

March 21, 2011
Noon
Newport, Oregon

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Councilors present: McConnell, Beemer, Brusselback, Allen, Sawyer, Bertuleit, and Roumagoux.

Staff present: Voetberg, Hawker, Marshall, and Miranda.

Others in attendance: Walter Sherman, Patricia Patrick-Joling, and Dave Morgan.

1. Municipal Court Judge, Jeff Pridgeon, appeared before Council and reviewed municipal court activities. He reported that the court operations could be improved through consistency and technology. He noted that there have been multiple court clerks throughout his tenure with the city, and with consistency in the staff, the court processes could be improved, including the ability to collect more of the outstanding fines. He also suggested improving the software used by the court. He recommended the city begin accepting credit cards for fines, and investigate the possibility of adopting an ordinance that would allow the city to impose a surcharge when a fine is paid on a payment plan. He reported that a small copier will be installed in the courtroom, and this should streamline some of the court's work. A discussion ensued regarding the entry of data from tickets, and particularly, the fact that it is now entered three times by different people. He noted that improved software could alleviate this duplication of efforts.
2. Council had a telephonic conversation with Christy Monson, of the Local Government Law Group. Issues discussed included municipal court prosecution, various models for working with the city, and ordinance drafting. Monson suggested that, in regard to ordinances, it would be advantageous if staff had an initial conversation with her regarding a proposed ordinance.

A discussion ensued regarding municipal court prosecutions. Monson suggested that her firm respond if an issue affects city liability, or is a legislative, administrative, or policy matter. She recommended that local counsel be used as the prosecutor in other minor cases.

It was noted that the city is reworking the solid waste ordinance. Monson reported that she had a preliminary review of documents and had spoken to the former city attorney for approximately an hour, but that no detailed discussions were held.

Voetberg noted that the solid waste ordinance revision will not occur until after Thompson's rate report to the city.

It was noted that Council had received a memo from Monson describing the various relationship models for contracted legal services, and that Council will be making a decision regarding that at this evening's meeting.

3. Allen suggested that the city manager's employment agreement be amended to extend the date of the annual evaluation. It was agreed that staff would draft an amendment to allow for the evaluation to be held by June 1, and present it to Council at this evening's meeting. Allen reported that he and Roumagoux have been working on evaluation materials for the city manager, and that information should be available by the next meeting.
4. Voetberg requested an executive session next week to present the offers from the Police and Public Works unions.

Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:52 P.M.