

CITY OF JEFFERSON
Council Worksession
September 9, 2021
6:30pm

COUNCILORS PRESENT: Dave Beyerl, Walt Perry, Bob Rossiter, David Watkins (zoom),
Mayor Michael Myers
COUNCILORS ABSENT: David Kellogg, Patrick McKenzie
STAFF PRESENT: Sarah Cook, CM/R; Jeff Buskirk, PWD

I. **CALL TO ORDER/FLAG SALUTE** – Mayor Myers called the meeting to order at 6:32pm and led in the flag salute.

II. **WORKSESSION TOPICS**

A. Old Gas Station Park – Reconsideration

Mayor Myers, after talking to different people in the community about the splash pad idea, noted how disappointed they were to hear the idea was not approved for further research. With that knowledge, he asked that the topic be brought back up for Council to reconsider, noting several interested citizens were in attendance.

The first to speak was, longtime resident and community volunteer, Mark Manning, who shared his enthusiasm about the splash pad. While he understood the safety concerns, he was confident they could be mitigated with proper planning and design of the area, pointing out that children walked to and from the Library, pool, and schools all the time and none of those areas had any of the safety measures in place like the area proposed for the splash pad park had. He thought the splash pad would be the most important feature of the entire proposed park, and the one thing that would draw people back again and again, above anything else there. It would be impressive, a visual statement, and a gateway to the City and Main Street. He went on to share a story about the splash pad in the City of Hubbard, which had many similarities in terms of location to a busy highway, similar size, etc. They turned an old, derelict park into a splash pad park and it transformed the entire area and gave it a whole new life. He, and everybody he spoke with about the idea, really hoped the splash pad plan would go forward.

Lance and Celine Gunderson were present with their children. Mrs. Gunderson indicated she drove to Corvallis specifically for their splash pad fountains because the river was not safe for small children. Her experience had always been positive and she thought it would be of great benefit to Jefferson, noting it would be a draw for nearby communities to visit the City. She too felt there were many ways to resolve any safety concerns about the location. Mr. Gunderson added that he grew up in town and walked all over, as did the kids today. He felt the location was in a good central location, within walking distance from neighborhoods, and would be a very positive addition for the community. He added that hindsight was 20/20 and he hoped this wouldn't be a missed opportunity they regretted later.

Mersha Studer announced she was in favor of the splash pad idea, but not at the proposed location because downtown parking was already an issue. She felt something like it would be better located near the pool. Mayor Myers pointed out that was Parks & Rec property, and not only was it outside the City, but he wasn't certain they'd want to take on the expense of the project, noting the City was in the position to do so. As for parking, he said parking downtown was always an issue during the summer, but there was also a large presence of foot traffic, kids and families, all over town, which he didn't think was any different.

Patti Ball expressed her favoritism, noting it was a golden opportunity for Jefferson. She said the town was changing, there were a lot of new people, and there needed to be things for them to do. She also commented that, for years, kids had been walking to and from school, up and down the highway with no sidewalks, while the proposed park location includes a controlled traffic signal, lighting, and was as visible as it could get. She further mentioned it's proximity to the Conser House, Library, Community Center, and how it would be an opportunity to bring people into town, if for nothing more than out of curiosity.

With no further comments, Mayor Myers directed his attention to the City Council for their feedback. The overall consensus from Council was that they liked the idea of a splash pad in town, but not at the proposed location. The primary concern expressed was safety due to the busy intersection; however, other concerns voiced by some included the cost of liability, responsibility to clean and maintain, and how the water would be processed or treated. Mayor Myers explained staff would address all of the questions as part of their research, and advised the Council to stay out of the weeds and let them do their work. They were simply at the early conceptual stage and did not want to invest a lot of time into a project that the Council was absolutely not interested in pursuing. He indicated his expectation was that the topic would come back to Council periodically for updates, and while it was easy for the Council to come up with reasons to say no, he was interested in learning how they could get to "yes", noting the funds were there, and they'd heard from several citizens in favor.

B. Historic Resources Evaluation System

Mark Manning, Chair of the Landmarks Advisory Committee (LAC), provided background on LAC's performance, the 2016 survey of homes that were over 50 years old, the rating system, which included historic value, physical materials, appearance, etc., and the inventory list created from the data. Homes that were on the inventory list would be eligible to be on the City's list of historic properties if it met one or more of the four criteria. Once an inventory was created, those homeowners could apply to be on the National Registry, which opened them up for other incentives, including grants. Mark explained the policy before them was the evaluation system for the whole process, which many cities already had in place. He clarified that the information was based on the exterior of the home only, and used his own home as an example to compare to some of the listed criteria. Councilor Beyerl moved to adopt the Historic Resources Evaluation System as presented by the LAC. Councilor Perry seconded. All in favor: Ayes – 4, Opposed – 0. **APPROVED.**

III. APPROVAL OF A/P – Councilor Beyerl moved to approve, seconded by Councilor Watkins.
Discussion: Councilor Perry received clarification from Sarah Cook on the breakdown of some

invoices when it repeats multiple lines, which she explained was due to the cost being spread over multiple funds or line items. All in favor: Ayes – 4, Opposed – 0. **APPROVED.**

IV. VISITORS

Linda Baker announced the Dolly Parton Imagination Library would be coming to the Jefferson Public Library.

Patti Ball shared information about a spaghetti dinner fundraiser for the Conser House, set to start at 4pm September 25th at Tommy's.

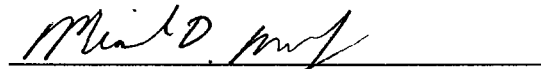
V. COUNCIL/STAFF COMMENTS

Dave Beyerl completed 2 park benches and they were stored at the public works shop. For future reference, he shared the cost was about \$1,000 for the 2 benches, between parts, material, and powder coating. The Council appreciated his gift tremendously!

Mayor Myers shared that the LOC Conference had been cancelled. He also said he chatted with some bicyclists at a park about what was important to them and they confirmed bike repair, restrooms, drinking fountain, and bike rack were all important.

VI. ADJOURNMENT – Councilor Beyerl moved to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Rossiter. All were in favor and the meeting closed at 7:48pm.

MINUTES APPROVED this 28th day of October, 2021.



Michael D. Myers, Mayor

ATTEST:



Sarah Cook, City Manager/Recorder