

City moves to restrict new storage units downtown

BY CINDY YINGST
The Columbia Press

City commissioners struggled with the idea of banning ministorage facilities in commercial corridors, but eventually voted Tuesday night to prohibit new units in the Warrenton and Hammond downtowns.

The decision, the first of two votes needed to finalize the plan, came after a public hearing on new design standards for the city's main thoroughfares.

"Do you want your downtown, where the city has developed a vision plan (and needs) a sense of place, do we want something so stagnant, static," Mayor Henry Balensifer asked his fellow commissioners. "Or do we want to have the vision (for the next) 20 to 30 years for more walkability."

The commercial corridor design standards will apply to commercial property fronting Highway 101, Alternate Highway 101, Dolphin Avenue, Marlin Avenue, Neptune Drive and Harbor Drive, and along Pacific Drive in downtown Hammond and South Main Avenue in downtown Warrenton.

For much of the past two years, Balensifer has advocated keeping storage units off Harbor and the two down-

towns as a way to "salvage what's left of a livable downtown."

Commissioner Mark Baldwin said he'd rather see ministorage facilities on Harbor, one of the city's primary entryways, than what's there now: an endless stream of transient camps.

Commissioner Pam Ackley joined Baldwin in recommending more stringent design standards for commercial development on Harbor, which could include storage facilities. Ackley recommended requiring a deep setback on Harbor with smaller retail stores and offices closer to the road.

Both agreed with Balensifer and Commissioner Tom Dyer that ministorage units aren't appropriate in the two downtowns.

Commissioner Rick Newton stated his opposition to ministorage units on Harbor and in the downtowns, but left the meeting before the vote.

"I just think, as we look at how do we create a Warrenton we're proud of ... that we not allow a hodgepodge of whatever people want to put wherever they want," Balensifer said. "With that little impact,



Balensifer



Baldwin



Ackley

we can have a great change."

A final public hearing and vote on the standards, which prohibit ministorage facilities through the two downtowns but allow them with increased design requirements along Harbor Drive, is expected at the Sept. 8 commission meeting.

Also on Tuesday, the City Commission:

- Approved an agreement with the city employees' union that provides a 1 percent cost-of-living adjustment and has the city picking up the health insurance deductible.

The agreement allows employees to renegotiate next year, when the city should have a better picture

of the pandemic's impact on the budget.

- Approved a \$33,152 contract with TSR Corporation of Vancouver, Wash., as low bidder of three bids for a project to clean the city's sewer mains and inspect them by video.

- Approved raising the rates for recycling from \$7.58 to \$7.80 per month effective Oct. 1. The 2.9 percent increase is a pass-through of increased fees Recology is charging the city.

Public safety calls

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She told an officer she was doing because of the environmental impact of vehicles driving on the beach and became agitated when told she had to move. She was given a warning and gas money so she could continue her trip to California to visit a relative.

FIRE AND SERVICE CALLS

- Brush fire, 7:52 a.m. Aug. 20, Hammond Marina.
- Smoke coming from sailboat, 7:09 a.m. Aug. 22, Warrenton

Boat Basin.

- Carbon dioxide alarm, 11:53 a.m. Aug. 24, 200 block Skipanon Drive.

MEDICAL CALLS

- Suicidal female, 12:45 p.m. Aug. 19, 100 block Northwest Fourth Street.

- Male who's feeling ill, 6:37 p.m. Aug. 20, 200 block Southwest Alder Avenue.

- Male with low blood sugar, 9:38 p.m. Aug. 20, 200 block Southwest Alder Avenue.

- Male who's passed out, 11:55 p.m. Aug. 21, Fred Meyer.

- Male with chest pain, 2:57 p.m. Aug. 23, 1100 block Nautical Drive.

- Male patient who's down, 8:45 p.m. Aug. 23, 1200 block Southwest Ninth Street.

- Male having a seizure, 2:08 p.m. Aug. 24, Fred Meyer.

- Male in distress, 8:56 p.m. Aug. 24, 1500 block Discovery Lane.

Repeated misuse of 911 leads to arrest of homeless man

A homeless man was warned several times to stop calling 911 without cause before officers cited him Aug. 17, then again on the morning of Aug. 22 and at noon on Aug. 22.

Bradley Joel Crupper, 58, initially was arrested by Astoria Police on Aug. 13 for allegedly creating a disturbance at Columbia Memorial Hospital.

Four days later, Crupper was found drinking wine and lying in a grassy area behind Staples in Warrenton, according to a Warrenton police report. He'd repeatedly called 911 saying he couldn't walk and needed to go to the hospital. But he refused to provide his location or other details.

"I recognized him from the week prior at CMH, where he was trespassing and arrested for disorderly conduct," Officer Aaron Berndt wrote in a police report.

After a long conversation, Crupper told the officer he

wanted to go to the hospital. Medix was called, but then the man became uncooperative and Medix staff left.

Crupper continued to call 911, threatening dispatchers. When the officer cited the man for improper use of 911, he "became angry and started walking toward me in an aggressive manner," the officer wrote. "I backed up and drew my pepper spray."

Eventually, Medix returned and took him to the hospital. But a short time later, Astoria police arrested him again for creating a disturbance.

At 9:30 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 22, dispatch called Warrenton police to let them know the man was again calling 911 and making threats from the area near Staples. He again was cited for misuse of 911.

At noon, officers returned after he continued to make 911 calls. This time he became combative with officers and was arrested on suspicion of disorderly conduct, resisting arrest and misusing 911.



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