

Minutes of the  
**PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE**  
Tuesday, October 17, 2023  
Council Chambers

Members: Committee Chair Jenee Pearce-Mushen and Committee Members Scott Hudson and Doug Craner in person.

Excused: Amber Fowler.

Absent: Steve Weight.

Staff: Public Works Director Karen La Bonte, Assistant Public Works Director Trevor Mount, and Public Works Administrative Assistant Tessa Schutt.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Pearce-Mushen called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**A. Minutes from Tuesday, September 19, 2023:**

Motion: Hudson moved to approve the minutes from September 19, 2023; Craner seconded the motion.

Vote: Craner, Hudson, and Pearce-Mushen voted AYE. The vote was 3:0 in favor and the motion carried.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

No comment was made.

ACTION ITEMS

**A. Utility Relief Requests/Disputed Utility Billing Fee Waivers**

The Committee first considered a request from the Shorewood Apartments at 1192-1194 Spruce St.

Motion: Craner moved to approve the staff recommendation to approve the utility relief request; Hudson seconded the motion.

Vote: Craner, Hudson, and Pearce-Mushen voted AYE; the vote was 3:0 in favor and the motion carried. The relief request was approved.

Next, the Committee considered a request from Adler at 787 S Hemlock St.

Hudson said it is great that all three requesting relief have EoW.

Craner said I would like to have a discussion about the next two. Adler: hose left on by neighbor. Gueck: defective hose left on by neighbor. Kind of same situation. In Adler's case, was a neighbor. Brings to light things noticed in the past. Whether approved or denied, these two applicants are going

to pay for their water. Not a circumstance where people don't pay for 100% of their water usage. I think they're expecting relief for their water usage. All we do is determine relief from sewer. Clearly water did not enter the wastewater system.

Schutt explained rationale. Hudson agreed that it's operator error and was done outside adding if I leave sprinkler system on, it's my fault. Craner agrees, they'll pay for water. Pearce-Mushen noted I had a water leak that didn't affect sewer for probably a year and paid for whole thing. We have a policy. We're trying to encourage conservation.

Mount explained years ago, we received a request for a resident with an outdoor shower. A transient walked by and used the shower at their home, left the water on. Had a huge bill. This is the same, it's human error. Recalls customer was frustrated, we denied it, they made modifications to their equipment.

Craner feels they're paying a penalty. They're already going to pay for water, now the City is charging them for sewer utility. La Bonte noted as you voted, that's what your ordinance says in your policy. For today's purposes, we have to follow this unless you want to go back and modify the policy. Craner says we're not allowed to do this. Pearce-Mushen noted if it's not a leak, should we be looking at this?

Motion: Craner moved to deny the staff recommendation to deny the utility relief request; Hudson seconded the motion.

Vote: Craner, Hudson, and Pearce-Mushen voted AYE; the vote was 3:0 in favor and the motion carried. The relief request was approved.

Pearce-Mushen asked the committee to reconsider their first vote.

Rationale: Irrigation and associated components are not eligible for relief.

Motion: Hudson moved to approve the staff recommendation to deny the utility relief request; PM seconded the motion.

Vote: 3:0 in favor; motion carried.

Finally, the Committee considered a request from Gueck at 352 Sunset Blvd.

Discussed the authority of the committee.

Jan Siebert-Wahrmund: I am confused now as a citizen if I ever have a leak. Pearce-Mushen replied if water enters sewer system, you will not get relief. You'll always pay for water. Concerned about splitting hairs about irrigation and "associated components." Hudson wants to return the policy to Council to include "hoses."

Craner said first one asked neighbor to water. That's irrigating. This one is a "Charged hose." We don't know what it's for.

Motion: Hudson moved to approve the staff recommendation to deny the utility relief request; Pearce-Mushen seconded the motion.

Vote: Craner, Hudson, and Pearce-Mushen voted AYE; the vote was 3:0 in favor and the motion carried. The relief request was denied.

La Bonte asked to have the resolution associated printed in the packet with the relief requests.

## 5. DISCUSSION AND INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

### **A. Public Works Status**

La Bonte provided project status updates: Wastewater team finished Main and Ecola pump station installs and online. Both are done in that regard. Midway & Siuslaw add ons are in progress. Water team has started E Harrison waterline replacement. Done valving, pipe will go in in future weeks. Asphalt patching is ¾ finished, have a few others we're digging out and prepping before plant closes. Getting into budget season soon. If you feel passionate about something bring it to my attention. We have a full plate so she won't initiate. Still have Midtown restrooms, did kickoff meeting for Tolovana Vehicle Ramp for ADA ramp rebuild with State Parks.

Craner asked what are the restrooms hours? Mount replied it varies based on how busy the police department is. Shut down around 10-11 at night, opening varies based on calls, usually open around 7am. Stay open a little later in summer. Mount understands concern as he gets calls about this.

Craner: have we gotten any indication about whether rains have made any difference in relation to Daniels report? La Bonte replied we had an engineering firm review this and do a study, quoted 2036 or 2038 when we would need to review things to see if there are any dynamic changes occurring. We are not in a water shortage. Mount encourages everyone to look at Water Report we just did, use the links. Pearce-Mushen asked is this is online? La Bonte replied yes, in council packet. Mount added and on YouTube.

## 6. GOOD OF THE ORDER

Pearce-Mushen: November 14<sup>th</sup> blood drive

Craner: is there CERT training? PM Pearce-Mushen replied yes, everyone should learn about it and sign up.

Hudson: this Saturday we do barrels at cache sites. I'll be up at Oscar so we have the citizens refreshing or getting their barrels. PM: Where is Oscar? Hudson: up off Old Cannon Beach Rd.

10/19 at 10:19 is Great Shakeout. Head to your evacuation route.

10/26 is Schutt's last day. She has accepted new job at City of Portland.

## 7. ADJOURN

Craner moved to adjourn.

Pearce-Mushen adjourned the meeting at 10:07.

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Tessa Schutt, Public Works Administrative Assistant