

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
Tuesday August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022, 5:30 P.M.  
City Hall Council Chambers  
115 N 3<sup>rd</sup> Street

The Council of the City of Oregon met Tuesday August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022, at 5:30 P.M.

The meeting was held at the City Hall Council Chambers and on Zoom.

Present: Mayor Ken Williams  
Commissioner Melanie Cozzi  
Commissioner Tim Krug  
Commission Terry Schuster  
Commissioner Kurt Wilson  
City Administrator Darin DeHaan

Also Present: Lieutenant Joe Brooks, Public Works Director Bill Covell, Don & Joy Groenhagen, Judy Groharing, Johanna Hayne, George Howe, Ron Klein, Kim Krug, Dan Luepkes, Ryan Magnoni, and Kevin O'Brien.

Present via Zoom: City Attorney Paul Chadwick, Corey Buck, Terry Plemmons, and Alexa Zoellner.

Absent: City Clerk Cheryl Hilton and Police Chief Shawn Melville.

Mayor Ken Williams called the meeting to order.

Public Works Director Bill Covell started the pledge of allegiance.

Public Comment:

Johanna Hayne spoke regarding the solar credit and costs associated with the variance application submitted by USS Ducks Solar LLC. She also expressed concerns on property values and the decommissioning costs associated with the project.

Judy Groharing also spoke about the variance application submitted by USS Ducks Solar LLC. She is concerned with the placement of the electric poles, disturbance to wildlife, and the amount of tax dollars the city would receive. She would like to see the property used for potential expansion to the Century Hill Subdivision.

Ron Klein expressed concern with the sounds created on the transition lines. He also asked the Council to make an informed decision for the community.

Kevin O'Brien commented on the expansion of the tax base for the city. He said there would be a buffer between the subdivision and the solar project. He thought the project would be a good idea.

Angie Bartel expressed concerns with the environmental impact at Oregon Park West when the solar project is there.

Mayor Ken Williams closed the public comment portion of the meeting at 5:47 pm.

Commissioner Kurt Wilson moved to approve the August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022, minutes, Seconded by Commissioner Melanie Cozzi.

Roll Call: Cozzi, Krug, Schuster, Wilson, Williams. No Nays.

Commissioner Terry Schuster moved to approve payroll in the amount of \$63,177.48 and the current warrants as listed:

Aegis Construction, Inc	\$410.00
Armcor Cartridge Incorporated	\$1,095.00
Bergy's Automotive	\$141.88
Bill Covell	\$40.00
Blackhawk Waterways	\$60.00
Butitta Bros Automotive - Oregon	\$47.50
Casper Home Inspection LLC	\$1,450.00
Cheryl Hilton	\$40.00
City of Oregon	\$5,000.00
City of Oregon	\$72,400.00
Comcast	\$325.50
ComEd	\$36.83
Constellation New Energy, Inc	\$1,134.60
Devin DeHaan	\$40.00
Dixon Paint	\$1,180.24
Dustin Runyon	\$40.00
Ecolab	\$145.41
Ehmen	\$815.00
Ehmen	\$140.00
Euclid Manager's	\$1,211.35
FCS LLC	\$5,020.00
Ferguson Enterprises LLC #3326	\$376.01
Gregory Spencer	\$40.00
Hawkins, Inc	\$1,105.63
ILEAS	\$60.00
Illinois EPA	\$11,677.38
Illinois EPA	\$72,768.30
Integrated Supply Network LLC	\$8,436.06
IP Communications, Inc	\$637.01
James Taylor	\$125.00
Jayce Gusloff	\$40.00
Jeff Pennington	\$40.00
Joe Brooks	\$40.00
Josh Lee	\$40.00
Josiah Flanagan	\$40.00
Ken Williams	\$109.29
Kurt Wilson	\$65.00
Maison Crawford	\$40.00

Manheim Solutions, Inc	\$2,592.00
Martin and Company	\$993.43
Mary Elliott	\$40.00
Matt Kalnins	\$40.00
Melanie Cozzi	\$40.00
Metropolitan Industries, Inc	\$1,098.77
Old National Bank	\$1,925.60
Oregon Community Unit School Dist.	\$6,000.00
Pace Analytical Services	\$149.87
Pines Meadow	\$51.00
Polo Cooperative Association	\$7,701.08
Postmaster	\$275.00
Postmaster	\$732.16
Quill	\$36.98
R.N.O.W.	\$589.20
Ray O'Herron Co, Inc	\$62.87
Rogers Ready Mix	\$659.00
Scott Wallace	\$40.00
Shawn Melville	\$122.25
Shawn Melville	\$70.00
Stillman BancCorp	\$2,863.65
Sun Life Financial	\$432.16
Tad Dominski	\$40.00
Terry Schuster	\$65.00
Tim Brechon	\$40.00
Tim Krug	\$40.00
Verizon	\$553.09
WasteWater Management of Northern IL	\$5,040.00
Willett Hofmann & Assoc	\$30,435.10
Zach McKean	\$40.00
	<b>\$249,181.20</b>

Seconded by Commissioner Melanie Cozzi.

Roll Call: Cozzi, Krug, Schuster, Wilson, Williams. No Nays.

Commissioner Kurt Wilson moved to approve a Variance Application submitted by USS Ducks Solar LLC, Seconded by Commissioner Terry Schuster.

**Discussion:** Mayor Ken Williams updated the Council what the requirements are to re-zone a property according to state law and the city code. The property is currently zoned R-1 with Ag exemption. He said any changes are serious affairs. He stated state law requirements, the zoning can be changed if the plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances not of his or her own making and variation if granted will not alter the essential character of the municipality. City code also states the Planning Commission and the City Council shall not vary the regulations of this title unless both bodies find that

based on the evidence presented to them the plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances and the variation if granted will not alter the essential character of the locality or cause substantial injury to the value of other property in the area of the city. He asked the petitioner to present his project.

Ryan Magnoni presented on behalf of USS Ducks Solar LLC. He spoke about the solar projects savings rates, concerns in home values, the pollinator habitat, concerns about construction, concerns about safety, screening and landscaping, and the base tax increase for the city.

Commissioner Terry Schuster asked how high the panels would be off the ground. Ryan Magnoni said they would be about six feet off the ground. Commissioner Terry Schuster also asked if the city had solicited the project. Ryan Magnoni stated no, they had reached out to ComEd to get initial applications. The solar company has been in the area for about ten months looking for an area with the infrastructure for the project. Commissioner Terry Schuster stated this is not a city project, the city has not pursued this project, the project is between the landowner and the solar company. He also said the savings was on supply only.

Commissioner Terry Schuster also stated there are other places for the city to increase population such as new subdivisions and annexations. He also asked about the decommissioning of the project. Ryan Magnoni said there is an agriculture mitigation agreement that must be submitted to the state. The agreement requires a bond be posted with an engineer's cost estimate prior to receiving a building permit. Mayor Ken Williams said the solar company must apply to the state for approval of the project and he asked what percentage of a chance his company has. Ryan Magnoni said a new program has been written by the state and believes they have a fifty to seventy five percent approval of their application.

Commissioner Kurt Wilson asked if there were any fees to subscribe or unsubscribe. Ryan Magnoni said there is no cost for either. Ryan Magnoni said the savings would be ten to twenty percent.

Commissioner Kurt Wilson said there is a battery backup that is in the middle of the project, at the Planning Commission meeting the potential noise was a concern.

Commissioner Melanie Cozzi said this would be backup energy for the city. She also asked if ComEd would be the supplier or do homeowners need to sign up. Ryan Magnoni said once a variance permit is approved by the city an application would be submitted to ComEd and a lot would be dependent on when the solar company started producing power. Commissioner Melanie Cozzi asked how much power is generated daily. Ryan Magnoni stated five megawatts of electricity is produced every hour, about seventy percent of the households in the City of Oregon.

Commissioner Tim Krug said he is a huge advocate of clean energy however he would not like to see a solar field in a residential area. He would like to see it in another location. He has had members of the community reach out to him stating they do not want this in the community. Mayor Ken Williams asked if there was property in the county that could be used. Ryan Magnoni said they sent out letters to landowners in the area to see if there was interest. Dan Luepkes was the only landowner who reached out. Commissioner Kurt Wilson also talked about noise being a potential issue and could a sunset clause be added to the contract.

Commissioner Melanie Cozzi expressed she is also an advocate for clean energy however with the reduced number of R-1 areas to expand for housing, and that takes priority. Mayor Ken Williams said the property was zoned R-1 as part of the comprehensive plan, being an ideal location for homes, close to other homes and parks. He also asked everyone to look at the topography of the Stonegate Ridge subdivision. There are hills and slopes there just like the property that is being looked at by the solar company. He also said he looks twenty years in the future when he makes decisions for the future of the city. Even if only half of the property were used for residential homes that would provide additional revenue and more students in our schools. He called for a roll call vote to approve the variance request over the Planning Commissions recommendation to deny the request.

Roll Call: Cozzi, Nay. Krug, Nay. Schuster, Nay. Wilson, Nay. Williams, Nay. No Yeas.

Commissioner Tim Krug moved to approve Resolution 2022-5 Authorizing the Closure of Rt 2 between Webster and Illinois Street and Rt. 64 between Monroe Street and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street for AOP Parade, Seconded by Commissioner Terry Schuster.

Roll Call: Cozzi, Krug, Schuster, Wilson, Williams. No Nays.

Mayor Ken Williams moved to approve an Agreement with Northern Illinois University Center for Governmental Studies for the Comprehensive Plan Update, Seconded by Commissioner Melanie Cozzi.

**Discussion:** Mayor Ken Williams stated many of the objectives on the 2016 Comprehensive Plan have been completed. The next step is to reach out to residents and business owners and re-establish what the future will be for the city. Commissioner Melanie Cozzi expressed interest in being involved with the process. City Administrator Darin DeHaan said seventeen thousand dollars of the cost will be funded with ARPA Funds received from the county.

Roll Call: Cozzi, Krug, Schuster, Wilson, Williams. No Nays.

Commissioner Tim Krug moved to approve Pay Request #5 for O'Brien Civil Works for ongoing work on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Seconded by Commissioner Terry Schuster.

**Discussion:** Commissioner Terry Schuster asked if the project would be completed before Autumn on Parade. Public Works Director Bill Covell stated there should be no impact on Autumn on Parade. City Administrator Darin DeHaan said McDonalds had concerns about access, they are working through these concerns.

Roll Call: Cozzi, Krug, Schuster, Wilson, Williams. No Nays.

Mayor Ken Williams moved to approve the City of Oregon Governmental Policy Manual and Authorize the City Administrator to make changes as required, Seconded by Commissioner Melanie Cozzi.

**Discussion:** Mayor Ken Williams said changes made to the policy will be given to the City Council quarterly for review. City Administrator Darin DeHaan said the city will be using the Lexipol system. The police department has been using the Lexipol system for a few years. Lexipol has a team of attorneys that reviews all the changes when they come in and updates are pushed through the portal. The city can review the changes before updating the city policy. There is also an app for employees to use for easy access. Everything from the city handbook has been integrated into Lexipol. He also stated that this will help him keep the policies updated since the city has no HR department.

Roll Call: Cozzi, Krug, Schuster, Wilson, Williams. No Nays.

Public Works Director Bill Covell said Jefferson Street is all cored out, there were soft spots that have been repaired. Concrete work will be started later this week. Blower filters at the sewer plant were replaced. He also congratulated Scott Wallace for passing his Class 1 test and Dustin for the new addition to his family.

City Administrator Darin DeHaan has met with Bill and Jeff. They are working on a plan of action for the lead line replacement. They want to make sure there is enough information gathered before putting it out to the public. The full plan will be sent out to the City Council first.

Commissioner Kurt Wilson would like to remind residents to call Moring Disposal if there are large items to be picked up.

Commissioner Terry Schuster gave a quick review of the audit. There were no irregularities. The audit was changed to the accrual accounting method instead of the cash basis method of accounting. He stated one important change in the general fund, the balance is about one million twenty-one thousand dollars. This is an increase of three hundred ninety-four thousand dollars, half of the increase was from the federal ARPA funds and the other half was from increase in state revenue sharing. Several years ago, the general fund balance was about three hundred fifty thousand dollars.

Commissioner Melanie Cozzi said the Benesh bench at Phelps Park will be unveiled tomorrow at 5:30. She also thanked the city for allowing her to go to the CDI courses. Thursday will be the Farmers Market and Ukulele Station will be there to perform. She also thanked Liz Hiemstra for covering the Farmers Market when she was unable to attend. She congratulated Scott Wallace on passing his class 1 test and Dustin Runyon on the addition to his family.

Mayor Ken Williams thanked the council for the good discussion.

Commissioner Terry Schuster moved to adjourn the meeting, Seconded by Commissioner Kurt Wilson.

Roll Call: Cozzi, Krug, Schuster, Wilson, Williams. No Nays.

Adjourn: 6:50 P.M.

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Ken Williams, Mayor

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cheryl Hilton, City Clerk