

CITY OF COQUILLE
CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
June 30, 2009

COUNCIL PRESENT: Councilors E.N. “Corky” Daniels, Loran Wiese, Linda Short, Fran Capehart and Bruce Parker.

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Terence O’Connor, Finance Director Chuck Dufner, Public Works Director John Higgins, Library Director Anne Conner, Police Chief Mark Dannels and Deputy Recorder Rene Collins

PRESS: Coquille Community News and Coquille Valley Sentinel

AUDIENCE: A roster of those present is on file in the City Recorder's Office

1. CALL TO ORDER

Council President Wiese called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. PRESENTATION BY – LELAND CONSULTING (URBAN RENEWAL CONSULTANTS)

City Manager O’Connor introduced Chris Zahas and Tina Mosca from Leland Consultants. They presented a presentation about the project and their work scope. They talked about what Urban Renewal is and how the funds are to be used. They said the URA plan was adopted in 1999, there are 260 acres of predominantly commercial and the revenue URA received in fiscal year 2007-2008 was \$167,563. They do not feel a major amendment is necessary or that the new legislation passed will affect Coquille’s urban renewal area. They showed how other cities had used their money to make improvements and what lessons were learned.

Diane Courtright lives and works downtown and feels that area is her focus. She feels the garbage cans need to be emptied on a regular basis and the grass should be cleaned up around the buildings. The awning with bird droppings need to be cleaned and those damaged need to be repaired and possibly URA dollars could help. Councilor Wiese said the City does not own the awnings. The side of Bill’s place needs to be fixed and the building is ugly. Ms. Courtright said the street lights could be more decorative and the auto place may need a fence to shield the vehicles that need to be stored. Councilor Wiese said we have some of the same problems we had ten years ago. Councilor Short is excited to see new people in the audience that are interested in making changes. Councilor Wiese said private investment is necessary to make the projects succeed. Councilor Daniels said some of the problems are that the owners do not live in town.

Robert Jump said URA has invested in awnings and asked how many more are they going to invest in if the owner is not going to maintain them, City Manager O’Connor said URA dollars cannot be used for maintenance.

Jean Ivy said that the downtown dynamic is changing and that there are more local owners doing business in their own buildings. Councilor Wiese said that maintenance could possibly be incorporated in the URA application.

Mr. Zahas of Leland Consulting said peer pressure works well with the building owners to keep the buildings looking nice.

Lowell Thomas said most of the weed abatements in the downtown core area have been done by volunteer groups. Councilor Short said the downtown land owners are responsible for the weeds growing in front of their buildings.

Ryan Deuschle said there needs to be jobs for the people here and look at the economic basis for the area and agriculture may be a possibility.

Lowell Thomas said he thinks they should look where Coquille was before 1980 and what happened when the forest industry went away. Coquille is the geographic center of the area and feels the economic stabilization can be the commercial center for the area.

Dr. Nancy Keller said growth is possible if there are good things for the kids to do. She feels the river walk development should be a major concentration. She also feels that an indoor swimming pool, new public library would contribute to the area and her new art center is providing activities for the children.

Bill Marino said water front is a good asset and would like to see the buildings in the GP site utilize the riverside and it not become the back of buildings. In the guidelines for the construction of those projects builders could be encouraged to possibly incorporate an open air area where there are lunching facilities that are partially covered. Lowell Thomas said you are not allowed to develop within 75' of the river front.

Kelly Thompson asked how the downtown merchants could get some parking for motor homes in the downtown area and what the City could do to help with the situation. City Manager O'Connor said if the downtown merchants identified a site and then discussions would go on from there. It was suggested an electronic sign can be put on the highway to let people know what is available. Mr. Zahas said that signage is important to let people know where things are.

Cindy Robinette said there needs to be a theme and it should be cute. Possibly lamp and hitching posts; it would grab people's attention.

Kelly Thompson asked how communities get money for downtown light posts. City Manager O'Connor said it was attempted 10 years ago and the building owners would have pay to hook up to the underground electric and they did not want to absorb the cost and their buildings electric would have to bring the building up to code. Mr. Zahas said sometimes a LID is formed to help defer the cost over time. Mr. Thompson said there may also be green grant dollars available or other dollar sources.

Lowell Thomas asked how difficult it is to extend the URA plan an additional 10 years. Tina Mosca, Leland Consulting, said you are not limited by time but by the amount of indebtedness.

James Harris said at the merchants meeting they discussed a brick entrance on Birch and Adams and they thought it would look nice. Councilor Parker said in the past ODOT would not let us put up an entrance. Mr. Harris said we need to stay on them and keep trying. Mr. Zahas said that the turnout is good and the enthusiasm is great and feels that projects can happen if everyone works together.

Lowell Thomas said that overnight lodging is needed in our area. City Manager O'Connor said lodging facilities are allowed at the GP site.

Bill Marino said McMenamins might be a possibility for a restaurant; City Manager O'Connor said that they declined to look at our area in the past.

Yvonne Savino said that people are interested and they have vision of what they would like to see.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Council President Wiese adjourned the Council Meeting at 5:55 p.m.

Council President, Loran Wiese

ATTEST: _____
Deputy Recorder, Rene Collins