

SEAT *from A1*

possible applicants expressed interest at the time and two candidates ended up applying.

Although councilors had decided to let the election play out rather than appoint an applicant, candidate Ashley Rigel withdrew on Aug. 18, leaving Stinnett to run unopposed.

In light of this, councilors voted on Monday to appoint Stinnett to the vacant seat for the remainder of the position's term, which will expire Dec. 31.

"I can't see a reason not to do this," said Mayor Jeff Gowing. "I think Jon's a good candidate and since he is the only one applying ... I think it just makes the most sense."

With the position expiring at the end of the year, Stinnett will be sworn in once more in January if elected in November. If Stinnett is not elected, the elected person would then fill the seat after the General Election.

City Manager Richard Meyers emphasized that the appointment does not serve as a substitute for the democratic process.

"The election will still be in place," he said. "People will still have to vote for Jon in order to get him into office in January."

distant from crosswalks on Main Street at both 10th and 14th streets.

According to the 2015 Cottage Grove Transportation System Plan, E. Main Street is considered a minor arterial, which is intended to provide "efficient through movement" for regional and local traffic.

The cost of a traffic study was estimated in the memorandum to be \$5,000 and the paint for striping \$1,000.

Councilor Mike Fleck said he would consider the crosswalk if a study showed it would improve safety.

"But I have huge concerns because ... it will make people feel safer about stepping off into that traffic where I think it would actually increase the risk to the pedestrian, not decrease it," he said.

Councilor Stinnett spoke in favor of the idea in addition to more traffic education.

"There are many reasons to cross Main Street in that interim between the two crosswalks but no safe, official way to do that," he said as he weighed Fleck's concern. "I would almost rather them be emboldened than bewildered by the lack of a way to do it safely."

Councilor Kenneth Roberts expressed his concern with the speed of traffic on that part of the road and pointed out that someone had recently been hit in a crosswalk there.

"So I think all this should be considered," he said. "Plus I feel that in this time of COVID, spending \$5,000 on a traffic study for a crosswalk that's two blocks away from another crosswalk is just a little bit crazy."

The council voted to approve a traffic study of

the intersection with only Roberts opposing.

The other citizen request originated in January this year, asking that stop signs be removed from the intersection of S. 16th Street and E. Madison Avenue.

The request cites the lack of necessity for the stop signs at a point of low traffic as it also wastes time, fuel and causes wear and tear on vehicles.

Referring to neighbors' testimonies about the speed of vehicles and frequency of pedestrian traffic, Cottage Grove Civil Engineer Ryan Sisson recommended that councilors keep the stop signs to decrease speed and increase safety.

Following some discussion, councilors voted unanimously to keep all four existing stop signs while adding crosswalks, flashing lights on the signs and double-yellow striping along S. 16th Street.

2020 Municipal Court Report

Municipal Court Judge Martin Fisher presented his 2020 Municipal Court Report to the City Council.

On the topic of case-loads, the report provided

numbers of cases cited into court before and after Gov. Brown's executive order on March 23, which closed most government and private facilities.

Prior to the order, the court had seen an increase in citations compared to the same period the previous year. After March 23, however, those numbers dropped.

"It seems to be holding pretty steady," said Fisher. "I suspect a part of that is just the lack of people being out and about."

From Jan. 1 to Sept. 1 last year, 612 citations and 1,025 violations were recorded. Totals this year over the same period dropped to 548 and 894, respectively.

Fisher also brought attention to recently passed Oregon legislation HB 4210 which has resulted in courts no longer being permitted to suspend driver's licenses of people who fail to pay traffic fines.

"That will — down the road, not immediately — have an extraordinarily significant impact on court revenue," he said.

Fisher explained that the legislation will likely have a downstream effect on traffic fine revenue.

"We don't have a way in our system to account for a distinction in fines between criminal fines and traffic fines," he said. "But just anecdotally, from what I see, the vast majority of our revenue comes from traffic fines."


Through discussion with the court clerk, Fisher said he has come to understand that the main motivator for the collection of

the fines is the threat of license suspension.

Fisher said the only remedy for this is a "somewhat tortured process" of criminalizing traffic violations, which he recommended against.

"So I suspect there will come a day in the next year or two when people realize this is no longer a threat and we will see a cratering of court revenue," he said.

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