

Local

City Council hears about disc golf course, revisits Baker County Justice Court IGA

BY GINA K. SWARTZ
Gina@TheBakerCountyPress.com

Tuesday's evening's only scheduled December City Council meeting began and ended in executive session.

Council met in executive session beginning at 6:30 p.m. to discuss with legal Counsel Dan Van Thiel, handling matters in place of Yturri Rose who has a conflict interest, current and possible litigation surrounding the issue of double water and sewer rates charged to annexed property owners in lieu of property taxes located on the east side of town.

Thirty minutes had been allotted for this executive session, and after 35 minutes Council was not finished discussing the matter.

City Manager Kee suggested continuing the executive session after the regularly scheduled meeting, to which Council agreed.

After Mayor Mosier opened the regularly scheduled public meeting, Councilor Downing said the Pledge of Allegiance and invocation. City Recorder Luke Yeaton called roll with each Councilor answering present.

Mosier addressed the consent agenda, calling attention to the one and only matter listed, a liquor license application that had been made by Moe Joe Smoke & Gift Inc.

This business is planning to operate at the location of 815 Campbell Street next to Subway. With no discussion among Council, Councilor Downing moved to approve with a second by Councilor Lewis.

Council voted to pass the motion unanimously.

Mosier called for citizen participation next, there was none. Council moved forward with the agenda. Ford Family Disc Golf Project Presentation for Donation.

Before the presentation began Councilor Lewis stated, "I am involved in this group," in case of any conflicts.

Kee advised Council this presentation was part of Cohort 5 of the Ford Family Leadership program, "Where a group of community members get together and come up with a project, solve problems, figure out how to fund a project and make it happen."

The group has chosen to pursue a disc golf course to be built at the sports complex. "Eventually, if they raise enough local funds Ford Family Foundation will award a \$5,000 grant," he said.

Danielle McCauley, a Baker High School senior and member of the Ford Institute Leadership program, addressed Council about the project she has worked on over the last year.

She estimated the total project cost to be around \$15,000, with \$5,000 of that the grant from the Ford Family Foundation.

She informed Council that the Cohort 5 has 26 community members ranging from High School age to retired senior citizens.

McCauley stated, "This activity is easy to learn, accessible to those of all



Danielle McCauley presenting to Council.

Gina K. Swartz / The Baker County Press

abilities and ages and is a very affordable activity. We chose this because of everything it has to offer our community. It is a free healthy activity for all ages, increases physical exercise and improves coordination."

McCauley went on to say that she had gotten support from PE teachers and even offered up the idea of recreational leagues possibly being formed.

She told Council that by adding disc golf to the complex there is potential for an increase in value of the space.

She said, "It isn't used as much as it could be—it's an amazing complex."

She also explained that it gives opportunity to local business to advertise through sponsorship of poles, baskets and benches planned to be installed.

Natural Structures has already in anticipation of the project designed baskets and benches, the benches are keeping in line with those already installed along the Leo Adler Parkway.

McCauley explained to Council this project could give non-profit organizations the potential to fund raise and even felt there could be a tourism aspect to the project. Once completed the Baker School District will own and maintain the course.

Councilor Langrell asked, "When do you need to have this operating?"

McCauley responded that it was the intention to have the course completed by the spring of 2016.

Mosier said to McCauley, "Typically when we are making donations to organizations it is through the budget process. Is there a reason why the donation needs to be now rather than waiting for our budget cycle?"

McCauley explained that all the fundraising money need to be raised by February in order to get the project done on time and to meet requirements for the grant match.

Kee stated that he felt money from the Parks and Recreation budget could be available however he would have a better idea in January what that might be.

Council agreed at the second January meeting af-

ter an amount was decided on the matter would be readdressed.

Ordinance #3347 IAMP: Third Reading

Mosier read a statement opening a public hearing regarding the Interchange Area Management Plan. Holly Kerns addressed Council giving a quick review of the IAMP noting three open houses had been held for public comment and input, information about the plan has been available online through the consultants Kittleson and Associates website throughout the project and project staff has been available at any time to address concerns the public has had.

Based on some concerns that were raised some changes to the plan had been made that she felt worked for everyone.

Kerns stated, "I have not heard any further public input or comment." She advised Council that the County Commissioners, who are joint partners in the IAMP, conducted another meeting and "are looking at revising some of the language specific to how Hudson Road is described and revising language as to how the consultation of the Oregon Department of Transportation will go in the County's zoning ordinance."

Kerns assured Council that the County's requested revisions would not have any effect on the development code and there was no need for concern.

Mosier said she had not heard any further public comment on the matter and her fellow Councilors indicated the same. With no one present to testify, Kee read the Ordinance for the third time by title only.

Councilor Downing Motioned to accept the third reading the Ordinance with a second by Councilor Abell. Council voted to unanimously pass the ordinance.

"Thank you for all your work on this; it has been a long process," Mosier said to Kerns.

Resolution #3764 Interfund Loan from General Fund to State and Federal Grants Fund

Jeanie Dexter addressed Council regarding the need to transfer up to \$50,000 from the General Fund to the State and Federal

Grants fund.

"We do this periodically when we have a grant come up like the FFA grant, which is a reimbursement grant," Dexter said.

She indicated that in such cases the City must front the cost for a project but will be reimbursed entirely. This money is for the apron rehabilitation project at the Baker City Municipal Airport.

Downing moved to approve this resolution with a second by Councilor Thomas. Once again the Council voted unanimously in favor.

Disposition of Temporary UV Treatment System 26;41

Michelle Owen, Public Works Director addressed Council informing them that Sentinel, the company from which the City purchased the system originally has made an offer to buy back the system. "Because it is an asset of the City, Council is required to authorize disposition of that asset."

Owen explained to council that the system was utilized, but now that the permanent UV system is in place this system is of no use.

The unit is in need of some repair and OTEC had requested power be disconnected for the unit.

The building that was built to house the unit has been repurposed and is being used to house a generator. The UV system is being housed in a warehouse currently.

Over the last year Owen had made known at conferences and with consultants she has interacted with that the City had this UV system and did not need it. "The problem of course, is that it is not one that could be used as a new system. It wouldn't be validated by the state," she said.

Other options were also considered such as parting the system out however as Owen explained the salvage value was extremely low.

Owen told Council, "While the offer Sentinel isn't marvelous it is certainly better than any other offer we've come up with thus far."

Owen told Council she just need authorization to sell it back for \$21,000. The unit originally was

\$153,000.

"That's quite a depreciation isn't it?" asked Mosier.

"It is," Owen said. "But it's one of those things, it's priceless because we needed when we needed it, and it served its purpose very well."

Downing moved to approve the sale of the equipment with a second by Councilor Lewis, all Councilors voted in favor.

Intergovernmental Agreement for Municipal Court Services

Kee spoke to Council regarding the intergovernmental agreement between the City and the County for the City's use of the Baker County Justice Court. The agreement has been in place since the late 1980s but has not been updated since 1995.

Recently Kee explored whether or not bringing a City Municipal Court back to the City would be in the best interest of the City.

Based on projected costs associated with operating a Municipal Court including hiring staff and a Judge, it was found that even while the City and County split revenue 50/50 from the City cases this arrangement is more financially responsible for the City than having their own.

One of the benefits Kee stressed about having a municipal court was that there would be regular reports to the Council, which they don't currently have.

A revised Intergovernmental agreement that required quarterly reports to the City Council is being proposed. Kee stated that this revision has been presented to the County Commissioners and The Justice court with neither having an issue with the request.

Kee also stated that in the revision it is stated that the agreement be revised by February after each election of The Justice of the Peace (every six years). The new revised agreement has not been signed by County Commissioners but is expected to be done at the December 16 meeting.

Michael Finney, current Baker County Justice Court Administrator, addressed Council giving the Court accolades for the services it provides this community and has for the past 26 years.

He stated that they strongly approve of the proposed changes to the Intergovernmental agreement.

Mosier spoke to Kee addressing the miscommunication the Court had with the letter Kee sent advising them the City intended to look into the matter of starting a separate municipal court, thus initiating a 60-day termination notice.

Mosier suggested a letter clarifying that it is not the city's intent to remove services be drafted and sent to the Court regarding the matter.

There was a consensus among the council to have the City Manager enter into the revised IGA with the County.

City Manager/Director Comments

Kee spoke briefly about pursuing public email addresses for Council indicating that was happening but some concerns were being addressed. Council was advised that they would see more information about this in January.

He also noted that in Council packets were City financial information and labor trends.

It was also mentioned that in January the City Auditors would be making a presentation to Council.

Kee also mentioned that Salvin Management Consultants will be in Baker City Thursday and Friday December 10 and 11 to conduct interviews with Council, Staff and the public to create a profile to begin recruitment for a new City Manager. Yeaton advised City Council applications are due January 7, 2016 at noon.

Council Comments

Councilor Abell reminded everyone that the HBC Parlour Tour was this coming Saturday from noon-5 p.m. and said she felt this year's offering of homes was a good one.

Mosier wished everyone a happy holiday and adjourned the meeting. Council then went back into executive session to finish the discussion started earlier regarding current and possible litigation surrounding the issue of double water and sewer rates.

The discussion was heated and lasted an additional 45 minutes.