



# CITY OF SWEET HOME CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

March 12, 2024, 6:30 PM  
Sweet Home City Hall, 3225 Main Street  
Sweet Home, OR 97386

## **Mission Statement**

The City of Sweet Home will work to build an economically strong community with an efficient and effective local government that will provide infrastructure and essential services to the citizens we serve. As efficient stewards of the valuable assets available, we will be responsive to the community while planning and preparing for the future.

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## **I. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM.

## **II. Roll Call**

### **PRESENT**

Mayor Susan Coleman  
President Pro Tem Greg Mahler  
Councilor Lisa Gourley  
Councilor Dylan Richards  
Councilor Angelita Sanchez  
Councilor Josh Thorstad  
Councilor Dave Trask

### **GUESTS**

Madison Yauck, 364 N. 7<sup>th</sup>, Philomath, OR 97370  
Sean Tate, 399 Water's Edge Court, Lebanon, OR 97355

## **III. Consent Agenda**

- a) Approval of Minutes:
  - i) 2023-02-13 City Council Meeting Minutes
  - ii) 2024-02-27 City Council Work Session Minutes
  - iii) 2024-02-27 City Council Meeting Minutes

President Pro Tem Mahler moved to approve the consent agenda. Councilor Richards seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

## **IV. Recognition of Visitors and Hearing of Petitions**

- a) Small Municipalities Advocacy Coalition (SMAC)

Mayor Coleman invited Sean Tate to present on the Small Municipalities Advocacy Coalition (SMAC).

Mr. Tate stated that he founded SMAC to provide a new advocacy model for small municipalities in Oregon. He highlighted the rural nature of Oregon and the challenges unique to small communities. He reviewed the current members of SMAC who joined through an intergovernmental agreement. He noted that members would work closely with his company, Tate Public Affairs, to identify group and local priorities needing advocacy at the state level. He reviewed SMAC's advocacy model and requested that the City of Sweet Home consider joining SMAC to advocate for its priorities. He presented the membership pricing, strategic timeline, and next steps for SMAC.

President Pro Tem Mahler asked why membership pricing varied based on population size. Mr. Tate replied that it was based on the resources typically available to different population sizes.

Councilor Trask asked if SMAC was similar to the League of Oregon Cities (LOC). Mr. Tate replied that LOC utilizes lobbyists, whereas SMAC utilizes municipalities and their experts to advocate for themselves.

No action was required for this item.

## **V. Old Business**

- a) Request for Council Action - Easement Agreement with Alyrica Networks, Inc.

Director Larsen reviewed the previous Council presentation regarding Alyrica's requested easement at the old City Hall site to place a telecommunications box and fencing. He invited Madison Yauck to speak.

Ms. Yauck explained that the proposed site would provide redundancy for Alyrica's services in case of damage to the underground fiber. She noted that Alyrica's infrastructure team performed analyses which resulted in the selection of the proposed site due to its ideal line of sight to Alyrica's tower.

Councilor Gourley expressed concern with impacts to future development of the site.

Councilor Trask asked what would occur if fiber was damaged and there was no redundancy. Ms. Yauck replied that Alyrica customers would lose communication ability on their network. Councilor Trask expressed support for the easement as proposed.

Director Larsen noted that the proposed construction would not limit access to the site.

Councilor Richards moved to approve the easement agreement. Councilor Trask seconded the motion. The motion failed by the following vote:

YEA: Thorstad, Trask

NAY: Coleman, Gourley, Mahler, Richards, Sanchez

No further action was taken.

- b) Information Only – Investigation of Claims Regarding Code Compliance Actions at 1188 55th Avenue - POSTPONED
- c) Request for Council Action - Code Compliance Abatement Lien – POSTPONED

Items b and c were postponed by staff.

## **VI. New Business**

- a) Information Only: Staff Report on System Development Charges Assessed on Accessory Dwelling Units

Director Larsen stated that staff prepared a report regarding Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and associated System Development Charges (SDCs) in response to a resident request. He noted that the State of Oregon mandated that ADUs be permitted anywhere a single family home is built. He stated that the City of Sweet Home limited the size of ADUs based on the square footage of the single family home already on the property. He noted that there was no cost distinction between SDCs for a typical single family home versus an ADU in the Sweet Home Municipal Code and that the SDCs were approximately \$15,000. He presented comparisons in pricing and discounts to other cities. He noted that SDCs were intended to cover the increased demand placed on infrastructure by new construction and reductions in SDCs would increase the burden on ratepayers.

President Pro Tem Mahler expressed disagreement with discounting SDCs.

Councilor Gourley expressed concern that SDCs for ADUs were less expensive in Albany and Lebanon.

Councilor Sanchez expressed support for reductions in SDCs, particularly where reductions could provide more housing access.

Mayor Coleman stated that if City Council wished to restructure SDCs to examine square footage, it would require review of all SDCs in the Code. She stated that reductions to SDCs would pass costs on to ratepayers.

City Manager Young noted that SDCs are typically waived for housing developments benefitting low income residents or development providing housing to the homeless.

Director Larsen stated that overall, Sweet Home's SDC structure was significantly lower than the rest of the state.

Mayor Coleman reminded the City Council that some of the current infrastructure challenges were due to insufficient SDCs in the past.

Councilor Sanchez requested an exemption from SDCs on ADUs until the housing crisis improved.

Councilor Gourley asked if low income residents could take advantage of SDC waivers. Director Larsen stated that the exemptions typically only applied to larger developments receiving state or federal subsidies. He added that the City rarely received applications for ADUs to be constructed on an owner-occupied lot and the vast majority of SDCs were paid for by developers.

Discussion ensued regarding changes to SDCs; there was consensus that staff present options to discount the cost of SDCs for ADUs where the owner lives in the primary residence on site.

No action was required for this item.

b) Request for Council Action – City Council FY 2024-2025 Goals

City Manager Young read the current City Council Mission Statement and Vision Statement. She reviewed the City Council goals that had been identified in a prior Work Session and noted the funding availability and needs for each.

President Pro Tem Mahler moved to approve the City Council FY 2024-2025 Mission, Vision, and Goals as presented. Councilor Thorstad seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**VIII. Reports of Committees**

There were no reports to be heard.

**IX. Reports of City Officials**

City Manager's Report

City Manager Young thanked the City Council for attending the Chamber of Commerce Awards Banquet and thanked the Chamber for hosting. She highlighted the Mayor's awards to Angela Clegg and Milt Moran. She noted that the League of Oregon Cities would host their annual conference in April and City Council was welcome to attend.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Coleman reminded City Council to complete their Statements of Economic Interest (SEIs) with the Oregon Government Ethics Commission (OGEC).

**X. Department Director Reports**

Library Services Director

- i) Library Director Report - February 2024

Community and Economic Development Director

- i) Community & Economic Development Director Report - February 2024

Public Works Director

- i) Public Works Director Report - February 2024

Police Chief

- i) Police Chief Report - February 2024

Chief Ogden stated that April is Child Abuse Prevention Month and the Police Department would host their annual Walk for the Cause on April 6, 2024.

Mayor Coleman asked of the increase in juveniles in custody. Chief Ogden replied that it was likely due to the recent reinstatement of a School Resource Officer (SRO) which increased interaction with juveniles in the community.

No other reports were heard.

**XI. Council Business for Good of the Order**

President Pro Tem Mahler asked of City's staff recommendation regarding SMAC. City Manager Young replied that she agreed the needs of small communities differed from those of larger communities but it was at City Council's discretion whether they wished to bring SMAC back for consideration. There was no consensus to place SMAC on a future agenda at this time.

City Attorney Snyder announced his retirement from the City of Sweet Home after 43 years of service. City Council thanked him for his service.

**XII. Adjournment**

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 8:03 PM.

  
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Mayor

ATTEST:



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City Manager - Ex Officio City Recorder