

0007 Mayor Barbara Larsen called the regular meeting of the Castle Rock City Council to order at 7:30 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. The following councilmembers were present: Khembar Yund, Greg Marcil, Earl Queen, Jack Reilly and Mike Mask.

0053 Councilmember Mask made a motion, seconded by Reilly to approve the minutes of the March 23, 2009 Regular Council Meeting. By roll call vote, unanimous Aye.

0100 Mayor Larsen adjourned regular session at 7:35 p.m. and opened the Public Hearing to take public comment on the filing of an application, in the amount of \$300,000, with USDA Rural Development for funding of improvements at the Castle Rock Regional Water Treatment Plant.

Vorse detailed that there are three possible funding sources for the Water Treatment Plant Improvement Project:

1. A \$300,000 loan from USDA Rural Development; at 4.5% interest rate; term 20 to 40 years.
2. The city's original application submitted for stimulus funding through the Department of Health (DOH) had been denied. However, the DOH applications are now being reconsidered. Those results will be available on April 23<sup>rd</sup>.
3. The Cowlitz County Commissioners are considering a short term loan from the county Landfill Fund. Vorse will meet with the Cowlitz County Commissioners and the Landfill Board on Wednesday.

Vorse explained that additional project funding is needed due to pay for mitigating issues after lead was discovered in the paint located the outside of the filter tanks and piping at the Water Treatment Plant. The lead paint must be safely contained and removed. A complete sandblasting to remove all the lead paint is the most viable option. This option prevents the expense of additional containment and removal of lead in the near future. Vorse noted that the lead levels in the paint were too low to be classified as a lead based paint. However, during the process of preparing the tanks to be painted, paint dust became airborne which created a hazard. In response to a question from Mayor Larsen, Vorse stated that the interest rate on a loan from Cowlitz County could be as low as 1% to 1.5%. It is possible that the DOH could provide a grant for 50% of the funding with the remainder a loan at 1% interest. Cowlitz County Landfill Funds could only be used as an interim loan.

In response to a question from Donna Williams, 211 Second Avenue SW, Vorse clarified that the Water Treatment Plant was built in 1969, and this is the third upgrade. When complete, the projected cost for the current upgrade will be \$2.3 million.

0586 There being no comment, Mayor Larsen closed the Public Hearing at 7:37 p.m. and resumed regular session.

0591 Mike Wind, Toutle River RV Resort, stated that local business owners, community leaders and outdoor enthusiasts care deeply about the economic, environmental and cultural health of southwest Washington. He feels that the long term management of Mount Saint Helens is a key component for our region's health. There is great concern that the volcano's current management is insufficient to best achieve our economic, environmental and cultural goals.

Wind noted that, in recent years the U.S. Forest Service has significantly reduced funding to the Mt. St. Helens Monument. This has resulted in decreased public services; with road, trail and visitor center closures. All of which has contributed to a steady drop in visitation. Declining visitation has caused local businesses to cut hours and staff, or to close.

He feels that to properly preserve, interpret and promote Mt. St. Helens it should be placed under the care of the National Park Service. There are several reasons to support this change:

- Mt. St. Helens is the site of the most recent volcanic eruption in the lower 48 states.
- The monument contains significant and unique natural wonders.
- Mt. St. Helens offers the best opportunities to study forest disturbance recovery.
- Mt. St. Helens is on par with other National Parks such as Yosemite, Mt. Rainier and Yellowstone.
- Adding Mt. St. Helens to the National Park System would generate significant economic benefits to gateway communities. A recent study released by the National Parks Conservation Association found that for every federal dollar invested in a national park, four dollars in economic benefit are generated for local economies.
- Designating Mt. St. Helens as part of the National Park System would generate media attention which would bring new tourists to the area. A study by the State of Colorado found that elevating a National Monument to a National Park result in a large and sustained increase in visitation. Again, new visitors would provide a much needed economic increase to gateway communities.

Wind noted that the U.S Forest Service has tripled the entrance fee at Johnston Ridge which caused Grey Line Bus Tours to cease service to the monument. This is a great loss to the entire region during these economically difficult times.

Mr. Wind requests council support to encourage the National Park Citizens Task Force to include Mt. St. Helens on the Recommended National Park System List to Congress. The Task Force will report to Washington State Representative

Baird, Senator Patty Murray and Senator Maria Cantwell. Castle Rock's proximity to Mt. St. Helens and I-5 could be a huge benefit to the City. Regional users do not provide sufficient revenue to fund an increase in local jobs which would be funded from tourism. An increase in campgrounds is also needed for tourist in our area.

Councilmember Mask noted that the National Park Service does not allow hunting. Mr. Wind responded that hunting is an activity enjoyed by local residents, but it does not fund sustainable jobs such as with tourism. In response to a question from Councilmember Mask, Mr. Wind specified that when California's Lassen Volcanic Monument became a National Park the gateway communities realized a 10 fold increase in business. When a tourist purchases a National Park Pass it provides access to, and use of, all National Parks for a period of one year. The economic increase for Castle Rock, being located 60 miles from the crater, would be huge. A road connecting the monument to Highway 12 would also encourage tourism, as most visitors would rather travel a loop.

In response to a question from Councilmember Mask, Mr. Wind clarified that in the past, a large survey was taken of citizens attending public comment meetings on this proposed change. However, those meetings were attended primarily by local sportsmen and scientists, without adequate representation from local business owners.

Councilmember Queen pointed out that tourists are constantly traveling past Castle Rock along I-5. Mr. Wind suggests reevaluating ways to draw tourists into the region. He recommends contacting the National Park Citizens Task Force in support of the National Park option and suggests visiting [www.npca.org](http://www.npca.org) for more information. Councilmember Queen suggests sending a letter in support of placing Mt. St. Helens in the care of the National Park Service. No formal action was taken on Mr. Wind's request.

- 1586 City Attorney Tom O'Neill reports that he has drafted a complaint against the aquatics land appraiser. Payments made for that service are being reviewed.
- 1646 Public Works Director David Vorse asked to be designated as the FEMA Applicant Agent for the December snow event, with Clerk-Treasurer Ryana Covington as the Alternate Agent.
- 1671 Councilmember Mask made a motion, seconded by Queen to approve Resolution 2009-03 designating David Vorse as the authorized representative and Ryana Covington as the alternate, to obtain federal and/or state emergency or disaster assistance funds for the December 2008 Severe Winter Storm and Record / Near Record Snow event, on first reading. By roll call vote, unanimous Aye.

- 1703 Vorse reports that while researching the viability of a community garden, the Department of Ecology indicated that property owned by the City or the Castle Rock School District (CRSD) is considered public property therefore any well placed on public property would be required to meet potable water quality standards and the garden size would be limited to ½ acre.

The cost to extend the water main on Roake Avenue SE to the soccer field for a community garden would be approximately \$5,000. In addition, this extension would require one week of labor from the Public Works Department. This cost does not include the connection fee, assessed by ordinance. Councilmember Queen noted that the sandy site would also require topsoil. Vorse noted that excess soil from the CAP Subdivision was placed on the site.

The CRSD indicated that they would manage the garden by managing educational plots for students while donating to the community food bank and the rental of plots to residents. The funds obtained from the rental of plots could be split between the City for water expenses and the CRSD for garden expenses. The CRSD applied for grant funding for this program but was unsuccessful. The rental of plots would not be adequate enough to fund the expense for water.

Councilmember Mask noted that funding is not available for this program. This item should be tabled until the next budget cycle. Councilmember Marcil stated that funding may materialize if we continue seeking opportunities.

- 2032 Vorse reports that the roof over the Harry Truman Monument at the Lions Volunteer Memorial Park needs to be replaced. Councilmembers Marcil, Queen and Mask have been seeking materials for improvements at this park. The Chamber of Commerce has donated \$100 for roofing material and paint for the picnic shelter. A business has also indicated that they may be willing to donate materials towards the replacement of the roof. Mayor Barbara Larsen stated that Susan Barker with the CRSD is contacting Mr. Whiting (Harry Truman's brother-in law), to ascertain if he would like to donate toward this project.

In response to a question from Councilmember Mask, Covington clarified that the \$60 fee for the roofing permit cannot be waived, since it is prescribed by city ordinance.

Councilmember Queen detailed that Councilmember Marcil obtained a donation of three tab roofing from Ken Campbell, Castle Rock Building Supply, for this project. He stated that plywood is still needed. In response to Councilmember Queen, Covington stated that she would place this item on the reader board with public works phone number. Vorse indicated that he would contact The Daily News regarding this event.

- 2336 Vorse requested that the URS Mitigation Consultant Agreement listed on the agenda be tabled until more information is obtained.
- 2352 Clerk-Treasurer Ryana Covington reported that Councilmember Mask has reviewed all documentation pertaining to the March expenditure claims as outlined in the Summary of Claims.
- 2364 Councilmember Queen made a motion, seconded by Reilly to approve payment of March expenditures in the amount of \$443,270.78 as described on the Summary of Claims and further described as check numbers 38428 through 38554 for general expenditures and check numbers 20577 through 20625 for payroll expenses. By roll call vote, unanimous “Aye”.
- 2375 On April 8<sup>th</sup>, Covington and a member of her finance staff worked with Washington State Archives representatives to purge archived items that can be disposed of in accordance with State retention schedules. She noted there were over 300 boxes that will be disposed of during the Spring Clean Up event. Covington stated Washington State Archives are downsizing staff and their on-site services will be limited in the future.
- 2455 Covington requested council direction regarding utility shut off notices. This month, there are two accounts slated for disconnect, containing small past due amounts. She asked if councilmembers would be interested in considering establishing a minimum balance. Those accounts with past due balances, at or below this amount would not be disconnected; the balances would be collected at the next billing. In answer to Councilmember Queen’s question, Covington stated that it is not part of policy to call customers before disconnecting them. Those slated for disconnect already have received three notifications of past due. There are approximately 8-15 customers slated for disconnect each month. If council required calls to be made to customers prior to disconnect, it would place an undue ‘burden of proof’ on staff to make sure that the customer is notified before being able to disconnect for non-payment. In addition, customers working during the day, out of town or choosing not to answer their phone would be able to avoid disconnection of their services. Covington stated when services are disconnected, a door notice is left at the residence.
- 2615 Councilmember Mask asked that the issue pertaining to the city’s requirement of utility deposits also be re-evaluated by councilmembers. He felt that if people are delinquent, then the deposit should be retained until they no longer are a customer. Covington stated that owners of rental property support that the city retains utility deposits. She also noted that as economic times change, utility customers have voiced support that the retained deposit is available to pay for the final utility bill. Covington stated that unpaid utility bills become a lien against the property. The lien is enforceable through disconnection of the service. By consensus, councilmembers asked that this issue be placed as an agenda at a subsequent meeting.

- 2699 Councilmembers Yund and Reilly spoke against establishing a minimum amount that would not qualify for disconnection procedures. By consensus, councilmembers directed that adopted municipal code be followed.

Donna Williams, Second Avenue, stated she works for Department of Social and Human Services. This agency provides financial assistance for needs such as utility bills and rental assistance. Williams provided the contact number to the city clerk.

- 2813 Covington presented the first quarter report for General Fund revenues. The report compares line item revenues from fiscal years 2005-2009. She noted that total revenues in 2009 are \$215,657.13 as compared with \$225,872 in 2008. Councilmember Yund noted that first quarter property tax revenues are only \$1,964.42 this year as compared to \$10,331.50 for the same period in 2008. Covington stated that a more comprehensive evaluation of all funds will be made available at the next council meeting.

- 2970 In answer to Councilmember Mask's question, Vicki Selander, Librarian, stated that the Friends of the Library will be paying for election costs to place the Library Excess Levy on the primary ballot. Covington noted that for one issue, the election cost could be up to \$3,000. Selander stated the Library Board will be submitting a formal request to the city council in support of submitting a library excess levy to the voters.

Selander announced that the Friends of the Library will hold a book sale on April 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>.

- 3098 Council Report of Meetings:  
Councilmember Marcil attended meetings in Centralia and Chehalis to compare water meter and utility billing systems. Also attending were employees, Vorse, Roller, Covington, Curtis and Purvis.

Other meetings attended by Marcil included: Castle Rock Lions Club, Cowlitz Summit Meeting, a police budget meeting (with Chief Heuer) and a meeting with Mr. Mike Wind.

Councilmember Queen also attended the police budget meeting.

Councilmember Mask reported that he also attended the County Summit meeting, along with Mayor Larsen and Councilmember Yund. At that meeting, various committees were formed to investigate options for combining services. He volunteered for some of the committees and has been attending those follow-up meetings. Councilmember Mask noted that one of his committees involves park services and he has asked the mayor and public works director to come to their next meeting, April 22<sup>nd</sup> to provide information regarding park services.

Mayor Larsen announced that she will replace Councilmember Mask as representative on the Lower Columbia Community Action Program (CAP) board. Councilmember Mask stated the CAP board requires their board members to donate financially to support the agency. He does not feel that councilmembers should be required to donate funds, just so the city can be represented.

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3330 Mayor Larsen adjourned regular session for a 10-minute Executive Session to discuss personnel issues.

3426 Mayor Larsen resumed Regular Session at 8:43 p.m.

3467 Councilmember Mask made a motion to direct staff to prepare a resolution to submit for the primary election requesting voter's consideration to fund by Special Excess Levy for Public Safety Funds in the amount of \$248,827 for fiscal year 2010.

Councilmember Yund stated this does not require a motion, only a consensus. There being no second the motion died. By consensus Councilmembers directed staff to prepare a resolution as described above for an excess levy to support public safety to be submitted to the voters at the primary election.

Councilmember Marcil explained this levy issue will be used to partially fund police operations in fiscal year 2010 and will be only in effect for one year.

3723 Councilmember Reilly made a motion, seconded by Marcil to adopt Ordinance No. 2009-02, an ordinance amending Castle Rock Municipal Code 10.16.010. Section 2 pertaining to parking time limits on city streets and where official signs so designate, on second reading. By roll call vote, unanimous 'Aye'.

3750 Mayor Larsen announced that she has repealed the hiring freeze enacted at the last council meeting. Councilmember Yund recommends that the hiring freeze be enacted for those positions funded by General Fund. Mayor Larsen agreed to the recommendation and a formal written notice will be prepared.

3945 Covington stated she was contacted by Tim Schmidt, from Government Outreach. He is currently working with the City of Longview to provide software to allow citizens to access information currently being provided by employees. The cost of the service is \$200 per month. Mr. Schmidt has offered to provide a presentation at the next city council meeting. By consensus, councilmembers stated they will need to decline the offer due to lack of funds.

4111 Covington stated she was asked if there were funds available to purchase bark dust for the flower beds in front of City Hall. Staff volunteers will be working during the Chamber of Commerce Spring Clean-Up Event and would like to

- spread bark dust to improve aesthetics and reduce watering needs. Councilmembers Marcil and Queen stated they would get the bark dust donated and delivered.
- 4220 Councilmembers reviewed the proposed amended contract between the City and the Senior Center. The terms are for a five-year period and include an addendum for provision of janitorial services.
- 4305 Councilmember Queen made a motion, seconded by Marcil to approve the amended contract between the City and Senior Center for use of a portion of the City Hall building to house the Castle Rock Senior Center. By roll call vote, Councilmembers Yund, Mask, Marcil and Queen voted 'Aye'. Councilmember Reilly abstained from voting.
- 4442 Nancy King, 404 Balcer Street NE requested a utility leak adjustment for March billing. Public Works Director Dave Vorse stated the leak was created due to equipment failure at the city meter. Vorse brought in a gasket and showed the area where the failure occurred. He stated the customer would not be able to make the repair, since it involved city equipment.
- 4558 Councilmember Mask made a motion, seconded by Reilly to approve the leak adjustment requested by King, in the amount of \$187.32, which is the full amount of the loss. Full credit is being provided because the cause of the leak was due to city equipment failure. By roll call vote, unanimous 'Aye'.
- 4593 Councilmember Yund made a motion, seconded by Reilly to approve Resolution No. 2009-04, a resolution to ask qualified voters of the City to fund by Special Excess Levy the furnishing of public library services to the citizens of Castle Rock and will submit the following question: 'Whether or not a special excess levy on real property shall be had for the purpose of funding library services to the citizens of Castle Rock during the year 2010.', on first reading. By roll call vote, unanimous 'Aye'
- Covington noted that the mayor needs to appoint individuals to prepare a 'pro' statement and a 'con' statement for publication in the voter's manual. Mayor Larsen stated she would contact Bud May to see if he would write the 'pro' statement. Councilmember Queen noted that in November, the library levy only failed by four votes.
- 4734 Vorse reported he has been attending planning meetings for the 'I Topped The Rock' fun run/walk fundraising event to benefit the library. He asked for clarification as to the city's commitment to provide liability insurance coverage for the event. By consensus, councilmembers agreed that it was the intent of city council to provide liability coverage, providing a city staff member participated in the event development.



- 4832 Councilmember Queen asked if Vorse could ask the Chamber of Commerce to include cleaning the restroom facilities at Lion's Pride Park as one of their Spring Clean-up Projects.
- 4862 Mayor Larsen adjourned Regular Session at 9:06 p.m. for a one-half hour executive session to discuss two personnel issues.
- 4912 Mayor Larsen reconvened Regular Session and adjourned the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

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Mayor Barbara Larsen

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Clerk-Treasurer

