Bertagna if there was a presentation. Bertagna confirmed that the presentation would cover projects from 2023 and future projects in 2024. Bertagna added that after the presentation the Board could discuss meetings going forward.

Bertagna began by reviewing the three master plans reviewed by the Board in the past year; the wastewater plan had been adopted and the water plan was being finalized and the environmental sustainability plan was adopted. Bertagna noted that work has already begun on the sustainability plan with energy efficient lighting upgrades having been made at the public works headquarters, wastewater treatment lab, and city hall. Bertagna anticipates cost savings from reduced energy use and maintenance.

Bertagna described the work done on the biosolids land application project and described images on the screen showing the dredging of pond 2, discing of the biosolids into fields, and the hay that had been harvested during 2023. Chair Kelly asked about the lifespan of the liners in the ponds, Bertagna stated 50 years.

Bertagna described the work being done on the improvements to well 1. Design had begun with several aspects of the design having been completed. Bertagna anticipated design to be completed in early spring of 2024. Chair Kelly asked if the well used on-site generation or gas, Bertagna confirmed gas, but the improvements would result in on-site generation. Bertagna noted the simple, low-maintenance, and fire-resistant design of the new building, similar to that of well 4. Bertagna stated the well pump had been repaired and would be used in the new building and described the layout of the planned site including a fence with barbed wire for site security. Chair Kelly asked if site security had been an issue in the past, Bertagna stated it had not, adding that many residents do not know the current facility is there and stated the new design would blend more with the natural features surrounding the site.

Bertagna transitioned to describing the Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project, starting with the work done on the City's 10-acre property on Edgington Rd adding that phases 1 and 2 had been completed and showed before and after images. Chair Kelly asked if the City owned the land, Bertagna confirmed that to be true, the land once belonged to the Sisters Water District. Bertagna then described the progress at the second of the two project sites, a heavily wooded area north of the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Marketable logs were removed with minimally invasive equipment.

Bertagna provided a brief review of the East Portal Master Plan, site plan, and phasing plan and electric vehicle charger location. Kelly asked if the City would charge for charger use, Bertagna confirmed the City would and details were being worked on with ODOT. Bertagna stated that about \$978,000.00 in grant funding had been secured for design and construction of phase 1, adding that the multi-use paths are anticipated to be included as well as paving for the EV chargers, which are funded through a separate grant of about \$250,000.00. A bus lane with a sawtooth design, shelters and an RV dump station are likely to be included as well in the first phase. Bertagna stated that the entire site had been surveyed and the design consultant is working on design to avoid tree removal when possible. Bertagna stated that the labyrinth would remain, and a dog park may be added at a later date. Kelly asked if the dog park would be fenced, Bertagna confirmed it would be fenced. Board Member Zehrung asked about conflicts of interest regarding a dog park being nearby a labyrinth used for quiet reflection and meditation. Bertagna stated that users of the labyrinth organize regular events there but only twice a year and added that the dog park could be closed if needed. Bertagna stated that there would be an event there for the Winter Solstice if Board members were interested in observing how the site is used.

Bertagna updated the Board on the progress regarding the Barclay Drive Improvements. The project is fully designed and bid-ready, but with a high cost. Bertagna stated that in 2024 the Board would review phasing of the project to better allow the corridor to function as an

alternate route. Kelly added that the improvements are important for connecting the current and future roundabouts.

Bertagna informed the Board of a new project, pedestrian safety improvements to the McKinney Butte Rd corridor. Funds had been budgeted for safety improvements in the city. Bertagna stated that with the new school being built City and School District staff had met to discuss future safety concerns. Bertagna added that the intersection of McKinney Butte and Arrowleaf will get a crossing because one does not exist there. Bertagna stated that a disabled resident requested a crosswalk at Arrowleaf.

Bertagna shared the most recent site plan for the US20@Locust roundabout and stated that he has been working on the project since 2011. Bertagna stated that ODOT had been working with affected property owners. Kelly stated that the owners of Hi-Camp had not been contacted but had been out of the City for several months. Bertagna confirmed that ODOT had been meeting with the business owners. Bertagna stated that the City would be reaching out to adjacent property owners to share information and plans. Kelly asked if one property would be the site of a future Oliver Lemons store. Bertagna stated it was owned by Rudy and the family but was not aware of any plans. Board Member Herman asked who would own the area between the new roundabout and the property to the southeast. Bertagna stated it would likely remain ODOT property because of the oversized truck lane through it. Bertagna stated one area would be jurisdictionally transferred to the City where a City waterline exists. Kelly asked if the "Welcome to Sisters" sign would be moved there, Bertagna stated potentially it could. Bertagna stated the bid let would start in February, construction beginning in April and the roundabout will be open by Memorial Day, with the construction on S Locust St and E Hood Ave being completed in July 2024. Kelly asked if there would be a turn lane to enter Hood Ave. Bertagna noted that it existed on the plans.

Bertagna stated that an RFP had been put out for the Westside Pump Station design, adding that it was a big project intercepting wastewater from the west side of the city, pumping the wastewater south down Pine St, under the highway, east down Jefferson, and tie in to the existing 12-inch pressure line on S Locust. Bertagna stated that the new pump station would effectively take half the capacity from the existing pump station and support future development on the west side of the city. Bertagna illustrated where nearby property lines are on the plans regarding US Forest Service and nearby private development. Kelly asked what the station was near the intersection of N Pine St and W Barclay Dr. Bertagna stated that it is a small lift station, pumping wastewater over a highpoint. Kelly asked if the lift station would remain, Bertagna confirmed it would remain and would pump into the Westside Pump Station. Bertagna stated some infrastructure was put in place by the Woodlands development, adding that it would create more capacity. Kelly asked about boring under the highway at the Pine intersection, adding that it is a frequently used intersection by residents. Bertagna stated that the intersection would be closed for the work but anticipates the intersection would be reopened quickly. Kelly asked about the size of the line, Bertagna replied 8-inch. Bertagna stated that the new pump station would resemble the existing Rope St pump station, but with the generator outside of the main structure surrounded by sound-reducing walls. Kelly asked if

odor was an issue at the existing pump station. Bertagna replied odor wasn't too bad, adding there was an odor issue at a nearby manhole but a charcoal filter solved the issue.

Bertagna provided a brief overview of development projects, beginning with the Woodlands development phase 2, specifically the paving for that phase which included public roads and private alleys. Bertagna then discussed the Sunset Meadows development and the paving that occurred there for the first two phases and what work that has yet to be done. Bertagna emphasized the moving of the multi-use path away from the highway, adding that Hayden Homes was originally interested in developing the property but lost interest upon learning the City would require a new path. Bertagna stated that Woodhill Homes was the developer performing the work. Board Member Ruppel asked if there were sidewalks along Felicity Lane. Bertagna replied stating that there was sidewalk on the north side of the street but that sidewalks on the south side were required when the adjacent multi-family was developed. Bertagna stated that Woodlands constructed their sidewalks prior to constructing homes. Council President Blum asked if the roads would be maintained privately. Bertagna replied stating the public roads would be owned and maintained by the City but that the private alleys would be owned and maintained privately. Kelly asked for clarification regarding private alley snow removal, Bertagna confirmed that they would be maintained privately. Bertagna then showed images of the Sunset Meadows paving and stated that the sidewalks in that development would be constructed in conjunction with home construction. Bertagna then showed the Board an image of the new path and highlighted the spacing between the path and highway, adding that the path was within a public access easement. Kelly asked if the path would be moved away from the highway all the way to the churches. Bertagna replied stating only between Brooks Camp and Hood along the property frontage with further path construction when later phases are started. Kelly asked if the paths were multi-use paths for bicyclists. Bertagna confirmed. Blum asked if e-bikes were allowed. Bertagna confirmed they were. Blum asked if 3-wheeled scooters were allowed. Bertagna confirmed they were. Bertagna added that what is allowed on a multi-use path may change as e-bikes become more common and potentially regulated.

Bertagna provided a brief summary of other current and future projects, assuming Council approval, including:

- Well 1 design completion by June 30th.
- Westside pump station design expected completion by end of July or August and out to bid around December of 2024.
- Complete East Portal phase 1 design and construct improvements in FY24/25.
- Design and construct Well 3 variable frequency drive and backup generator.
- Construct US20@Locust roundabout.
- Work on funding strategy for art landscaping like Barclay roundabout involving an ad hoc committee for selection process with public involvement. Expected completion spring 2025.
- Future discussion with the Board concerning phasing of the Barclay Dr Improvements. With phase 1 beginning construction in fall 2024.

- Replacing pumps at Rope St pump station.
- Conduct one-stop financing meeting with public agency funding providers where projects are pitched, and funding opportunities are proposed.
- Develop and issue design-build Request for Proposals regarding a new reservoir, Edgington Rd trunk line, and Lazy Z wetlands projects.
- Design and construct recirculating water retrofit with disinfection system for the Fir St Park splash pad. The splash pad has infrastructure in place for the retrofit equipment.
- Water and wastewater SDC rate updates to be implemented July 1, 2024. Increases are about \$2,000.00 for water and \$800.00 for sewer for a single-family dwelling. Updated population data was used. Kelly asked if water and wastewater rates would go up. Bertagna confirmed they would to secure debt-funding. Kelly suggested investigating multi-year, gradual increase as opposed to a lump increase. Bertagna stated that City water and sewer monthly rates are relatively low. Bertagna stated a tiered methodology may be used where increased usage results in increased rates for water and a volume-based charge for sewer using winter-month averages. Board Member Zehrung asked about those residents who reside outside of the city in winter months. Bertagna stated there may be a minimum rate based. Ruppel suggested a default rate based on a single-family home and any usage over that would be charged extra. Bertagna stated that a similar situation is currently used for commercial and industrial utility accounts using a 7-month average of November through April and stated residential may be a 5-month average of November through March. Kelly asked how that might affect Pine Meadow Village where there is no irrigation November through April, Bertagna replied that there is no sewer rate for them. Bertagna added that PMV would be in the higher tier because PMV is metered.
- Design and construct the McKinney Butte corridor safety improvements.

Bertagna concluded that he may have missed a project and that this review did not cover projects like street maintenance. Kelly stated that some of the street maintenance was in the budget for spring, Bertagna confirmed adding that oil prices have gone down. Bertagna asked the Board for questions and comments.

Chair Kelly liked the idea of a workshop concerning the Barclay Dr Improvements and was interested in a tour of the facilities surrounding public works. Bertagna agreed and stated that there would be new Board members in January. Bertagna added that it would be good for members of the Board to see in person areas and projects that are discussed in meetings.

6. Board Member Comments

Chair Kelly asked about meeting times and dates in 2024. Kelly asked the Board if Tuesdays still worked well for members, all agreed. Director Bertagna asked if 4:00PM worked well. Vice Chair Herman stated that 4:30PM worked better for him. Others agreed that 4:30PM worked well. Kelly asked about meeting frequency and if the current schedule works or if less frequent meetings were preferred. Board Member Zehrung favored the current schedule. Herman asked how soon staff know that a meeting needs to be cancelled. Bertagna stated a couple weeks

ahead of time it is known but largely depends on consultant schedules, adding that a January meeting should occur in light of new Board members and anticipated material for the Board to review but that every other month would work from there. Bertagna stated that some projects don't work very fast. Kelly asked if that was reasonable. Herman stated they could still be flexible with cancellations. Kelly stated it may be wise to keep the current meeting times on their calendars. Bertagna agreed should there be the need to convene the Board. Board Member Ruppel agreed that more advanced notice would be nice.

Kelly asked how the meeting could be more productive for members and the community and called on Zehring. Zehring stated they would need time to think. Herman stated he was happy with the current format. Council President Blum stated that they would like snacks, Kelly agreed. Bertagna stated that snacks could be provided. Project Coordinator Dumanch asked if there were any dietary restrictions. None were voiced. Ruppel stated that they like the idea of field trips and advanced notice so that they can visit areas being discussed at meetings ahead of time. Bertagna asked if one week was enough time to review the meeting packets. All agreed one week was good. Kelly asked Blum if they were satisfied with the meetings. Blum stated they were and stated it was helpful to view presentations about projects adding that the City Council appreciates the work the Board does. Bertagna praised the Board and mirrored Blum's comment regarding Council. Bertagna stated that the public may have comments about the changes regarding rate and fee increases. Zehring asked if there was more being expected of the Board. Bertagna stated no, he was satisfied with the Board's performance stating that losing the former Chair Dave Moyer was a loss for the group, but current Chair Kelly was doing a great job. Bertagna stated that the Board was doing well reviewing plans and putting thought into projects so that staff and the public know that thorough review was being done strategically and Board member expertise was very important in the review process. Bertagna acknowledged the tedious reviewing of master plans that the Board had experienced in 2023 and that more active projects would be more engaging for the Board. Kelly stated that the public often gets nervous when large construction projects happen. Bertagna stated that education regarding reliability of public services and utilities was very important and that projects have a purpose. Bertagna stated there was some anti-growth sentiment among residents. Kelly suggested reaching out to other organizations on how to have difficult discussions regarding growth and rate increases with residents opposed to it, giving individuals on fixed incomes as an example. Ruppel asked if the City had an assistance program. Bertagna confirmed the City does, a low-income assistance program of 25 percent off. Bertagna added that the City works with residents, but the City doesn't turn off water around holidays or during extreme cold weather events.

Ruppel asked about the new utility billing system. Bertagna stated they had not heard anything about the reception of the new system. Blum stated the Finance Director told them it was well received. Blum stated that sometimes to improve things need to change. Blum recalled a situation when she first moved to Sisters and commended staff for noticing when their water bill had been unusually high, stating that she later found out her irrigation system was leaking. Bertagna asked Dumanch if he had heard anything about the new system. Dumanch replied no but overhears residents receiving help from staff on getting set up in the new system.

Ruppel stated that Bend had a test on one of their water wells recently and tested positive for PFAS also known as forever chemical and asked if the Sisters tests for that. Bertagna stated that the City was not required to test for them, and few are, mostly cities with population over 10,000 or those with a known spill or site issue. Bertagna stated that Black Butte may be required to due to an old military camp having been there in the past. Kelly asked if the local airport ever supported military flights, Bertagna stated it has not. Kelly asked about fir fighting use at the airport, Bertagna stated no but that it may have been used as a base for helicopters. Kelly stated he had worked on litigation for an airport concerning PFAS, suggesting airports and industrial locations being possible to have PFAS contamination, Kelly added that the Lazy Z may also potentially have PFAS contamination from PFAS passing through humans bodies and entering wastewater. Bertagna stated that he reached out to staff with Deschutes County and was informed that Sisters is unlikely to have to test for PFAS, Bertagna added that water and wastewater testing is very frequent. Zehrung noted that a recirculating retrofit on the splash pad will require more testing.

Kelly asked about traffic studies and if the intersection of Pine and Hood was going to become a 4-way stop, adding that he and others have had close calls at the intersection. Bertagna stated that there is a lot of traffic volume at the intersection. Kelly noted that the new 4-way stop on Main and Larch was brilliant. Bertagna stated that crash data supported the implementation of a 4-way stop there but that there was no crash data for the intersection of Hood and Pine, adding that he has attempted to make the intersection a 4-way stop but could not without data to support the change. Bertagna further suggested that incidents at the intersection may not be reported. Ruppel started a million close calls. Zehrung added that he has had close calls there as well, further stating that maybe the close calls are not close enough to report. Bertagna stated that the City has asked local law enforcement to report any incidents at the intersect in an effort to gather data to support a change. Kelly and Bertagna agreed that a 4-way stop at the intersection would be good.

Kelly asked members of the Board for further comments. None were had.

7. Adjourn

Chair Kelly adjourned the meeting at 5:10 PM.