

CALL TO ORDER The Regular meeting of the Seaside City Council was called to order at 7:03 PM by Mayor Don Larson.

Mayor Larson stated the City Council meeting was being held at the Seaside Fire Department since there was not any electricity at City Hall and other parts of the City.

ATTENDANCE Present: Mayor Don Larson, Council President Tim Tolan, Councilors Stubby Lyons, Larry Haller, Dave Moore, and Don Johnson.

Absent: Councilor Gary Diebolt.

Also Present: Trish Downey, Assistant to the City Manager; Dan Van Thiel, City Attorney; Russ Vandenberg, Convention Center General Manager; Mikaela Norval, Tourism Director; Donald Allison, Seaside Signal; Jeff Nelson, KAST; Nancy McCarthy, Daily Astorian.

AGENDA Motion to approve the April 13 2009, agenda; carried unanimously. (Johnson/Lyons)

MINUTES Motion to approve the March 23, 2009, minutes; carried unanimously. (Lyons/Johnson)

CONFLICT Mayor Larson asked whether any Councilor wished to declare a conflict of interest.

No one declared a conflict of interest.

CONSENT AGENDA Motion to approve payment of the bills in the amount of \$605,915.09; carried unanimously. (Lyons/Haller)

VACANCY – PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE Mayor Larson stated there was one vacancy on the Parks Advisory Committee with one application received. Mayor Larson asked Council what they wished to do.

Councilor Lyons stated the applicant should be interviewed.

Mayor Larson stated Council would interview the applicant on Monday, April 27, 2009, prior to the regular City Council meeting.

SEASIDE CONVENTION CENTER EXPANSION FEASIBILITY STUDY Tony Peterman, Strategic Advisory Group, stated the primary mission statement for the Convention Center was to facilitate convention and tradeshow events that generated economic impact to the Seaside area and the secondary mission statement was when primary events were not booked, the facility was to be used for community, education, cultural, religious, athletic, and entertainment events. Mr. Peterman further stated there were approximately ninety days of lost business to competitive destinations. The ninety days represented approximately \$9,000,000.00 in lost revenue that Seaside could have had. One reason conventions went elsewhere was the lack of space at the Convention Center. People who had used the facilities liked the quality and high customer service. Mr. Peterman further stated the study looked at facilities within a 300 mile radius and would look at Seaside pertaining to the convention industry, hotel market, review the results of the meeting planners, and the economy overall. Mr. Peterman further stated the study did find that the Seaside Convention Center should consider expanding the facilities. There were three primary pieces of information that supported the data. There were over 300 individually owned Convention Centers and Seaside was approximately 200,000 square feet. Twenty percent of the overall facilities were the same or smaller than Seaside and eighty percent were larger than Seaside. There had only been three times in the last twenty two years that the demand for Convention Center space had decreased, the early nineties, after 9-11, and now during the current recession. Mr. Peterman stated the health of the market in Seaside was not great and was about a mid fifty percent occupancy market. Most hotel markets wanted to be in the high sixties or low seventies. There had not been much of a change since 2006 when considering occupancy except during November and December of 2008. Mr. Peterman stated there was an online survey conducted with seventy-five meeting planners in a 300 mile radius. The most important thing to meeting planners when selecting a destination for a convention was hotels, and then space. Fifty-three percent of the meeting planners had been to Seaside and forty-seven had not. Most meeting planners came to Seaside because of the good value, liked the services from the Convention Center, and liked the overall destination and feel of Seaside. Most meeting planners did not come to Seaside because of insufficient space at the Convention Center, and food quality and service. When meeting planners did not choose Seaside where did they go, Sun River was the number one selected destination, then Eugene Hilton, and Resort at the Mountain. There were over forty five destinations that the meeting planners had gone to which was very surprising. Mr. Peterman further stated almost seventy percent of the meeting planners needed two hundred or less rooms, and eighty eight percent needed four hundred or fewer rooms.

Besides building a larger convention facilities people liked to be close to the hotels and 40% of the meeting planners stated that Seaside needed to upgrade their existing hotel facilities, upgrade the quality of the food at the Convention Center, and the facility needed to be large enough to allow a Ballroom which was very critical to larger groups. Mr. Peterman stated there were nine primary competitors and they offered true Ballroom Space with multiple uses. The total facility should offer at least 7,500 square feet of space.

NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

David Szymanski stated he wanted to give Council and the public a brief introduction to the feasibility study of the National Parks Service. There was a proposal to designate portions of the lower Columbia as a Pacific National Heritage Area. The project would not go forward until the National Parks Service presented the information to local governments and the public. The important thing to remember about a National Heritage Area was they were not a government program but were run by a non profit coordinating entity. Mr. Szymanski further stated there were forty-nine National Heritage Area's which was a designation that congress gave to communities that had a pure identity and that were part of the American experience. One of the first National Heritage Area's designated was the Black Stone River Valley in Massachusetts. The Black Stone River was the cradle of the industrial revolution in North America. Mr. Szymanski further stated there was not any Federal control over National Heritage Area's. The criteria for a National Heritage Area were communities with a sense of place, coordinating entity, boundaries that make sense, and the public's decision to support the area. The boundary line would run from Knappa Svenson to Tillamook Head. The project could not go forward without public support. Mr. Szymanski further stated people in the region had sent more then one hundred letters of support to their congressional representatives and that was why the area was being considered. A public meeting was tentatively scheduled for May 21, 2009, in Seaside, and Mr. Szymanski hoped the public would join in and share their thoughts on the proposal.

Councilor Lyons stated in the metro section of the newspaper there was an article about Glacial Lake Missoula. Approximately 15,000 years ago the Missoula floods broke loose and now congress had passed a legislation that called for the National Park Service to create a management plan to run the trail. The legislation caped future spending of the trail at \$12,000,000.00 and there would be a trail that stretched from Missoula Montana to Astoria. Councilor Lyons asked if that project be part of a National Heritage Area.

Mr. Szymanski stated the management plan to run the trail from Montana to Astoria was a separate appropriation and authorization.

RESOLUTION #3673

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF SEASIDE, OREGON, AUTHORIZING PARTICIPATION IN THE OREGON STATE MARINE BOARD GRANT PROGRAM

Mayor Larson stated the Resolution was a housekeeping issue where an authorization was needed for the City to receive a few thousand dollars.

Mayor Larson asked for public comments and there were no comments.

Mayor Larson asked for Council Comments and there were no comments.

Motion to read Resolution #3673 by title only; carried unanimously. (Haller/Lyons)

Motion to adopt Resolution #3673; carried unanimously. (Haller/Lyons)

ORDINANCE #2009-01

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF SEASIDE, OREGON, AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 2007-13 REGARDING THE VACATION OF A PORTION OF HOLLADAY DRIVE

Mayor Larson stated the Ordinance was amending ordinance #2007-13. This was a piece of property the City sold at the South 'Y' and section four stated, after two years if the property was not developed the piece would come back to the City. Section four should have been left out of this particular Ordinance which was keeping the owner from developing the property.

Mayor Larson asked for public comments and there were no comments.

Mayor Larson asked for Council Comments and there were no comments.

Motion to place Ordinance 2009-01 on its first reading by title only; carried unanimously. (Haller/Tolan)

Motion to place Ordinance 2009-01 on its second reading by title only; carried unanimously. (Haller/Lyons)

COMMENTS – PUBLIC

Donald Allison, Seaside Signal Reporter, asked what was happening at 12th and the Prom on the beach.

Mayor Larson stated that was the Dune Management Program where the sand was being leveled.

Kevin O’Keane, 2525 Pine Street, Seaside, stated his wife had petitioned last year to obtain signatures from homeowners in the area who were requesting improvements to Pine Street. Mr. O’Keane asked if the street would be improved.

Mayor Larson stated the City would soon be in the process of sending notices to perform the Local Improvement District. The issue with the improvements were sidewalks which if added would raise the cost of the Local Improvement District. The City was trying to resolve the paving without forcing curbs and sidewalks in the area. Neal Wallace, Public Works Director, had all the information but was on vacation.

Merlin Humpal, 2481 Oregon Avenue, Seaside, stated he noticed on Mr. Peterman’s scale that Seaside was at a point two and the top was a two which looked like ten percent and not twenty percent.

Mr. Peterman stated what he had meant by twenty percent was out of the three hundred and fifty facilities listed twenty percent of those were small and eighty percent were bigger.

Mayor Larson stated the Convention Center Feasibility Study started off with an Ad Hoc Committee and what was interesting was that Councilor Haller was on the original Convention Center Committee thirty five years ago. Mayor Larson further stated the City was seriously looking at whether the Convention Center should be expanded. Nothing would be done to the Convention Center until the City knew the expansion was needed, would be used, and would bring a good return to the City. Mayor Larson further stated the report that Mr. Peterman had put together would be available to the public. The report was marvelous and really outlined everything that was needed.

Terry Bischel, 133 5th Avenue, Seaside, stated he would like to be a strong advocate and voice to support Mr. Peterman’s recommendations to expand the Convention Center Facility. The Convention Center was a thirty five year old facility and while the property had been maintained Seaside was just not competitive in the important market with the ballroom space that was needed.

Councilor Haller stated the City was looking at maybe three or four years before the project would get going. With the economy, right now was not a time to jump right into the project and Council would conduct many workshops on how things would be done.

Jeff Nelson, KAST Radio Reporter, asked what the size of the ballroom would be and where would the ballroom be added.

Mayor Larson stated that was too far into the future to know where the ballroom would be built but the size was 10,000 to 15,000 square feet.

Mr. Humpal stated assuming the City built a larger facility and needed more motels would there be enough employees to fill the jobs that would be available.

Mayor Larson stated that was a good question. There were forty two units of work force housing and the City was pretty close to probably getting a few more units of affordable housing over on Necanicum.

Nancy Holmes 1523 Cooper Street, Seaside, stated besides the space that was needed at the Convention Center the food was mentioned and the City needed to take a good hard look at the food and service of the facility which was very important.

COMMENTS – STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE`

Cody Forsythe, Student Council Representative, stated Bill Bradbury would be speaking with the Social Study Students sometime this week from 10:30 to 11:30; Track meet on Saturday, April 18, 2009; Junior Senior Prom on Saturday, April 25, 2009.

COMMENTS – COUNCIL

Councilor Lyons stated the Oregon 150 was still alive and the wheels of government often times move rather slowly. There was a meeting Wednesday, April 25, 2009, in Astoria with representatives from the Oregon 150 project. Seaside’s project would be a large time capsule on display.

Mayor Larson stated Seaside was hoping to have the Governor in Seaside for the time capsule.

Councilor Moore read an article in the Daily Astorian titled "Seaside Defies Tourist Stereotype." Councilor Moore stated he had lived in Seaside for thirty years and had served on the City Council for two years and wanted to congratulate the leadership, Council, City Manager, Department Heads, Staff, and all the people that served on the various boards, Committees and Commissions. Councilor Moore further stated Seaside was an unbeknownst leader in the Heritage Area.

Councilor Johnson asked Mr. Szymanski about the amount of funds that would be used toward the National Heritage Area.

Mr. Szymanski stated during the first three years the coordinating entity could receive up to \$150,000.00 while the investment plan was being finished. Then there was an eligibility to compete and the average money was approximately \$400,000.00 to \$500,000.00. The coordinating entity would need to match the money received.

Council President Tolan thanked Mr. Peterman and Mr. Szymanski for the presentations and further stated he was very excited about the prospects especially with the Convention Center study and the City seemed to be moving in the right direction.

Mayor Larson stated Wednesday, May 6, 2009, there would be an Urban Renewal Budget Committee Meeting and on Monday, May 18, 2009, at 7:00 pm, at the Convention Center the Mayor was holding a meeting called Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow, and would include the 2020 Visioning information.

COMMENTS – STAFF

Trish Downey, Assistant to the City Manager, stated there would be a voluntary Tsunami Drill in Seaside on Friday, April 24, 2009. Ms. Downey asked the press to advertise the event and further stated there would be notices sent to the community, motels, and businesses to get the word out to everyone.

Mikaela Norval, Tourism Director, stated there was a Travel Writer in Seaside last weekend. The Tourism Grant Program was in the application process and if anyone was interested in applying, the applications needed to be returned by May 1, 2009. The Radio Advertisements will hit the airways in Portland.

Russ Vandenberg, Convention Center General Manager, thanked Mr. Peterman for the fine work that was done on the study which was a first step in a long process.

Mayor Larson stated a Tsunami Fair was scheduled for Monday, April 21, 2009, at the Convention Center.

Kim Jordan, Administrative Secretary, stated Council was scheduled to attend the Chamber of Commerce Breakfast meeting on Friday, May 8, 2009.

ADJOURNMENT

The regular meeting adjourned at 8:05 PM.

Kim Jordan, Secretary

DON LARSON, MAYOR