

Mayor Vickie L Raines presided

Councilmembers Present: Jim Ancich, Carl Sperring, Karen Cox, Frank Chestnut and Debbi Moran

Staff Present: Finance Director Kathy Welch, Attorney Stephen Hyde, Public Works Director Darrin Raines, Fire Chief Al Burrows and Police Chief Casey Stratton

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Mayor Vickie L. Raines.

MEETING CALLED
TO ORDER

It was moved by Frank Chestnut and seconded by Debbi Moran to approve Agenda.

AGENDA
APPROVED

It was moved by Debbi Moran and seconded by Carl Sperring to approve the minutes of the April 20, 2011 meeting and vouchers from April 19th through May 18th in the amount of 73,687.23.

CONSENT AGENDA
MINUTES
APPROVED

FRANKLIN PARK DISCUSSION

Mayor Raines set aside the first part of the meeting to hear comments from a community group that wanted to discuss Franklin Park. Mayor Raines asked if there was a spokesperson for the group.

Josh Mayr, 1118 Dundee Drive, identified himself as the spokesperson. Josh said that Linda Springer called the City a few weeks ago to inquire about when the Franklin Park would be maintained. Linda told Josh that someone at City Hall said that the park was due to be subdivided and sold. They then took it upon themselves to petition the community members about their thoughts on this. The group presented a petition with over 140 signatures opposing the subdivision of the park. Josh said that they just had a few questions about the City's plans to subdivide the park. Mayor Raines said the city has no plans to subdivide the park. Mayor Raines said that she spoke with Ms. Springer on the phone and also communicated with Mr. Schmidt and E-mail to Craig Zora, who contacted her directly. Mayor Raines said that due to severe budget reductions we have had an issue with maintenance. We have reduced the budget with this Council as well as past Councils in park maintenance. Raines explained that park maintenance comes out of the General Fund which is where our loss of revenue from the pulp mill was 60%. Mayor Raines said that we had a request from one of the Council members last year to look at the potential of selling two lots on the back part of the park adjacent to Dundee. We discussed it as a Council with the goal being if we could sell off part we could put the money in reserve for maintenance of the rest of the park along with upgrading the equipment. This did not get done in the last budget session or latter part of 2010 so it was brought up in 2011. It was discussed in January and February in public meetings that were on the agenda as well as in the minutes. Mr. Chestnut said that he would like to know what the people have to say. We posted a Public Hearing, notified the paper and advertised appropriately and held the Public Hearing March 2nd, 2011. We received two comments at said meeting, Dick Keller, Washington Street, asked which half would be sold and Kyle Pauley, G Street, asked if any buyers had expressed interest in purchasing the lots. The answer was no. At no time was the property listed or assigned a value. Mayor Raines expressed her gratitude that the community group expressed interest in this and took the time to show up tonight. We usually have Mrs. Moulton and one other person show up to our meetings. We also had the Attorney review the quick claim deed where the City acquired the

property and it does not look like we can obtain title insurance on it. At that point this became a moot issue, more than two months ago.

Josh Mayr said they are here to work with the City. If there is a maintenance issue with the park there are several people, Josh included, that are willing to donate their time and energy to maintain that park. Even if half of the park was divided and sold, (Mayor Raines said there was no plans to do this right now) that this space would disappear forever. Josh explained they were here to not only oppose the subdivision of the park but to help maintain the park as well. He explained that Linda Springer is a professional grant writer and he would also be more than happy to solicit donations to come up with matching funds for a grant to improve the park. Josh said one of the special things about Cosmopolis is our parks. Mayor Raines said that she appreciates this and noted that we have two former council members in the audience that in the past have noted that we have too many parks for a community our size to maintain. As far as people helping Mayor Raines said our Police/Court Clerk has volunteered to mow the property around City Hall. We have had three different churches come into town to volunteer to weed the Second Street flower beds and down First Street. City Hall staff, on their own time on weekends, has also volunteered to weed the flower beds. Mayor Raines said that she was taken aback that this group would come in and imply that the City was doing something behind the citizen's backs. The public comment is always welcome through phone, E mail or in person. We cannot send a personal mailing to every household to let them know what discussions are taking place at Council.

Mrs. Springer said that when she called on the 7th, their goal was to assist with the park. She said that she asked when we would be mowing the park and was told that "that's not going happen". She said that they had a group of people that would be willing to help, but the grass is so high now that they would like the City to come in and get it down so they can help maintain it. She understood that the City planned to subdivide the park and sell it. She did not want this to happen so she got a petition together of citizens opposing this plan. She said that she spoke with only about seven people who knew of the City's discussion regarding the park. Mrs. Springer said that after her call to City Hall, Mayor Raines called her the next day to communicate with her to tell her that "at this time it is not our intention to sell the park". Mrs. Springer asked if the City was planning on pursuing this at another time. Mayor Raines said that she can only speak for the present Council and Mayor, and that they have no intention of pursuing this, however; sometime down the road another Council might have other ideas that they would like to implement. Mayor Raines said this is on the record. Mayor Raines told the group that there are four seats up for election this year, Frank Chestnut's, Mr. Sperring's, Mr. Ancich's and hers. If there are different people sitting in this chair a year or two from now and it comes up for suggestion, she cannot tell the group what the new Council and Mayor will do. Mayor Raines said that at the Council Retreat Attorney Hyde came to the meeting and explained the situation about the title company, at which time, the discussion has been dropped.

Josh Mayr asked if there was a covenant on the property that would cover this. Attorney Hyde said that the answer is no. Josh said that his understanding was that James Bell donated the property to the City and asked if there was any express instructions that this was to be a park. Mayor Raines said the property was deeded January 16, 1968 and the Council would not even have had the discussion if the sale was not an option. She explained that the only reason it came up was to garner a way to make that park better, it was never to close the entire park. Mayor Raines said that the talks were

preliminary and we never have just one public hearing to decide on this type of issue.

Mrs. Springer said that they came upon a flyer to have a work party at Mill Creek Park and nobody knew about it. She was told that this was a flyer for last year's work party. We had a great turn out last year that Kyle Pauley helped organize. The work party was a great success. Mayor Raines said that we are in the process of updating our web site so we can post all of this information. This has been a long term goal of the Mayor's to create another avenue of information distribution. As of now, we post information at the post office and at City Hall. A public hearing is also posted there and also advertised in the paper.

Mrs. Springer said that when we look for funding, there are people who write grants, to pursue different ways to fund this without taking out of the City budget

Pat Priamos said that she understood that everyone had to hook onto sewer when the lines were put in Highlands. Attorney Hyde explained that when a system fails they must hook onto the City sewer. Pat also said that her and Jo Beard approached the City some years ago about purchasing the pathway between Dundee and Fife. At that time, they were told that it was part of the park. She would like a clarification.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

COMMITTEE
PUBLIC WORKS

Public Works – The Public Works committee met tonight to discuss the water agreement with Aberdeen and the sewer bill and agreement.

E 9-1-1 - Mayor Raines said that they met to discuss union negotiations. Sales tax revenues are down.

Legislative – Carl Sperring said legislators are in the middle of a special session to discuss budget negotiations. They hope to broker a deal within the next few days.

CITY OFFICIAL REPORTS

CITY OFFICIALS
POLICE

Police – Chief Stratton said he met with various groups to prepare for the grand opening of the mill this weekend. They are expecting a fairly large group and we are getting assistance from the County and the City of Hoquiam. Civil Service is going to be advertising for a lateral police

Fire – Fire Chief Burrows reported that the Fire Department was invited by Donna Parson, Cosmo Safety team, to participate in a confined space safety class. This is a great training opportunity for our department. 7602 was out of service and in need of some repairs.

Public Works – Public Works Director Raines reported that we should be advertising for the Downtown Corridor project in about 3 weeks. Qwest will be relocating the utilities to underground. The trees in Phase II have been lifting the sidewalk so we are proposing to not put any big trees in Phase III and IV.

MAYOR'S REPORT

MAYOR

Mayor Raines read Buddy Proclamation for May 19, 20 and 21st, 2011. Mayor Raines extended Happy Birthday wishes to Debbi Moran. Mayor Raines reminded everyone about the grand opening for Cosmo this coming Saturday. There is parking on site and everyone is to use the West gate

A. Ordinance No. 1244 – Changing value of stolen property/gross misdemeanor

Attorney Hyde read Ordinance No. 1244 in its entirety and On duly carried motion by Frank Chestnut and seconded by Carl Sperring Ordinance No. 1244 was passed.

B. Ordinance No. 1245 – Amending zoning code to increase maximum heights for buildings

Attorney Hyde read Ordinance No. 1245 regarding amendments to the Cosmopolis Zoning Code and on duly carried motion by Frank Chestnut and seconded by Carl Sperring Ordinance No. 1245 amending Cosmopolis Municipal Code chapter 18 was approved. Attorney Hyde explained that the Planning Commission held a public hearing on the proposed changes. There were no public comments for or against the changes.

C. Resolution 2011-01 Opposing the Chehalis Watershed Cooperative Agreement.

Mayor Raines explained that she has spoken before regarding this issue. The current agreement was not recognized by the Flood Authority. It eliminates any participation, other than advisory, by the cities. It also excludes Lewis County where 90% of the damage occurred in the 2007-2008 storm. Mayor Raines said she was appointed to represent the City of Montesano, but also looks out for the interests of the City of Cosmopolis. One of Mayor Raines's biggest concerns are the boundaries created by Commissioner Willis that provides for 53 ½% of the project cost to come from Grays Harbor citizens. The bulk of the expense should be Lewis County where the bulk of the damage occurred. The citizens in Grays Harbor County that would receive a benefit from any project in Lewis County should pay an equitable portion of the cost. This formula was based on population that included Westport and Ocean Shores that are not affected by up river flooding. The way the agreement is written, a vote of the people is not required to increase our taxes to pay for this. The agreement also maintains the Chehalis Tribe's sovereignty on this issue and they are not required to pay for anything even though they have a very strong voice at the table. Mayor Raines said her biggest issue with this agreement is that it was done behind the people's backs. Hoquiam has already passed a similar resolution and Aberdeen is reviewing it and will be voting on it next week. On duly carried motion by Frank Chestnut and seconded by Carl Sperring Resolution No. 2011-01 is approved.

D. Aberdeen Water Contract

Darrin explained that the current contract has expired. Aberdeen has proposed that we sign a ten year contract and limit the amount of water available to Cosmopolis to 130 % of maximum peak flow. They also would like to tack on a \$750 tap fee for any new construction. This fee would go to the City of Aberdeen. The City of Aberdeen charges their residents this fee. Jim Ancich said that the City of Aberdeen does not have to do anything except pump the water to the City limits. They do not maintain our distribution lines or meters. Frank said that he does not see a justification for the City of Aberdeen to add this on to our rates. Darrin said that Aberdeen told him they have no interest in sitting down with Cosmopolis on this issue. Frank said that he would like to have a meeting with Aberdeen's Public Works committee to discuss this. Darrin said that the City of Cosmopolis was instrumental in getting a \$100,000 for the water tower that sits in Cosmopolis. Aberdeen was not eligible because they were not metered. The past agreement we had with Aberdeen had the improvement charges built into our rate structure and we have been paying that all along.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Councilman Sperring asked about the tree limbs that were piled in the right of way on “J” St. Darrin said they plan to have this removed and will suggest owner take the debris to Grays Harbor Paper. He also inquired about when the cemetery would be mowed. Darrin said they will have it mowed before Memorial Day. Carl also asked about the height of vegetation. Darrin said this is a budget issue. The City does not have the funds to keep our own vegetation at a low height, so how can we ask the citizens to do so.

COUNCIL
COMMENTS

Frank Chestnut thanked Mayor, Council and all staff for their support during the recent loss of his mother and father. He also thanked the citizens who offered their condolences.

Debbi Moran thanked all the public that attended tonight’s meeting. She also wanted to extend thanks to Cosmo for including our Fire Department in their training. Debbi said that she thinks the water tower at Cosmo looks great.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Loren Williams said that he would like the City to enforce the law that requires stock mufflers on vehicles. Vehicles go by his house with very loud exhausts and wake him up. We need to enforce the law that is on the books. We also have derelict buildings that need to be taken care of.

PUBLIC
COMMENTS

Phil Jurasin said that he has lived here for most of his 58 years and knows that start up at the mill creates extra hazard. He has contacted people at the mill and they have been very receptive to being notified and appreciate the community letting them know when there is a problem. They do not always realize it at the mill site. He said that he does want to see the mill succeed.

Dick Keller, 717 Washington, asked when the surplus items would sold and how. Darrin said 3 p.m. Friday we will be opening sealed bids.

Mrs. Moulton said that if citizens want to get information they should come to the Council meeting. Mrs. Moulton has been attending meetings for years.

Mayor Raines said that she appreciates the public’s participation and attendance.

Finance Director

Attest:

Mayor

