

A regular meeting of the Astoria Common Council was held at the above place at the hour of 7:00 pm.

Councilors Present: Nemlowill, Herzig, Price, Mayor LaMear

Councilors Excused: Warr

Staff Present: City Manager Estes, Assistant City Manager/Police Chief Johnston, Parks and Recreation Director Cosby, Financial Analyst Snyder, City Support Engineer Moore, Fire Chief Ames, Interim Planner Morgan, Library Director Tucker, Public Works Director Cook, and City Attorney Henningsgaard. The meeting is recorded and will be transcribed by ABC Transcription Services, Inc.

REPORTS OF COUNCILORS:

Item 5(a): Councilor Nemlowill reported that Astor School would be participating in Jump Rope for Heart to raise about \$3,000 for the American Heart Association and she would accept donations. She toured the Police Department earlier that week and learned the police coordinates with schools and works all over the community to keep Astoria safe. There has been an increase in 911 calls which has not been offset by an increase in resources. She was proud of Astoria's Police Department and thanked Chief Johnston and his staff for the great work.

Item 5(b): Councilor Herzig had no reports.

Item 5(c): Councilor Price reported that she and Mayor LaMear volunteered at Project Homeless Connect in Seaside the previous week. This year, there have been 30 percent to 50 percent fewer people looking for services, which could have been because people were finding services on their own or because of good weather. Many people are in need of glasses. The Lion's Club helps with this need by using proceeds from newspaper recycling to provide glasses to people in need. She encouraged people to donate newspapers to the Lion's Club, noting that they have a donation box in front of the veterinary hospital on 31st Street. February would be a good month for arts and culture. The Second Saturday Art Walk falls on Valentine's Day and the Astoria Downtown Historic District Association (ADHDA) has done a great job working with the businesses on window displays for the holiday. The ADHDA held its volunteer appreciation night on January 29th at Buoy Beer, where several people were given cleverly named awards, such as The Voice of Reason Award that was given to City Manager Estes.

Item 5(d): Mayor LaMear reported that she attended the opening of the teen center at the Astoria Recreation Center. Having a place specifically for teenagers is a great new addition to the community. The teen center is close to the high school and is open from the time school gets out until 7:00 pm on weekdays. She volunteered at Project Homeless Connect, where she noticed that in addition to glasses, many people needed a haircut or an identification card. She also attended the ADHDA's award night, which was fun. The volunteers have worked hard for the city. Astoria is built on volunteers and it is nice to give them recognition.

CHANGES TO AGENDA:

Mayor LaMear said Municipal Court Judge Chris Kaino requested the addition of Regular Agenda Item 10(d): Appointment of Municipal Court Judge Pro Tem. The agenda was approved with changes.

PROCLAMATIONS:

Item 7(a): Tongue Point Job Corps Center Week

Mayor LaMear read the proclamation declaring the week of February 2-9, 2015 as Tongue Point Job Corps Center Week.

Mayor LaMear said she had been lucky to work with Job Corps students in the Citizens Helping Improve Parks (CHIP-in) program. The students also helped the City plant 200 trees during its bicentennial. She thanked the

Tongue Point staff for their work and congratulated them on their 50th year. She presented Tita Montero and the Student Government Association President with the proclamation.

PRESENTATIONS:

Item 8(a): Police Officer Kenny Hansen 25 Year Service Pin

Chief Johnston explained that the City honors employment with the City in five-year increments and it is a rare opportunity for the City to recognize 25 years of employment. The four officers at the meeting had a combined total of 80 years of police experience. Officer Hansen has served as a detective and school resource officer for the City, and worked on drug enforcement as Chief Johnston's partner in the 1990s. He and Mayor LaMear presented Officer Hansen with a 25-Year Service Pin.

Item 8(b): Enterprise Zone

Scott Summers, Clatsop County Manager, and Alejandro Bancke, Clatsop County Public Works made the following presentation on efforts to possibly create an Enterprise Zone:

- Clatsop County, Astoria, Warrenton, and the Port of Astoria would co-sponsor an application to Business Oregon for an enterprise zone in the region.
- The zone would offer opportunities for businesses growing or relocating to Oregon by:
 - Exempting businesses from local property taxes on new investment
 - Serving as a focal point for local development efforts
 - Encouraging home-grown entrepreneurs by prompting bigger reinvestments, accelerating reinvestment expansion and hiring
 - Expanding employment
 - Bolstering early success of business projects
 - Attracting investments in facilities
 - Promoting higher levels of employee compensation
- Businesses eligible for total exemption from property taxes normally assessed on new facilities and new equipment for three to five years generally include non-retail businesses, but exceptions do allow some hotels and motels. Qualified property includes new buildings and structures, modifications, additions, newly installed machinery and equipment, but not land.
 - Businesses not eligible for the tax exemption would be most retail, construction, or financial institutions.
 - During the basic three-year exemption period, a business would need to increase its full-time permanent employment by the greater of one job or 10 percent of its total force within the zone, maintain a minimum employment level, enter into a first source agreement with a local job training provider, and satisfy any additional local conditions.
- The zone must be no more than 15 square miles big, no more than 25 miles from one point to another, and no more than 15 miles between non-contiguous areas.
- Establishment of an enterprise zone would not amend local land use zoning or permitting requirements.

Mr. Summers showed slides of what the proposed zone could look like and noted the zone would be located in the northern areas of the county, which are generally industrial areas. The County would work with the City to amend the proposed boundaries of the zone, which is proposed to include part of the Port of Astoria's property, Astoria's downtown corridor, and Tongue Point. Earlier that day, a meeting invitation was sent to all of the local taxing jurisdictions that overlap the proposed zone. This was required as part of the application for the zone and the meeting has tentatively been scheduled for February 24, 2015. A resolution adoption has been tentatively scheduled for the co-sponsoring jurisdictions so that resolution consideration would occur on the first Council meeting of March. This will allow time to amend the resolution at the second meeting in March, if necessary. The application is due by April 10, 2015.

Mayor LaMear asked if the County would conduct a public hearing. Mr. Summers said a public meeting was required, and the County would function as the location for that meeting; however, each jurisdiction must consider its own resolution. He added the public meeting on February 24th would be an opportunity for the public and taxing jurisdictions to ask questions. City Manager Estes clarified that the County would like each jurisdiction to consider a resolution at its first meeting in March, which would be Astoria's March 2nd City Council meeting.

Councilor Nemlowill said it was nice to see this approach to economic development. She asked how the Oregon Business Development Department (OBDD) was involved in the process of establishing a new enterprise zone. She also asked if there were successful examples of enterprise zones in the local area.

Mr. Summers explained that the OBDD offers its Enterprise Zone Program to municipalities and tribal governments. Any jurisdiction could apply for an enterprise zone and the application is approved by OBDD. Once the zone is established, it is self-policing and the County would like to appoint Kevin Leahy as the local zone administrator. Qualified businesses that move into the zone would automatically be exempt from paying taxes on new investments. Columbia County has an enterprise zone, which includes Wauna Mill because the zone crosses the county line in such a way that the mill was able to take advantage of the tax benefits. The Portland Development Commission adopted a new enterprise zone in 2012 for the east Portland area. Clatsop County looked to the City of Newberg as an example because they have a good enterprise zone. There are about 60 to 70 enterprise zones throughout the state.

Councilor Price said she did not know much about enterprise zones and had just begun to research them. However, she understood the main purpose of an enterprise zone was to increase employment levels in distressed economic areas. In December 2014, Clatsop County's unemployment rate was six percent, which was only slightly higher than the national rate and lower than the state's overall rate. She believed businesses were not generally deterred by higher taxes and businesses were most interested in the education of the labor force, access to transportation, and local purchasing power. Otherwise, enterprise zones had not shown to be very effective in California, Colorado, or Oregon for anything other than very large existing industries that are looking to expand. Despite various waivers from the minimum employment requirements, the inclusion of Wauna Mill in the enterprise zone cost Columbia County a four-year legal battle and the taxing districts a total of \$2.5 million after losing the legal dispute. The 10-year loan, which began in 2012, has cost the City of Astoria about \$250,000 and the Astoria School District about \$350,000. It seemed as if enterprise zones shifted employment to low-wage, low-skilled industries and were incompatible with localism because 80 percent of the jobs created were not newly created, but moved in from other locations by businesses that just wanted to move where rent was lower within the same community. The job creation cost of an enterprise zone is high because of the tax revenue the taxing districts lose. She hoped Astoria could sustainably rebuild its City Staff, pay attention to deferred maintenance, and upgrade financial and other systems. According to Astoria's 2013 audit, 64 percent of the General Fund revenue comes from property taxes, but the League of Oregon Cities determined Astoria's property tax revenue to be 78 percent of the General Fund. She did not want to give up any of that tax revenue unless it could really be a great benefit for Astoria.

Mr. Summers clarified that the tax revenue exemption would only be on new investments. Clatsop County owns the North Coast Business Park, which is not being taxed and sits vacant. The enterprise zone would provide an incentive for a business to come in to the park and do some investment. Enterprise zones are an additional tool for creating investment and jobs. The tax base would remain the same because the tax exemption is not available for land. Buoy Beer has done some recent investment in the community and their baseline tax has already been set. In an enterprise zone, if Buoy Beer wanted to expand, this and any other new investment would be tax exempt for three years. The established baseline would still be taxed at the current rate. No jurisdiction would give up any of the taxes it is already collecting. The exemption is only on new investment. Even if a private developer owned the business park and paid property taxes on it, the tax base would not change because land does not qualify for the exemption. If the County could provide an incentive for a qualifying business to expand into the area, their equipment and new building would exempt from taxes for three to five years. When the exemption period expires, the equipment and building would be taxed. Enterprise zones are not meant to be a silver bullet, but to serve as a tool. While the coastal areas do have some good things going, the area is not very close to Interstate 5 and does not always have the qualified labor force being sought. The County regularly works with Clatsop Community College's Small Business Development Center to improve and increase the labor pool. This area needs to work with a variety of tools and avenues at the same time and the enterprise zone would be one more tool for the area to use. If Astoria is not interested in participating, the enterprise zone would still be able to move forward with the other co-sponsors. The City is not required to participate in the zone.

Councilor Herzig confirmed that establishing the zone would not require land use and permitting laws to be amended, noting that Astoria was currently going through a very long process of adopting policies for its riverfront. He believed people wanted reassurance that an enterprise zone would allow their newly adopted policies to remain in effect. Mr. Summers said the zone might provide incentives for redevelopment in the areas Astoria wants redevelopment to occur. Astoria's zoning would remain the same.

Mayor LaMear encouraged everyone to attend the February 24th meeting to learn more about the proposed enterprise zone and give feedback.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

The following items were presented on the Consent Calendar:

- 9(a) City Council Minutes of 1/5/15
- 9(b) Boards and Commission Minutes
 - (1) Parks Board Meeting of 12/10/14
 - (2) Planning Commission Meeting of 12/17/14
- 9(c) Second Amendment to Land Lease Agreement with Verizon Wireless (Police)
- 9(d) Authorization to Issue Request for Proposals (RFP) for Special Inspection and Materials Testing Services for the Astoria Senior Center Renovation Project (Community Development)

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Herzig, seconded by Councilor Nemlowill, to approve the Consent Calendar. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Price, Herzig, Nemlowill, and Mayor LaMear; Nays: None.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

Item 10(a): Authorization to Purchase Generator (Public Works)

The domestic water that supplies Astoria citizens originates at the slow sand filter in the City's watershed above Svensen. Several water sources supply the sand filter with water by gravity. During the drier part of the year, additional water needs to be pumped from Main Lake to supplement the flow from the creeks. Two three-phase pumps are used to produce the volume of water needed to the filters from Main Lake. In order to produce the required three-phase power for the pumps, a roto-phase converter is utilized and a three-phase diesel generator is used to power the second pump. In 1996, a used three-phase Cummins diesel generator was purchased to power these pumps. This generator has over 6,000 hours of run time, and is in need of major repairs that are not cost effective.

At the November 5, 2014 City Council meeting, Council authorized joining the Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC) in order to facilitate the purchase of a pumper truck for the Astoria Fire Department. Cummins Power Generation Inc. is a contract vendor to the HGAC. Staff has researched various replacement options and determined it would be advantageous to purchase a new three-phase Cummins diesel generator. Funds have been budgeted in the Public Works Improvement Fund for this purchase. It is recommended that the City Council authorize the purchase of one new 80 KW three-phase Cummins diesel generator through HGAC for \$22,711.80.

City Manager Estes explained that HGAC is a cooperative procurement agency that facilitates contracts between member jurisdictions and member manufacturers.

Councilor Price asked if the generator would last a long time. Director Cook replied the City has over 15 generators located at various facilities throughout the city, most of which are Cummins. Cummins generators are very reliable.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Herzig, seconded by Councilor Price, to authorize the purchase of one new 80 KW three phase Cummins diesel generator through HGAC for \$22,711.80. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Price, Herzig, Nemlowill, and Mayor LaMear; Nays: None.

Item 10(b): Public Hearing and Ordinance Amending Astoria City Code Sections 8.825 through 8.885 Pertaining to Merchant Policemen, Watchmen, and Guards (1st Reading) (Police)

The Police Department proposes changes to the Astoria City Code regulating Security Guards. The State was given regulatory authority over security guards many years ago creating a much more robust regulation of Security Guards. The current Code is a duplication that refers to sections of the Code, which have been previously repealed. This amendment would bring the City Code into alignment with State law. An ordinance

implementing the amendments is included for Council's review. It is recommended that Council hold the public hearing and conduct the first reading of this proposed ordinance.

Mayor LaMear opened the public hearing at 7:37 p.m. and called for anyone wanting to address the City Council on the ordinance amendments to come forward. Hearing none, she closed the public hearing at 7:37 p.m. and called for Council discussion and deliberation.

Councilor Herzig explained that the Code amendments would enforce the State law requiring uniformed guards to be licensed. No one could pretend to be a security guard or police officer. The law ensures that security guards are fully trained and licensed, and part of a real operation.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Nemlowill, seconded by Councilor Herzig to conduct the first reading of the Ordinance amending Astoria City Code Sections 8.825 through 8.885. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Price, Herzig, Nemlowill, and Mayor LaMear; Nays: None.

Director Cook conducted the first reading of the ordinance amending Astoria City Code Sections 8.825 through 8.885.

Item 10(c): Request to Adjust Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Project Timeline (Public Works)

In November 2010, an Amended Stipulation and Final Order (ASFO) was signed by the City of Astoria and the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) establishing deadlines and criteria for the Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Program. The ASFO requires the City to work to eliminate all CSO discharges from specific discharge points, except during storm events that exceed the stated criteria in the agreement. As stipulated in the ASFO, the City is required to control outfalls by a certain date according to the following schedule:

	Phase	ASFO Completion Deadline	Number of Outfalls Controlled
✓	1	Dec. 1, 2006	9 outfalls
✓	2	Dec. 1, 2007	9 outfalls
✓	3	Dec. 1, 2013	6 outfalls
	4	Dec. 1, 2016	11 outfalls
	5	Dec. 1, 2022	3 outfalls
		TOTAL	38 outfalls

Phases 1 through 3 are complete and have controlled 24 outfalls. The upcoming 16th Street CSO Separation Project will control 5 outfalls as part of Phase 4. The remaining 9 outfalls that need to be controlled are the most challenging due to infrastructure configurations and lack of monitoring data. It has become clear that meeting current ASFO timelines is not feasible. Staff met with DEQ and discussed adjusting the timeline. DEQ staff was supportive and has asked that a formal request be submitted. An administrative amendment will then be executed by DEQ for the new timeline.

Staff recommends extending the final deadline for the remaining 9 outfalls from December 1, 2022 to December 1, 2028. This timeline will allow monitoring to occur between projects to evaluate system response and collect data for developing the best and most cost effective solutions for future projects. Extending the deadline for final completion will also allow the City to repay several of the initial project loans, which will reduce the peak CSO Surcharge rate.

Staff has prepared a formal request, which has been reviewed by the City's environmental attorney. If approved by DEQ, the final ASFO amendment will be presented to Council for final authorization at a future meeting. It is recommended that City Council authorize staff to formally request an administrative amendment to the Amended Stipulation and Final Order from DEQ to adjust the CSO Program completion timeline.

City Support Engineer Moore said she had been tracking the CSO project for quite some time. DEQ administers the Clean Water Act on behalf of the Environmental Protection Agency. Astoria entered into the ASFO

agreement in 2010 with a timeline. Phases 1 through 3 of the project timeline are complete and Phase 4, the 16th Street CSO Project, is underway. Construction on the 16th Street CSO Project will begin in the summer and when complete will control 5 of the 11 outfalls that must be controlled by the end of Phase 4. Once the 16th Street CSO Project is complete, only 9 of the 38 outfalls will remain uncontrolled. She showed a map marking the locations of the last 9 outfalls, noting that they are the most challenging, and Staff has not yet determined what work will be needed on the 9 outfalls. She displayed a graph showing how the costs of the program are related to the City's level of control. Staff completed the easiest work that would control the largest volume of outfalls during the first phases of the project, so 50 percent of the outfalls were controlled after the first project. When the 16th Street CSO Project is complete, the City will be almost 90 percent controlled at a cost of about \$31 million. The City is required to have 96 percent of its outfalls controlled and this last 6 percent will cost the City between \$10 and \$15 million. As Staff tracked the program, it became clear that Astoria would not meet the 2016 deadline to have all 11 outfalls controlled and it would be challenging to meet the 2022 deadline of Phase 5. Staffing, funding, technical information, and monitoring after projects are complete have made these deadlines unattainable. Staff would like the Phase 5 deadline extended to 2028. The DEQ was supportive of this new deadline and believed 6 years was a reasonable extension. However, DEQ did warn the City not to ask for much more of an extension. The DEQ was supportive because the City has already made so much progress and has been diligent about meeting deadlines. Staff would like City Council's permission to submit the formal request to DEQ for the extension. The DEQ would respond with an official amendment to the agreement. Before Staff signed the official agreement, they would like to have a work session with City Council to discuss the details of the program.

City Manager Estes said at the goal setting session, City Council received a request for a work session to discuss CSO rate increases anticipated to complete the project. The current projected high rate is 163 percent of the sewer rate. However, if the deadline extension is approved by DEQ, the adjusted timeline would result in a reduced peak surcharge of 105 percent of the sewer rate. The additional time would allow the City to pay off some of the loans associated with the older CSO projects prior to taking on new debt. Staff can discuss the details of the surcharge with Council at a work session.

Councilor Herzig asked if the remaining 9 outfalls of Phase 4 would be included in the timeline extension. Engineer Moore said yes and explained the request is to eliminate the phases in the original agreement. Staff can negotiate an intermediate deadline if DEQ requires one, as established in the original agreement. City Council would be asked if any intermediate deadlines were reasonable. Councilor Herzig understood that the new timeline would require all remaining outfalls to be complete by 2028, which gives Staff a lot more flexibility. He added that everyone is concerned with the surcharge to the sewer rates and Staff is looking for other ways of funding the project. Currently, the City is paying a very low interest rate, which seems to be the best option. However, Staff continues to work on the issue because one of City Council's goals is to keep Astoria affordable for Astorians. The CSO project is federally mandated, so Astoria must find a way to move forward. He thanked Engineer Moore for her work on this project and said it would be nice if DEQ approves the request.

Councilor Nemlowill asked if the \$10 to \$15 million cost to complete the project was more than what the City originally anticipated. Engineer Moore said the program was originally estimated to cost \$40 million and this cost has never been adjusted for cost of living or inflation. Staff has recently taken a more proactive approach at rebuilding intersections and streets than it did when the program began. Therefore, some costs included in the program are not just for installing new storm pipe and have resulted in an increase. Expenses to date are \$31 million and the City expects total project costs to be between \$40 and \$50 million. However, with more data, Staff can scope projects better and provide an estimate of total program costs. Councilor Nemlowill believed Engineer Moore had good rationale for the project. It would be a relief to the citizens to pay a reduced surcharge. She asked if extending the deadline would cost the City more in the long run. Director Cook said construction costs typically increase about three percent each year. Therefore, additional inflation would not be so significant that the extension request should be denied by Council. This is similar to extending a 20-year mortgage to 30 years. City Manager Estes added that while there may be some escalation in costs as time goes on, the City could absorb those costs better and without increasing the originally projected surcharge of 163 percent of the sewer rate. The extension will allow the City to pay off earlier loans before taking on new debt, which would impact the rate payers.

Councilor Herzig understood that the enhanced monitoring and data collection would allow Staff to be more efficient as the project moves forward. This could possibly save money. Engineer Moore added with better data, Staff can better characterize the system it is trying to control.

Councilor Price asked if the interest rate on the loans was locked in. She believed the City could borrow up to \$40 million for this project and anticipated interest rates would be higher on loans taken out five or ten years from now. Staff said the City negotiates with the Infrastructure Finance Authority (IFA) each time there is a new project. Along with securing loans, the City is also working to secure grants. The interest rates on current loans range from zero percent to four percent, including a grant that provided \$2 million in grant funds and a \$2 million zero interest loan. The method of combining grants with loans would not be possible with a revenue bond. The early loans were at four percent interest, but the City also has one, two, and three percent fixed rate loans. Each time the City begins a new phase of the project, it negotiates with the IFA.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Herzig, seconded by Councilor Nemlowill to authorize Staff to request an administrative amendment to the Amended Stipulation and Final Order from DEQ to adjust the CSO Program completion timeline. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Price, Herzig, Nemlowill, and Mayor LaMear; Nays: None.

Item 10(d): Appointment of Municipal Court Judge Pro Tem

This Item was added to the Agenda during Item 6: Changes to the Agenda.

Mayor LaMear said Municipal Court Judge Kaino requested that this item be added to the agenda. Ron Woltjer has served as Judge Pro Tem when Judge Kaino was not available; however, Mr. Woltjer is now the Municipal Court Judge in Warrenton and their night court is the same night as Astoria's. Judge Kaino has asked if the City Council would like to appoint a Judge Pro Tem or give him the authority to appoint one. Astoria's Charter states that "City Council may authorize the Municipal Judge to appoint Municipal Judges Pro Tem for terms of office set by the Judge or the Council." Judge Kaino has an appointee in mind who has served as Judge Pro Tem before, but he wants direction from Council about how to move forward.

Councilor Herzig wanted Judge Kaino to submit the names and background information of three people to City Council. Since he has been a Councilor, Astoria has not conducted a performance review of the Municipal Judge, so this could be considered for the future.

Councilor Nemlowill believed she could go along with Councilor Herzig's suggestion; however, Astoria's Charter states the Municipal Judge could appoint a Judge Pro Tem. If Council believes Judge Kaino is doing a good job, she believed he could also do a good job of appointing a Judge Pro Tem.

Councilor Price believed City Council had recourse, but could agree to either the Charter or Councilor Herzig's suggestion.

Mayor LaMear believed Judge Kaino should be allowed to appoint a Judge Pro Tem since the Charter gives the Municipal Judge the authority to do so.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Price, seconded by Councilor Nemlowill to authorize Municipal Court Judge Kaino to appoint a Municipal Court Judge Pro Tem. Motion carried 3 to 1. Ayes: Councilors Price, Nemlowill, and Mayor LaMear; Nays: Councilor Herzig.

NEW BUSINESS & MISCELLANEOUS, PUBLIC COMMENTS

Joann Wiltrakis, 410 Jerome, Astoria, said in the last two weeks, she has almost been broadsided twice at the intersection of Irving Avenue and 8th Street. In both instances, she was driving west on Irving, attempting to make a left turn on to 8th. There is no stop or yield sign on Irving, and drivers turning off of Irving have the right-of-way. The first time she was almost broadsided, the other vehicle was driving south on 8th Street, up the hill. This driver stopped at the stop sign. She believed the driver expected her to stop as well because the driver simply made eye contact and kept going through the intersection. The second time she was almost broadsided, a car came flying down the hill heading north on 8th Street, ignored the yield sign, and went through the intersection. She asked the City to make the intersection a four-way stop or install signage informing drivers that Irving does not stop.

Councilor Price believed the intersection was a four or three-way stop during the CSO project. Members of the audience said they believed there was an island, the intersection was completely blocked off, and a sawhorse was in the intersection. Director Cook confirmed that a temporary stop sign was in place during the CSO project

to control traffic for the contractor. Councilor Price said she had heard that a number of the neighbors preferred this stop sign, which was on Irving. Director Cook added that the City Engineer is working with a traffic engineer to resolve the issues at this intersection, hopefully within the month. Councilor Nemlowill said she also had two near misses at that intersection recently.

Mayor LaMear said she was hosting Meet the Mayor meetings on the first Wednesday of each month. At these meetings, she has received several requests to discuss traffic safety. Therefore, she planned to devote her entire meeting on March 4th to traffic safety issues, with Director Cook, Engineer Harrington, and perhaps an ODOT representative present. Since Astoria has State highways within its city limits, the City does not always control of some of the streets. She encouraged everyone to attend because there are many traffic safety issues in the city.

Sue Skinner, 511 Jerome, Astoria, said there were all kinds of traffic safety problems in her neighborhood. People are starting to park on the sidewalk again. That night, she saw a truck parked on the east part of 8th Street right at the intersection at Irving Avenue and close to the sidewalk. After many complaints, the police asked people to move their vehicles. However, this only lasted about six months and now all of the vehicles are up on the sidewalk again, leaving no way to walk on the sidewalks. The intersection has always been terrible. The police have asked if she had ever actually seen a wreck in that location, and though she never has, she stops at the intersection regardless of the direction she is traveling. She also sounds her horn anytime a driver runs through the yield or stop sign. She believed many drivers did not even know there were traffic safety issues at that intersection. People who do not live in Astoria definitely would not know of the issues.

Mayor LaMear said it sounded like the Engineering Department was working on the issues, which is good.

Councilor Herzig said people should continue to bring traffic and pedestrian safety issues to the goal setting sessions. He had suggested forming an independent traffic safety committee, but Council voted against this idea. However, Council did agree that people need to bring their concerns to the City Council. The Traffic Safety Advisory Committee only meets quarterly at the start of the Planning Commission meetings and it is not an effective commission when it comes to citizen's concerns. He was glad that people bring the issues to the attention of City Council. The City needs to be much more proactive with pedestrian and traffic safety.

Councilor Nemlowill noted there were a few members of the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee in the audience and said she did not believe the committee was ineffective because of any wrongdoing of committee members. The issue is that the committee members are also Planning Commission members and hold their traffic safety meetings right before Planning Commission meetings.

Councilor Herzig agreed and said the committee was overburdened because they are working through the Riverfront planning process with many meeting that are hours long. It is too much for the Committee to also be tasked with taking citizen's concerns, making decisions, and directing Staff on traffic and pedestrian safety. He really wanted the City to have an independent committee, but this was no reflection on the current committee.

Mayor LaMear recessed the regular session to convene the Executive Session at 8:05 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Item 12(a): ORS 192.660(2) (d) – Labor Negotiation Consultations

Mayor LaMear reconvened the regular session at 8:58 p.m.

City Manager Estes explained that the first discussion was about a Letter of Understanding with the Fire Union, which stated there was an opening for a cost of living adjustment in the current contract. The City's negotiating team worked with the union's negotiating team. A 3 percent increase, retroactive to July 1, 2014, and a 2.25 percent increase, retroactive to January 1, 2015, have been proposed. The Fire Union has voted to ratify this proposal.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Nemlowill, seconded by Councilor Herzig to approve and authorize the Mayor to sign the Letter of Understanding between the City of Astoria and the International Association of Firefighters Local 696. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Price, Herzig, Nemlowill, and Mayor LaMear; Nays: None.

City Manager Estes said the next item was consideration of a union contract with the Parks General Union. The contract would be in effect for three years, retroactive to July 1, 2014, and would include cost of living adjustments of 2.5 percent for three years, a change in insurance from CIS Insurance to Teamsters Insurance, and would include compensation to a Health Reimbursement Arrangement Voluntary Employees' Benefit Association (HRA VEBA) account of 0.75 percent of the base salary. This contract has been voted on and ratified by the Parks General Union.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Price, seconded by Councilor Herzig to approve and authorize the Mayor to sign the employment agreement by and between the City of Astoria and the General Parks Employees Group, Chauffeurs, Teamsters, and Helpers Local 58. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Price, Herzig, Nemlowill, and Mayor LaMear; Nays: None.

City Manager Estes stated the next item was consideration of a resolution that would provide for a seven percent salary split between the Fire Department Lieutenant, Deputy Fire Chief, and Fire Chief. This resolution is similar to one approved last fall for Police Department Sergeants. The resolution provides some continuity in the salary split among union employees and the Fire Department management team. The most recent negotiations between the Fire Department and the union will result in the Deputy Fire Chief making less than the Lieutenants. Staff believed this needed to be addressed. The resolution will reduce the salary split from 16 percent to 7 percent.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Price, seconded by Councilor Nemlowill to approve the resolution establishing compensation policy and practice for non-represented Fire Department management in order to achieve equitable pay within the Fire Department and foster career service and merit principles deemed essential to the public interest and authorize the Mayor to sign the resolution. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Price, Herzig, Nemlowill, and Mayor LaMear; Nays: None.

City Manager Estes said the last item is a salary resolution that provides for the changes as identified in the Fire Union negotiations, Parks General negotiations, Fire Department compression issues, and an adjust for Astoria's Parks and Recreation Director.

City Council Action: Motion made by Councilor Nemlowill, seconded by Councilor Herzig to approve the salary resolution establishing a basic compensation plan for the employees of the City of Astoria and establishing regulations for the placement of present employees within the wage and salary schedules provided. Motion carried unanimously. Ayes: Councilors Price, Herzig, Nemlowill, and Mayor LaMear; Nays: None.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

APPROVED:

City Manager