

**COMMON COUNCIL  
TUESDAY, JUNE 13, 2023  
6:00 PM**

Mayor Ryan Daniel – Present  
Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle – Present  
Attorney Marcia McNagny – Present

**Council Members**

Walter Crowder – Present  
Jennifer Middleton – Present  
Jennifer Romano – Present  
Tad Varga – Present  
Daniel Weigold – Present

The Columbia City Common Council met in regular session with all members present, Mayor Daniel presiding.

**MINUTES** Motion was made by Jennifer Romano to approve an overview of the May 23, 2023, meeting minutes as presented, Tad Varga seconded the motion, all voted aye.

**SWEARING IN OF PARK DIRECTOR – MATT HEIDEN** Rosie Coyle performed the swearing in ceremony for Matt Heiden.

**PARK DEPARTMENT REPORT** Matt Heiden reported the pool season started strong, baseball season was winding down and they were preparing for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration.

**COMPLIANCE WITH STATEMENT OF BENEFITS: KYOCERA SGS PRECISION TOOLS – PERSONAL PROPERTY 2020-18** Mayor Daniel noted new forms were submitted and can now see the full numbers. He advised it was requested that they come before Council. He shared that Dale Buuck was not able to be present either but knew he has had multiple conversations with Kyocera. He noted Kyocera was a good company for our community but also the numbers do not necessarily show the return that was expected. He suggested, to be fair, since 2022 was just last year, maybe it was a scenario that if given another year, the actual number may be higher.

Councilmembers expressed their disappointment with no representation from Kyocera at the meeting. Jennifer Romano felt they surely had someone that could be present to answer questions if it was important to them. Walt Crowder advised Council does not know the situation and are flexible in the appropriate manner but also must set examples of what is expected of everyone else. He felt they were a good company for our community but can only state that under assumption.

Rosie Coyle explained this was for Personal Property, which goes to the Assessor. She advised they have to show proof of everything to their office to get the abatement and do not necessarily have to put that through to City Council. She shared there would be another layer of checks before they would be approved for the abatement. She explained City Council has to approve

that it is ok to send it on to the Assessor. Mayor Daniel felt it was pretty clear that in 2020 they pretty much met what was estimated and felt the issue was with the 2022 abatement. He pointed out the number of additional employees was estimated at 10, and actually was 11, but the salaries were a lot less than what was anticipated.

Tad Varga questioned if there was enough time to table it again. Rosie Coyle advised they could. Tad Varga advised he at least wanted to find out more.

Tom LaRue advised there were signs posted down there advertising for Swiss Operators and CNC Operators and suggested they were maybe having a hard time finding employees.

Jennifer Romano did not feel it was Council's responsibility to know their business and they should have someone available to answer questions. Mayor Daniel advised he talked with Dale Buuck earlier and he confirmed that message was communicated.

Mayor Daniel suggested moving forward with the 2020 personal property abatement.

Motion was made by Tad Varga to find Kyocera SGS Precision Tools in compliance with the 2020 Personal Property abatement and grant an additional year of abatement, Dan Weigold seconded the motion, Jennifer Middleton, Tad Varga, Dan Weigold and Walt Crowder voted aye, Jennifer Romano was opposed.

**COMPLIANCE WITH STATEMENT OF BENEFITS: KYOCERA SGS PRECISION TOOLS – PERSONAL PROPERTY 2022-26** Mayor Daniel advised this was the abatement a lot of the conversation was on and questioned how Council wanted to proceed. Walt Crowder advised he would like to give them one more opportunity to come in; he agreed it was not for Council to manage their business but wanted to give them another opportunity. He clarified that the longer they wait, the more likely they would not get the abatement. Mayor Daniel suggested if that was the direction Council was leaning and they do not show at the next meeting you could certainly not grant the abatement. Rosie Coyle advised as long as the decision comes from Council to wait, they would be ok. Walt Crowder felt Council would be giving them every opportunity to make it successful. Dan Weigold agreed and added if they do not show then they do not care enough. Walt Crowder mentioned at that point the abatement would go away and they would have to start over. Mayor Daniel advised they would just lose that year; much like Holiday Inn Express where they lost 2 years because they had not filled out the paperwork. He explained the schedule continues but is based on whether Council approves it or not.

Tad Varga advised he wanted to give them the benefit of the doubt but is torn.

Jennifer Romano felt there were deadlines for a reason.

Mike Shoda suggested the reason salaries may not be up there is maybe because they were having a hard time coming up with people who were trained in running the machinery. He advised he could not say that is what the problem was but you cannot just pull someone off the street to run those machines. Mayor Daniel felt they 100% agreed but the challenge was we do not know that.

Dan Weigold stressed the bottom line is they need to respect the abatement and when it is requested for someone to come in, they should make every attempt. Jennifer Romano felt it also sets a bad precedence for other businesses; we all have those guidelines that we have to follow through on or have a penalty for it.

Walt Crowder advised he would still like to give them one more opportunity to be here and if that does not work, they will forfeit that percentage of the abatement until next year.

Motion was made by Walt Crowder to table this until the next meeting and strongly request their presence.

Jennifer Romano felt there should be someone present from the company, not Dale Buuck. Tad Varga agreed.

Walt Crowder amended his motion to table this until the next City Council meeting and have a representative, employed by the Company, be present to discuss the abatement, Dan Weigold seconded the motion, Jennifer Middleton, Tad Varga, Dan Weigold and Walt Crowder voted aye, Jennifer Romano was opposed.

**PUBLIC HEARING – UTILITY RATE ADJUSTMENTS** Mayor Daniel recessed the Council meeting to hold the public hearing on the utility rate adjustments.

Hearing no comments or questions, Mayor Daniel closed the public hearing.

**ELECTRIC RATE ADJUSTMENT – ORDINANCE 2023-5 2<sup>ND</sup> READING** Motion was made by Jennifer Middleton to read Ordinance 2023-5 by title only, Jennifer Romano seconded the motion, all voted aye. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Ordinance 2023-5 an ordinance amending the rates and charges for the City of Columbia City Municipal Electric Utility.

Motion was made by Tad Varga to approve Ordinance 2023-5 on second and final reading, Dan Weigold seconded the motion, all voted aye.

**WATER RATE ADJUSTMENT – ORDINANCE 2023-6: 2<sup>ND</sup> READING** Motion was made by Jennifer Middleton to read Ordinance 2023-6 by title only, Jennifer Romano seconded the motion, all voted aye. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Ordinance 2023-6 an ordinance amending the rates and charges for the City of Columbia City Municipal Water Utility.

Motion was made by Walt Crowder to approve Ordinance 2023-6 on second and final reading, Tad Varga seconded the motion, all voted aye.

**SEWER RATE ADJUSTMENT – ORDINANCE 2023-7: 2<sup>ND</sup> READING** Motion was made by Jennifer Romano to read Ordinance 2023-7 by title only, Dan Weigold seconded the motion, all voted aye. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Ordinance 2023-7 an ordinance amending the rates and charges for the City of Columbia City Municipal Sewer Utility.

Motion was made by Jennifer Middleton to approve Ordinance 2023-7 on second and final reading, Tad Varga seconded the motion, all voted aye.

**STORMWATER RATE ADJUSTMENT – ORDINANCE 2023-8: 2<sup>ND</sup> READING** Motion was made by Jennifer Romano to read Ordinance 2023-8 by title only, Tad Varga seconded the motion, all voted aye. Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle read Ordinance 2023-8 an ordinance amending the rates and charges for the City of Columbia City Municipal Stormwater Utility.

Mayor Daniel noted in his 12 years they have never touched this utility.

Dan Weigold mentioned the County assessed drainage fees were paid out of stormwater instead of charging individuals. Mayor Daniel advised that was correct for within the City limits; those are paid out of the stormwater fees.

Motion was made by Dan Weigold to approve Ordinance 2023-8 on second and final reading, Tad Varga seconded the motion, all voted aye.

**DEPARTMENT REPORTS** **Mike Cook** – Safety Committee walk through, update on CSO-19 project, worked with Miller Drain on Columbia Shores liftstation, continue to work on ARV's, no bids received for the force main project so have tabled the project, attended AFE meeting in Auburn to be eligible for State and Federal funding. **Mike Shoda** – changing out meters, fixing storm drain sink holes, postponing flushing hydrants until Fall. **Tom LaRue** – Truck 105 having minor issues, took equipment to Touch-a-Truck event at Library, Union Township took old gas meters, repairs to Fire Museum roof. **Kelly Cearbaugh** – removed trees at cemetery, maintenance to Jet Machine, 2 guys attending CDL training, equipment to Touch-a-Truck events, crack sealing completed, road patching and continue with sewer maintenance in Columbia Shores. **Terry Wherry** – fiber project at North water tower complete, equipment ordered for new park office.

**CDL TRAINING** Walt Crowder questioned if the CDL training was a result of the new law. Kelly Cearbaugh advised that was correct. He shared we use to train in-house and it was fairly cheap but then they came out with this new law that requires a 3-week class. Mayor Daniel shared our costs use to be, in total, a couple hundred dollars for one person and now we are sending 5 people to this class and is costing us \$23,000. He believed it was the Feds who said that anyone who holds a CDL has to be able to drive a big truck, even though what we do is not that, we do not do over the road trucking or hauling but that is what they have mandated.

Walt Crowder questioned if the Fire Department was exempt. Mayor Daniel advised they were. Kelly Cearbaugh did not feel that made sense that they were exempt but his department was not. Tom LaRue advised there has been a lot of discussion on that topic and the reason being is because all of the volunteers would have to be sent for the training as well.

Kelly Cearbaugh felt Cities should be exempt for things like this. Mayor Daniel felt they could easily make different classes of CDL's.

Tad Varga questioned if the person doing this was a government agency or private instructor. Mayor Daniel advised it was a private instructor. He shared we have talked about the idea of certifying someone in-house but finding the right person who would be here for a significant amount of time who already has both classes of CDL's.

Mayor Daniel advised we were trying to work with the people at IMEA who are working to hopefully put a program in place for city electric utilities to go through for a CDL course.

**APPROPRIATION REQUEST** Rosie Coyle shared she and the Mayor met over some budget items and discovered they never budgeted anything out of the Riverboat money, which is where they want to pay for the equipment for the park office. She requested Council approve adding \$150,000.00 to the Riverboat budget. Mayor Daniel reported this was both cash on hand as well as what is anticipated revenue for this year; he did not anticipate expending all of that.

Walt Crowder questioned if this would be for IT. Mayor Daniel advised it would be to outfit the park office with all of the necessary equipment. He noted the cost was \$75,000.00.

Motion was made by Dan Weigold to appropriate \$150,000 to the Riverboat Fund for 2023, Walt Crowder seconded the motion, all voted aye.

**MAYOR REPORT** Mayor Daniel shared department reports for Shawn Lickey, Gary Parrett and Chip Hill. He also gave an update on the happenings of the Solid Waste Board and have started meeting monthly. He shared that we were looking into a mass notification system for the City. He reported Chip Hill was attending a US 30 meeting. He advised they had firefighter interviews on Friday and community BINGO at Eagle Park on Saturday. He reported everything was in place for Old Settler's week. He advised he has an intern, Eden Oddou working with in his office for the next month and half.

**ARTS COMMISSION** Jennifer Romano reported on upcoming Arts Commission events. They were partnering with Columbia City Connect and the Mayor's office Summer in the City events.

**DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION** Jennifer Romano reported they held their first meeting for the Downtown Revitalization. She shared they met with the consultants to discuss what was going right and what improvements could be made. She advised there was a survey created and will be disbursed for people to share their ideas.

**CHICKENS** Melanie Love shared while waiting on a decision on chickens she has planted a garden and has learned that backyard chickens can aid in the compost to keep soil balanced and her garden growing.

Having no further business to discuss, Mayor Daniel called the meeting adjourned.

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Mayor Ryan Daniel

Attest:

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Clerk Treasurer Rosie Coyle