

GRESHAM CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

July 15, 2014

A. CALL TO ORDER BY PRESIDING OFFICER

Mayor Bemis called the meeting of the Gresham City Council to order at 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 15, 2014 in Council Chambers located in the Gresham Public Safety and Schools Building, 1331 NW Eastman Parkway, Gresham, Oregon.

COUNCIL PRESENT: Mayor Shane T. Bemis
Council President Lori Stegmann
Councilor Jerry Hinton
Councilor Kirk French
Councilor Karylinn Echols
Councilor Mario Palmero
Councilor Mike McCormick

STAFF PRESENT: Erik Kvarsten, City Manager
Rachael Fuller, Assistant City Manager
David Ris, City Attorney
Robin Franzen-Parker, Director Public Affairs
Eric Chambers, Senior Manager
Jessica Harper, Assistant to the Mayor
Dale Cummins, Deputy Police Chief
Greg Matthews, Fire Chief
Bernard Seeger, Director Finance and Management Services
Susanjoy Baskoro, City Recorder

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND MOMENT OF SILENCE

Mayor Bemis lead the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

2. INSTRUCTIONS TO CITIZENS ON SIGNING UP FOR PUBLIC TESTIMONY REGARDING AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Council President Lori Stegmann read instructions to citizens wishing to testify before Council.

3. RECOGNITION & APPRECIATION: PUBLIC SAFETY RESPONDERS

Mayor Bemis introduced Fire Chief Greg Matthews and Deputy Police Chief Dale Cummins. He said Councilor McCormick brought up some of the issues of the Reynolds High School shooting to the council, and the media unfolded the entire story. But while this tragedy took place in the City of Troutdale,

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Gresham's medical personnel and many of our first responders from the Police Department were there. The City Council wanted to take the time to say "Thank you" to the men and women of the Police Department as well as the members of the Fire Department that were on scene and provided all the help the entire way through the process, including reunifying the students with their families and additional investigation work afterwards. Mayor Bemis acknowledged how good the City's first responders are and his appreciation for everything they do each and every day to protect the citizens of Gresham as well as the surrounding cities.

Chief Matthews said that this incident reassured staff of the depth of talent and preparedness that is present among our first responders. This is due to the commitment of training and working together with the Police Department and other jurisdictions. This was a tremendous tragedy for the family and all the parents of students at Reynolds. When you realize how much worse it could have been, take comfort in knowing that your fire fighters and police are prepared and it is a commitment to the professionalism that they have. It is an honor to lead them. He thanked Mayor Bemis and the Council for recognizing the work they do.

Deputy Chief Cummins said this was a terrible incident but it is one that we train for and one in which the training paid off. The Gresham officers were the first ones to arrive and do what they are trained to do. Anytime this happens in our community it doesn't only affect the family involved, but it affects everyone in the community as well as the officers who have to go home to their kids and look at them after they have seen such tragic events. It takes a big toll on the first responders. He encouraged the community to remember that. He thanked the Council and Mayor for recognizing the officers.

4. PROCLAMATION: OUTSTANDING ACCOMPLISHMENT

Mayor Bemis recognized a great Gresham citizen, Dean Hall, who swam 184 miles down the Willamette River, the first person to ever swim the entire length of the river, all to raise funds for leukemia and lymphoma. Mayor Bemis read the proclamation and presented it to Mr. Hall.

Mr. Hall said accomplishing any big dream is not a solo event. He had a lot of people that helped him accomplish this, the Willamette River Keepers, the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, but the greatest of which are his two parents. They are 79 years old. They supported his crazy dream. His dad paddled 160 of the 184 miles in front of him while he swam, with very little complaints and a lot of encouragement. So much of the credit goes to his parents. He then presented the tee-shirt that was made for the event entitled, "The Willamette, He Swam It" to Mayor Bemis. After a thirty-three year exile in Kansas, he said it is great to be back where he was born and raised, Gresham!

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B. CITIZEN COMMENTS FOR AGENDA (EXCEPT PUBLIC HEARING) AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

1. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Tony Reynoldson, citizen, expressed his frustration regarding transitional housing or a drug and alcohol home at 3131 SE Teal Drive. The neighborhood as a whole, wants to know what can be done about this home. The numbers are unlimited, but due to occupancy codes, there must be some kind of limit. There are 24 women staying in the home. Are children allowed to stay in this home? There are parking issues and nothing has been done. Trash is an issue. The next door neighbor has a state certified home for a child being cared for. Is a drug and alcohol rehab home allowed to come into the neighborhood with a state certified home already present? He asked if this is now considered a commercial zone. It is no longer residential housing. There are many code violations and it seems that nothing is being done about them.

Mayor Bemis said he spoke with Mr. Schmidt, Director of Development Services, about these issues and all of Council is concerned and will work with the City Attorney's office and Ms. Schmidt to determine what can be done. It is unsettling at best in a residential neighborhood. Give us some time to figure out the next steps. He thanked Mr. Reynoldson for bringing this issue forward.

Mr. Reynoldson said he wants to make the Police Department aware that residents will continue to make calls of complaints to the non-emergency line as they come up.

C. CONSENT AGENDA

Susanjoy Baskoro, City Recorder read the Consent Agenda.

1. APPOINTMENT: CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE
2. APPOINTMENTS & REAPPOINTMENTS: FINANCE COMMITTEE
3. APPOINTMENT: GRESHAM ART COMMITTEE
4. APPOINTMENTS: YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE
5. ENACTMENT READING: GRESHAM REVISED CODE AMENDMENT: GRESHAM COMPETITIVENESS
6. ENACTMENT READING: GRESHAM REVISED CODE AMENDMENT: UTILITY BILLING SYSTEM OPERATIONS

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7. AWARD TO PRIVATE BUSINESS: PURCHASE OF POLICE PATROL FORD VEHICLES
8. AWARD TO PRIVATE BUSINESS: PURCHASE OF POLICE PATROL CHEVY VEHICLES
9. AWARD TO PRIVATE BUSINESS: DEMOLITION OF FRIENDS OF THE CHILDREN BUILDING
10. AWARD TO PRIVATE BUSINESS: PURCHASE OF MOBILE COMPUTERS FOR POLICE VEHICLES
11. AWARD TO PRIVATE BUSINESS: CONTRACT TO LOAD, HAUL, DISPOSE AND RECYCLE DEBRIS
12. RESOLUTION NO. 3168 - U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT LOAN TO THE CITY OF GRESHAM FOR THE PACIFIC STREET PROJECT
13. RESOLUTION NO. 3169: HEALTHY EATING ACTIVE LIVING (HEAL) CITIES CAMPAIGN

City Attorney Ris, made a point of correction for item number C-5 Enactment Reading. This should be Gresham Community Development Code Amendment, Gresham Competitiveness.

A motion was made by Councilor Jerry Hinton, second by Councilor Kirk French, TO APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS C-1 THROUGH C-13. The motion passed as follows:

Mayor Shane T. Bemis	YES
Council President Lori Stegmann	YES
Councilor Jerry Hinton	YES
Councilor Kirk French	YES
Councilor Karylinn Echols	YES
Councilor Mario Palmero	YES
Councilor Mike McCormick	YES

Mayor Bemis introduced Donald West and Janice Baker and thanked them for their volunteer service on the Finance Committee. He also introduced Cassie Fisher and thanked her for volunteering to work on the Gresham Art Committee.

D. PUBLIC HEARING

None

E. COUNCIL BUSINESS

1. FRIENDS OF THE CHILDREN PROJECT

Bernard Seeger, Director of Finance and Management Services introduced Mark Young, Chief Operating Officer of Friends of the Children and Megan Lewis, Director of Development and responsible for the fund raising program.

Mr. Young introduced the Friends of the Children agenda item (PowerPoint Presentation Exhibit A).

Ms. Lewis provided a funding update of the project (slide 2 of exhibit A).

Councilor Echols asked if there has been a conversation on how to respond to serious emergencies, specifically how one would egress in different parts of the building.

Mr. Young stated staff has not had this conversation but noted there are numerous egress locations. The security of the building is tight. One must be buzzed into the building; there is no way to get into the building unless you have the proper identification. There are security cameras at every entrance.

Councilor Echols stressed the importance of reviewing the safety issues.

Mr. Young stated staff worked closely with a police officer who specializes in difficult emergency situations when planning for the safety and security of the students and staff.

Council President Stegmann asked for clarification on the portion of the building that is secure if other organizations are using a different location within the facility.

Mr. Young pointed out the specific areas that are only for their youth and one must be buzzed into this area or have a key fob (which is only given to staff) to access. If a community group is using a different portion of the facility, they will not be able to access the area where the youth are located.

Council President Stegmann noted her excitement for this project to be in the City's backyard. She said she is thrilled with the timeline and the amount of money they have raised. She can't wait for them to open in 2015.

Councilor Palmero noted his appreciation that this project will provide a safe haven for kids and that the gym will be opened up to the community. He asked if there will be counseling available to youth with certain issues of concern.

Mr. Young said yes. They have had youth that have been involved in gangs and have come from very difficult situations. They have partnerships with a number of organizations and make counseling immediately available for any youth after incidents occur. In an effort to prevent incidents they monitor the mental health of their youth very carefully. The mentors are trained to do this. Some of the youth are in mental health counseling. The staff spends four hours a week with these kids and knows them very well.

Councilor Palmero said these are high risk youth in the community and trust is a big issue with them and he is very thankful for this program.

Councilor Hinton said the epicenter of any success with children is the family. He asked how the program staff interacts with the families of these children.

Mr. Young said for the first time they will begin to select youth out of the foster care system. Youth in foster care are definitely at risk. A requirement of the foster care grant is to do home visits. However, this program has been doing home visits for twenty-one years. Whenever a child is dropped off back home, the staff does a home visit. There is constant interaction with the families. The primary focus is definitely the youth, but they realize that getting help for family is important. For the first time they have a grant to provide funding for working with black families. They are working with the black parent initiative. The foster care grant also requires spending time working with the families. As they can stretch themselves, the Rockwood Consortium allows them to connect the youth into organizations that work more deeply with families.

Councilor Palmero asked how many children will be in program once the building is complete.

Mr. Young stated there are 425 youth currently being served. The growth plan is to be at 500 youth by 2017. With the foster care grant they will be adding sixteen new youth a year out of foster care over the next three years, totaling 48. The strategic plan has them growing to 500. So they are adding approximately 30 to 40 new youth per year. They are also looking at the ability of working with their older youth, 18-24 years of age; because once a youth does the program they informally work with them but not formally. They monitor, very carefully the number of youth that are using this new facility. They would love to see this facility serving upwards of 1,000 youth.

Councilor Palmero asked what the age group is of the children they are currently working with.

Mr. Young responded they work directly with youth who are from kindergarten to 18 years of age. They have a scholarship program for some youth that are older than 18 years of age.

Councilor Palmero said he is happy they are working with foster children.

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Mr. Young said the Portland Children's Levy gave them a nice grant to begin working with foster care. With foster care, no matter where a child goes to school or foster home the Friends of Children program will follow them. They can jump school districts and schools. That is why this program is good for foster care, they can live in five different foster care homes and the program stays with them. The program stays with a child for twelve and one-half years no matter what they do or where they move to.

Councilor Palmero asked if the children's academics improved when participating in the Friends of Children program.

Mr. Young said 83 percent of the children graduate from high school. When the youth enter kindergarten they are miles below the benchmark. Most of the children are very far behind and below academically. But by the time they are seniors in high school they are at least at the level to graduate.

Councilor Palmero said that is important because we are trying to improve things in Gresham and we need a society that has the basic skills to get livable wage jobs.

Mr. Young said his kids have the basic skills and are ready for livable wage jobs.

Councilor McCormick asked if the 500 kids are all coming from the Rockwood-Gresham area.

Mr. Young said currently 50 percent of the youth are east of 82nd Avenue. In five years about 75 percent of the youth will be east of 82nd Avenue. When Friends went to DHS they gave them zip codes of where they wanted to select the DSH youth from and most of the zip codes were in the Rockwood East County area.

Councilor McCormick said this program will make a big difference in these kids.

Council President Stegmann asked what kind of relationship Friend's has with the local schools.

Mr. Young said the schools love this program. They are in more than 120 schools. Poverty moves. With the K through fifth grade program the mentors are in the classroom with the kids.

Councilor French asked how many kids come back to the program to offer support.

Ms. Lewis said many of the alumni of the program stay very close to their mentors. Many mentors are texting and staying in touch with the students as they go off to college. They had a student who went to barber college and has a successful shop so he now cuts the hair for the students for free. Many college graduates become tutors for students in the program.

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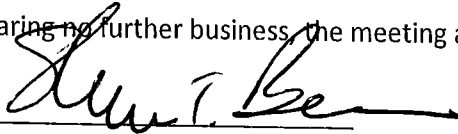
Mr. Young said the youth do come back and become mentors for the kids currently in the program.

Mayor Bemis said one of the reasons the program is successful is because it began with a tutor helping a student. He expressed the excitement of the Council to welcome the Friend's program into the community. He appreciates how Friend's has been involved in the community and with the key partners and learning the issues and knowing the players. He thanked them for the update and the good work.

F. COUNCIL MEASURES AND PROPOSALS

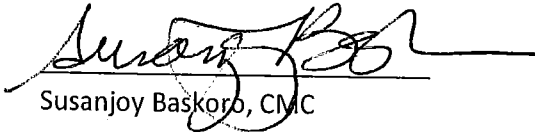
G. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

Hearing no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:46 p.m.



Shane T. Bemis,
Mayor

Respectfully Submitted,



Susanjoy Baskoro, CMC
City Recorder