

CITY OF NEWBERG CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
JUNE 28, 2010
7:00 P.M. MEETING
PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING TRAINING ROOM
401 EAST THIRD STREET

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Bob Andrews called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

Members

Present:	Mayor Bob Andrews	Denise Bacon	Stephen McKinney
	Bart Rierson	Marc Shelton	Wade Witherspoon

Staff

Present:	Daniel Danicic, City Manager	Terrence Mahr, City Attorney
	Janelle Nordyke, Finance Director	Jennifer Nelson, Recording Secretary

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was performed.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

V. APPOINTMENTS

Consider a motion to appoint the most qualified candidate to fill the City Council District #6 vacant position created by the resignation of Mr. Bob Larson for a term expiring December 31, 2010.

Mayor Andrews gave some background and explanation of the anticipated process for the evening. Candidates were drawn by lottery for the order of interview and fifteen minutes allotted for each to respond to the questions they have already received. Councilors will rate the responses using an established scoring system and entertain motion later.

Mr. Terrence Mahr, City Attorney, spoke of Section 33 of the Charter and made some legal statements regarding appointments needing a majority of the votes. He noted the scoring sheets will be signed and submitted into the permanent record. The appointed candidate will attend their first Council meeting as a Councilor on July 6, 2010.

Mr. Ryan Howard spoke of his current enrollment as a law student and described himself as outgoing, objective, logical, and persuasive with a strong work ethic. He said he had two prevailing reasons for his desire to serve; the first was to give back to a city he calls home and encourage others to do the same. He also spoke of his volunteering with an environmental stewardship program with the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and with the Traffic Safety Commission (TSC) Bicycle Rodeo. The second reason was to further his understanding of local government and laws; he feels the organization of society is fundamental to existence and is fascinated by how the local level interacts with the other branches of county, state, and federal

government. He felt encouraging and maintaining growth is a critical issue for Newberg because it cannot be assumed things will return to the pre-recession level; expenditures need to be carefully planned with reliable and proven methods. He encouraged investments and growth, but he felt finding a balance backed with funding is critical. He felt Newberg's most positive attribute was its sense of community and the pride of its citizens and local businesses. He gave his opinions on a recent Council issue regarding a daytime curfew, saying he supports schools to do what they can by holding the students accountable. He stated he understood the time commitment for this position and felt he would be capable of meeting the requirements as a full time student with effective time management.

Councilor Marc Shelton asked him about his perception of the recent rate increases in the context of growth.

Mr. Howard replied that any time rates increase it is essential to consider the impact on the citizens, the increases may be necessary, but the impact must also be reasonable.

Councilor Bart Rierson asked if he planned to run to be elected for the position after the duration of the current term.

Mr. Howard said he would like to serve as long as he can, but funds are limited and he cannot determine if he will or not at this point.

Mr. Ray Waller said he worked for government all his life as a police officer and assistant chief. After retirement he also worked for an attorney general's office in California and for a private security company in Oregon. When he completely retired, he took care of his wife of forty-four years until she passed. He decided to apply for appointment as a way to get moving and serve again. He felt the major issue facing Newberg is the economy, although the wine industry has not been hurt as heavily and the college is also a steady source to rely on. Regarding recent Council decisions he spoke of the water rate increases; although he disagreed with them and they hurt him financially it had been four years from a previous increase and it was prudent and proper to have one. His schedule is open so he did not feel the time commitment would be a problem.

Councilor Shelton asked how he viewed the work of volunteers and citizen groups to come to decision on rate increases as councilor.

Mr. Waller said he has been involved with volunteer groups most of his life and he felt the more, the better.

Councilor Rierson asked if he was selected, would he plan to run for election. Mr. Waller replied he would.

Mr. Ernie Amundson, Jr. has lived in Newberg since 1964 working at local businesses and volunteering for city groups like the Citizens' Rate Review Committee (CRRC) for the last ten years and the Budget Committee for the last eight years. It has given him good insight on how the City Council works with other committees and staff. He said he takes pride in being a resident and getting to know a lot of people over the years, he likes to be a part of it all and give back to the community. He felt a critical issue for the City is the Budget because of the economy balancing it this year was difficult and next year will be also; tough decisions had to be made and will continue to be as the City figures out how to do what they are doing with less and less available money. He felt Newberg's greatest positive attribute is its people. He also spoke of the city's staff growing from within and the leadership that comes from their experience being invaluable. He spoke of a recent decision involving his work on the CRRC for a step utility rate increase; he was the only member that voted no because although the repairs were needed the timing of the significant increase was too steep to ask for in light of the current unemployment rate. But, he felt good that the City endorsed an assistance program to help low income families with that increase. He said he was aware of the time commitment as he ran for the seat in 2006 and he is willing to commit to it. He said he also intends to run in the fall.

Councilor Stephen McKinney asked about his negative vote on the rate increase on the CRRC and asked how he felt he would handle other difficult decisions in the future as a councilor.

Mr. Amundson, Jr. replied that on the CRRC he was chosen to represent Newberg as a citizen and that amount of an increase was just too much; but, as a councilor he would be asked to make decisions for what is best for the city as a whole, not just from the view of a citizen.

Mr. Dale Farris said he was an Oregon native who graduated from Tigard High School in 1977 and went into the military. After a twenty-one year career, he retired to Albany for ten years and relocated to Newberg in 2009 with plans to make this his home. He has wanted to serve and this has been the first opportunity his schedule has allowed him to do that. He felt the critical issue facing Newberg is facilitating growth while keeping the small town feel. He understood the need to get revenue, but not at the expense of the citizens or just growing to grow. He felt the people were Newberg's most positive attribute and the small town feel. He spoke of recent discussions on a daytime curfew and the decision to continue only after more information was received; that tells him the Council is concerned about the issue and not just making changes for change sake. He said he understands the time commitment and would have to work out a scheduling conflict if he is appointed, but he felt it could be overcome. He plans to run in the fall.

Councilor Shelton asked him to talk about utility rates and balancing the need to facilitate growth while keeping the small town perception.

Mr. Farris said if infrastructure needs to be updated then dollars need to be raised; but, the size of the increase and the burden of the citizens and businesses need to be considered so they are carrying the load equally.

Councilor McKinney asked how this can be achieved when the city is faced with significant capital improvement projects that are not optional.

Mr. Farris said if it is mandated then a way needs to be figured out to get the dollars either by rate increase or other vehicles if warranted and not undue on certain segments of the population.

Mr. Robert Fitzner said he has been living in Newberg over a year working with a company that works with ODOT on the construction of bridges statewide and he has met a lot of stakeholders in the community. He also worked in Saudi Arabia working with government agencies on issues of infrastructure. He is interested in giving back to the community and being involved in the decision making process. He felt the critical issue for Newberg is the Newberg-Dundee Bypass project and how it will affect residents, not just in the corridor, but also in the businesses. He agrees Newberg's people are its most positive attribute and its being a good small town with access to larger events; he felt the city had a good blend. He spoke of a recent hearing on the Columbia Drive local improvement district where a citizen raised an issue and the Council decided to postpone their decision until those issues could be addressed; he felt this was very diplomatic. He said he was aware of the time commitment and although he has a forty hour work week to schedule around, he can be flexible and he will run in the fall.

Councilor Shelton asked about rate increases and how he thinks it impacts how he would come to a decision.

Mr. Fitzner said no one likes additional taxes, but they are a necessary evil for expansion as well as operation and maintenance. If they have not been raised in four years, as was said earlier, then it is necessary to increase the rates in order to keep up.

Councilor McKinney asked him to clarify his comments on the bypass and decreases in business revenue. He asked him what benefits or potential non-benefits he saw with the bypass.

Mr. Fitzner said there are both benefits and non-benefits. The citizens could live better without having to deal with the large volumes of traffic on a daily basis, but, revenue will also be lost from people who would normally be passing through town that will not be if the bypass is built. He felt it would probably be better in the long term to build the bypass though.

Mayor Andrews recessed at 7:58 PM for staff to collect and tally the scores and reconvened at 8:10 PM.

Mr. Danicic provided the score results for each of the candidates. Mr. Ryan Howard and Mr. Ernie Amundson, Jr. were ranked as the two top scoring candidates.

Councilor Rierson argued for Mr. Amundson even though he ranked second, placing higher value on his being a lifelong resident with his duration of service to the City already, he felt strongly that his experience was greater.

Mayor Andrews also agreed that a stronger sense of a long term commitment can be realized on behalf of the City with Mr. Amundson based on his background.

MOTION: Rierson/Shelton to nominate Mr. Ryan Howard and Mr. Ernie Amundson, Jr. for consideration as the most qualified candidate to fill the City Council District No. 6 vacant position for a term expiring December 31, 2010. (6 Yes/0 No/1 Vacant) Motion carried.

MOTION: Rierson/Shelton to appoint either Ryan Howard or Ernie Amundson, Jr. as the most qualified nominee to fill the City Council District No. 6 vacant position for a term expiring December 31, 2010.

VOTE #1: To appoint either Ryan Howard or Ernie Amundson, Jr. as the most qualified nominee to fill the City Council District No. 6 vacant position:

Ryan Howard	3 Yes [McKinney, Bacon, Witherspoon]/0 No/1 Vacant
Ernie Amundson, Jr.	3 Yes [Rierson, Shelton, Andrews]/0 No/1 Vacant

Failed for lack of a majority.

Mayor Andrews recessed until 8:38 PM. He reconvened with three more questions for each of the top two candidates to answer: what makes a good city council, how to fund projects out there that need to be completed, and if they are unsuccessful in the appointment would they still be willing to run in the election.

Mr. Amundson said a good city council has to be willing to dedicate hours of their time with little compensation and they have to be willing to make decisions that are not always popular.

Mr. Howard said they must be receptive to the citizens for what they want and better equipped to provide those services. For funding, although times are tough, actions need to focus on the efficiency of programs and expenditures. If limited funds are available, it is necessary to look at the impacts to ensure the most gets done with the least amount of money. Alternative programs to encourage the citizen to take on a burden that would otherwise burden the city should be emphasized, like reducing water usage and riding bicycles to limit the need to invest in roads.

Mr. Amundson spoke of adding a dollar onto the utility bills to fund the additional police officers being a good example of finding funding, it may not be real popular but there were more who supported it than disapproved. He is planning on running in the fall even if he is not successful in the appointment tonight.

Mr. Howard said while he may be at whim of his career when he is done with classes in three years, his family lives here and he would be willing to run for election.

VOTE #2: To appoint either Ryan Howard or Ernie Amundson, Jr. as the most qualified nominee to fill the City Council District No. 6 vacant position:

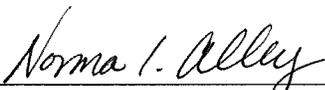
Ryan Howard	4 Yes [McKinney, Bacon, Witherspoon, Andrews]/0 No/1 Vacant
Ernie Amundson, Jr.	2 Yes [Rierson, Shelton]/0 No/1 Vacant

Mr. Ryan Howard was appointed to the District No. 6 vacant position.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:54 PM.

ADOPTED by the Newberg City Council this 2nd day of August, 2010.



Norma I. Alley, City Recorder

ATTEST by the Mayor this 5th day of August, 2010.



Bob Andrews, Mayor