



Minutes
Irrigon City Council Meeting
October 15, 2024
Irrigon City Hall - 500 NE Main Avenue

- The meeting was called to order at 6:09 pm.

Mayor Pro-Tem Benji Calvert led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilors present: Mayor Pro-Tem Benji Calvert, Melvin Lambert, Daren Strong, Heather Bishop, Hector Cano and Marilina Avila-Serratos. Mayor Michelle Patton had an excused absence.

A quorum was present.

City Staff present: City Manager Aaron Palmquist, Finance & Administrative Director Amanda Ferguson and city planning consultant Carla McLane of McLane Consulting.

Audience present: John Bass and Gus Peterson

- Mayor's Comments

The League of Oregon Cities (LOC) will be having an Elected Essentials Workshop in Pendleton on December 19, 2024. All councilors should plan on attending.

1. Public Comment

Gus Peterson from Ione addressed the council. Stating that he was running for Morrow County Commissioner because he was tired of the fighting and petty arguments. He sees himself as a positive visionary, plans to attend all city/county meetings that he is able and be regularly involved.

2. * Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of Minutes – September 17, 2024
- b. City Manager Report and Staff Updates
- c. Accounts Payable
- d. Law Enforcement
- e. Municipal Court
- f. Correspondence

Heather Bishop moved to accept and approve the consent agenda as presented. Melvin Lambert seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously

3. Employment Land, Strategies Plan

After discussing the possibility of bringing in light industrial businesses to Irrigon at the August 20, 2024 city council meeting Carla McLane was asked to bring more information regarding the process to present to council.

Oregon is governed by a statewide land use planning program. The state has in place requirements that communities wanting to either expand their urban growth boundary (UGB) or convert other lands to employment lands (commercial or industrial) they need complete an Economic Opportunities Analysis (EOA) to determine, in economic terms, the supply and demand for those types of lands.

The Department of Land Conservation and Development defines EOA as follows: “An Economic Opportunity Analysis is like an economic forecast for an area: it equips cities with information to help prepare for growth over time. These analyses help cities and counties understand which industries and services will thrive in their area, and how they can best use land within their urban growth boundaries (UGB).”

As part of the EOA process a Public Advisory Committee, or PAC, will be formed to provide insight and guidance to the process, the contractor will evaluate Goal 9 of the Comprehensive Plan to be sure that the policies are adequate to support the desired outcomes related to employment lands, and the EOA will outline the various supply and demand scenarios for the City of Irrigon. Once a contractor is selected, the process generally takes about nine months to complete and should result in an expansion of the UGB or a change in zoning of lands to support economic development, or both.

Questions that need to be considered are: How would food processing or data center development be welcomed in our community? Can economic development be done in a way that would be beneficial to the community? Does the city have adequate infrastructure to support these types of development? Many of these questions can and will be answered through an EOA as well as many others.

Carla asked if there was a consensus for her to move forward with a simple scope of work for a Request for Proposals (RFP), as well as to have a discussion with Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) in regards to an Economic Opportunity Analysis (EOA) and whether a housing analysis will be needed. Irrigon’s housing information from 2018 still has relevance and may be enough. The city’s transportation system plan may need to be updated as well. The city’s current commercial code needs to be rewritten. The current light industrial code has several uses, but it is outdated and needs to be updated.

The projected cost for the Economic Opportunity Analysis is \$85,000 and the Economic Opportunity Analysis with a Housing Analysis is \$135,000-150,000.

Potential funding sources are grants for economic opportunity analysis or other entities that would benefit from the EOA might be willing to fund the project. The city could ask for additional funding from the CREZ board.

Questions were asked by Heather Bishop, if farmland is rezoned, will the farmers be required to sell that property or conform to the new zoning requirements? If property owners refused to sell, would these actions be mute? Should we discuss it with landowners before moving forward?

Palmquist believes that if the price is right the farmers will sell.

Carla recommended the following steps: find employment lands, then have conversations with landowners to determine willingness.

Possible industries are AWS, data centers, data center support services, contractors, construction, or processing plants. As data centers move into an area, other industries that support their operations move in as well such as air filter manufacturing for data centers.

Benji Calvert declared all communities are experiencing budget expenses increases and the tax base is not keeping up. Residential land doesn’t give a very good tax base, so commercial and industrial lands are needed for growth.

Hector Cano requested getting the community involved before the request for proposals. This is a benefit for the community.

Heather requested that an announcement be made to the public, making them aware that the council is considering going out for a RFP for a EOA.

Prior to the meeting, there could be a question-and-answer session. The council could have dialogue and get a sense of what people want.

Heather stated she wants a better understanding and community input before making a decision.

Carla agreed to bring back more information at the November council meeting. Then the scope of work and RFP at the December council meeting.

4. * SB1530 Infrastructure Lift Station Project Bid Award

The city received two eligible bids for this project. The lowest-noted public bidder, Pump Tech, LLC and Romtec Utilities, Inc., complies with the noted requirements as set forth in the bidding documents.

Melvin Lambert moved to award the Advanced Lift Station Project to Pump Tech for \$149,850 pre-packaged station and Romtec utilities for \$54,375 back up generator as presented and authorizing the mayor and city manager to sign applicable documents.

Daren Strong seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

5. * Irrigon Motto Contest Selection

In June of this year the City Council put forth a contest for a new motto, which would be started at the beginning of the school year. Five (5) groups of individuals were solicited (IHS, Morrow Ed Center, IES, AC Houghton, and the Irrigon public community). Entries were to be returned by Friday, October 4, 2024. Six (6) entries were received. The following are the entries:

- AC Houghton – Mikah Moore submitted “Columbia Spirit, Small town Heart”
- IHS – Evan Purves submitted, “Just a Cast Away”
- Community – Karma Ezell submitted, “Sunsets, River, Fish and Fun”
- Community – Karma Ezell submitted, “Small Town With Big Heart”
- AC Houghton – Mateo Mendoza submitted, “Exploring Heritage, Ignite our Future”
- AC Houghton – Mia Mendoza submitted, “Uniting Journey to Discover Together”

Everyone gets a gift card, but the winner gets a wireless microphone, gift card, trophy and shirt or sweatshirt with new motto on it.

Benji nominated “Columbia Spirit, Small Town Heart”

Hector nominated, “Just a Cast Away”

Heather nominated, “Exploring Heritage, Ignite our Future”

Vote was taken and the motto “Columbia Spirit, Small Town Heart” received 4 votes and “Just a Cast Away” received 2 votes.

Heather moved to select the motto “Columbia Spirit, Small Town Heart” as the winner for the motto contest as received from Mikah Moore. Marlina Avila-Serratos seconded the motion. Motion passed with one nay from Councilor Melvin Lambert.

6. * Oregon State Parks “Splash Park Grant” Agreement

This item was postponed to a later meeting. The City of Irrigon has been awarded the \$1 million for the splash park grant but DOJ is still reviewing the documents.

7. Items for Future Council Meetings

- Annual Audit Report – Nov/Dec 2024
- SB1530 Infrastructure Project – Feb 2025
- Food Pod Construction Project – Fall 2024
- Splash Park Construction - 2026

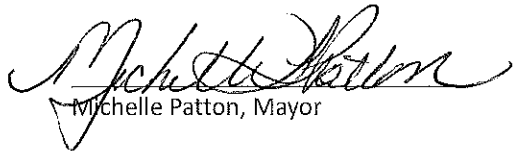
- Ordinance 260-23 “Camping and Homelessness” - TBD
- Boards and Commissions (Irrigon Code) –TBD
- Development Code – On-going
- Public Contracting & Purchasing Policy – TBD

Marlina moved to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm

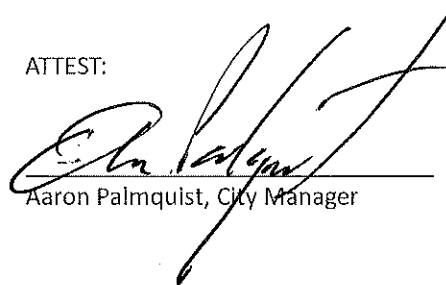
Minutes prepared by Amanda Ferguson.

Signed:



Michelle Patton, Mayor

ATTEST:



Aaron Palmquist, City Manager