

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES****October 12, 2021**

The scheduled meeting of the Ontario City Council was called to order by Mayor Riley Hill at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 28, 2021, in the Council Chambers of City Hall. Council members present in person or by call-in were Riley Hill, Sam Baker, John Kirby, Eddie Melendrez, and Ken Hart. Michael Braden and Susann Mills were excused.

Members of staff present in person or by call-in were Adam Brown, Tori Barnett, Dan Cummings, Steven Romero, Kari Ott, Larry Sullivan, Al Cablay, Paul Woods, and Marc Berg. Larry Sullivan departed the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting was recorded, and copies are available at City Hall.

Mayor Hill led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA

This Agenda was posted on October 8, 2021. Copies of the Agenda are available from the City Hall Customer Service Counter and on the city's website www.ontariooregon.org.

Councilor Kirby asked that item 5(C) and 5(D) be removed from consent and acted on individually.

BAKER moved, HART seconded, **TO ADOPT THE AGENDA AS AMENDED**. Roll call vote: Mills-out; Baker-yes; Kirby-yes; Braden-out; Hart-yes; Melendrez-yes; Hill-yes. Motion carried 5/0/2.

CONSENT AGENDA

HART moved, KIRBY seconded, **TO ADOPT THE CONSENT AGENDA, WHICH INCLUDED COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF AUGUST 24, 2021; EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES OF AUGUST 24, 2021; COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 28, 2021; AND HOUSING INCENTIVE PROGRAM: JASSO (39-2021)**. Roll call vote: Mills-out; Baker-yes; Kirby-yes; Braden-out; Hart-yes; Melendrez-yes; Hill-yes. Motion carried 5/0/2.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Johnny Wiles, Ontario: My wife and I have been here a few years, and we really like this town. We was wondering if you could use that Presbyterian Hospital for like a shelter for the homeless. I used to jog a lot, and I like to jog, and I was wondering if it was possible to maybe have Ontario have a 10K race or something. That's about it for me.

NEW BUSINESS

Councilor Melendrez stated regarding the next two actions, as a member of the Business Loan Fund, he had asked about the loans requested by the Mayor, and it was confirmed his business was eligible as it was a program that was available to anyone.

BAKER moved, KIRBY seconded, **THE COUNCIL APPROVE THE APPLICATION BY GREYSTONE BUILDERS LLC AT 1565 SKOOKUM DRIVE FOR THE ONTARIO HOUSING INCENTIVE PROGRAM IN THE AMOUNT OF \$10,000 (40-2021)**. Roll call vote: Mills-out; Baker-yes; Kirby-yes; Braden-out; Hart-yes; Melendrez-yes; Hill-abstain. Motion carried 4/0/2/1.



KIRBY moved, BAKER seconded, **THE COUNCIL APPROVE THE APPLICATION BY GREYSTONE BUILDERS, LLC AT 1554 SKOOKUM DRIVE FOR THE ONTARIO HOUSING INCENTIVE PROGRAM IN THE AMOUNT OF 10,000 (41-2021).** Roll call vote: Mills-out; Baker-yes; Kirby-yes; Braden-out; Hart-yes; Melendrez-yes; Hill-abstain. Motion carried 4/0/2/1.

Bid Award: Auctioneering Services to Baker Auction Company, LLC; and Declaring Certain City-Owned Vehicles, Equipment, and Supplies as Surplus

Councilor Baker recused himself as his business had a direct conflict of interest and stepped away from the dais.

Al Cablay, Public Works Director, presented.

KIRBY moved, HART seconded, **THE COUNCIL DECLARE THE ATTACHED INVENTORY LIST AS SURPLUS AND ELIGIBLE FOR SALE, SALVAGE AND/OR DISPOSAL.** Roll call vote: Mills-out; Baker-recuse; Kirby-yes; Braden-out; Hart-yes; Melendrez-yes; Hill-yes. Motion carried 4/0/2/1.

Councilor Melendrez asked for the process of declaring items as surplus and ready for disposal.

Mr. Cablay stated it an RFP was put out for anyone to bid on.

MELENDREZ moved, KIRBY seconded, **THE CITY COUNCIL AWARD THE CONTRACT FOR AUCTIONEERING SERVICES AS SPECIFIED IN THE RFP TO BAKER AUCTION COMPANY, LLC.** Roll call vote: Mills-out; Baker-abstain; Kirby-yes; Braden-out; Hart-yes; Melendrez-yes; Hill-yes. Motion carried 4/0/2/1.

Resolution #2021-134: Supplemental Budget for Carry-Over Projects

Kari Ott, Finance Director, presented.

HART moved, KIRBY seconded, **THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVE RESOLUTION #2021-134: A SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR CARRYOVER PROJECTS.** Roll call vote: Mills-out; Baker-yes; Kirby-yes; Braden-out; Hart-yes; Melendrez-yes; Hill-yes. Motion carried 5/0/2.

DEPARTMENT HEAD UPDATES

Police: Quarterly Report *(Attached)*

Steven Romero, Police Chief, presented.

Councilor Melendrez told the Chief it had been an honor and privilege to work with him in his service to the community and thanked him for everything he'd done.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Arts & Economic Prosperity Study

Adam Brown, City Manager, stated this was a very exciting project that came from the state. Last year, they began an economic arts impact, and it was very successful, so it was being extended across the state. The city was partnering with the cities of Vale and Nyssa, Four Rivers Cultural Center, the Drexel Foundation, and the Border Board. The cost of the study would be \$3K, and a funder was located who would cover \$1,200, so it would be \$1,800 divided between the six entities. The group would attend the arts and cultural activities and get feedback directly from participants, such as did they eat here, did attendees stay over in a hotel, that type of thing. For around \$1K, the city would be provided good data, and would cover a few years. The funds would be expended from the City Manager's budget, as there were funds remaining due to the departure of Peter Hall and various trainings being cancelled due to Covid, with Council approval.

Evidence Room Audit Presentation

Steve Romero, Police Chief, presented. The current evidence room technician was at half-time, which was below the industry's best practices and standards. One of the findings that arose from the audit was the lack of adequate staffing for day-to-day requirements, policy mandates could not be achieved due to a lack of 24/7 supervisory coverage and presence. That impacted the department drastically on money counts. The policy read that all money taken into custody shall be counted by a police supervisor; however, there was not adequate staffing for that to occur, so they were in conflict with the policy. There was no direct supervisory oversight of the evidence technician, and that had been an issue for over three years. Control mechanisms were lacking; restricted access was needed in the facility. That had been corrected. The facility did not meet modern day security standards; training needed to be enhanced through a professional evidence management association; the policy was not in step with practices; and they were years behind in purging items. The bar code technology needed to be brought up to date. It was launched in March, 2021, but there were over 20K individual pieces of evidence. Each item of evidence should have its own tag, so they had to go back and tag everything. There was a lack of storage for temporary high liability items, like drugs, drugs, and money. There was opportunity for improvement, but it required investment and resources of time to complete. One proposal he had was to staff the evidence room by one full-time employee. He suggested reassigning a police sergeant, so they would be a supervisory member, into the evidence room for a minimum of six months, more like a year, and backfill that position with an acting sergeant for field operations. That would give a line level employee the opportunity to serve in a temporary supervisory capacity. Turning the position into full time would be about \$47K plus benefits. The part time position did not receive benefits.

Mayor Hill stated benefits generally equaled whatever the pay was.

Chief Romero stated it would almost double to a full time, around \$80K+ fully burdened, but it would be a full-time evidence technician. The sergeant would just be reassigned with no additional cost. It was recommended to have a direct oversight to the area. Once the cleanup was done – six months to a year – that person could go back to patrol. One officer was currently on a year-long military deployment which was not being paid for the city, so those funds could be utilized there.

Councilor Melendrez stated this was something that was needed, or something like this evidence issue could happen again.

Chief Romero stated any evidence room should be staffed with a full-time employee. There were three major liabilities for all police departments: one, the jail system, two, the evidence room; and three, use of force. In Ontario, there was no jail liability, but there was definitely a liability attached to the evidence room.

Councilor Kirby asked if there were any organizations that could issue penalties or was it more that the DA could lose cases if the evidence and management was not taken care of correctly.

Chief Romero stated no. If something was done incorrectly or something was done wrong, the state could prosecute. There were no civil sanctions or court sanctions.

Councilor Hart stated they were actually looking at two issues: One, an ongoing staffing issue, which would probably be addressed in the next budget; and second, there were decades worth of evidence. Was there an entity or business that could be hired temporarily to help get the evidence room cleaned out and up to date, and then start with a fresh plate versus hiring a permanent employee, which would take a lot more budget action by the Council.

Chief Romero stated the city's risk management service providers offered to reimburse the city for the initial audit. He intended to accept those funds. Maybe they could then take that reimbursement to move forward on a one-time cost, to get some much-needed results.

HAND OUTSMonthly Department Stats (Attached)

Code Enforcement: Sep 2021

Public Works: Sep 2021

Fire & Rescue: Sep 2021

Police: Sep 2021

Minutes (Attached)

County Court 09-22-2021; 09-29-2021

Public Works Committee 07-13-2021; 08-17-2021

CORRESPONDENCE, COMMENTS AND EX-OFFICIO REPORTS

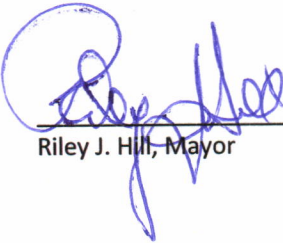
- Councilor Melendrez stated he got a bit frustrated with differences in opinions, but upon reflection, he wanted them to know he was going to do a better job because it was his duty to work together with the other Councilors.
- Councilor Melendrez stated at a previous meeting, Jackson Fox made some accusations about a supposed overpayment to a business. He felt he had failed both the City Manager and Kari Ott by not saying something after Kari let the Council know what really happened, that it was a banking error, not an error by the city. He wasn't sure what should have been said, and they probably didn't need to hear anything, but he wanted to offer his apology for not speaking up.

EXECUTIVE SESSIONExecutive Session: ORS 192.660(2)(e)

An Executive Session was called at 6:58 p.m. under provisions of ORS 192.660(2)(e) to discuss real property. The Council adjourned the session at 7:09 p.m. and returned to the regular meeting.

ADJOURN

HART moved, BAKER seconded, **THAT THE MEETING BE ADJOURNED**. Roll call vote: Mills-out; Baker-yes; Kirby-yes; Braden-out; Hart-yes; Melendrez-yes; Hill-yes. Motion carried 5/0/2.

ACCEPTED:

Riley J. Hill, Mayor**ATTEST**

Tori Barnett, MMC, City Recorder