

Columbia City Council Pre-Council Minutes

Monday, May 20, 2013 5:00 p.m.

City Hall – Council Chambers

701 East Broadway

Council members present: Mayor McDavid, Fred Schmidt, Mike Trapp, Karl Skala, Ian Thomas, Laura Nauser (arrived at 5:30) and Barbara Hoppe

Absent: None

Mayor McDavid called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.

Planning and Zoning Commission Interviews:

From 5:00 to 6:00, Council asked a series of questions to four candidates related to the Planning and Zoning Commission. Candidates were interviewed one at a time, in the following order: Anthony Stanton, Sara Loe, Elizabeth Miller and Ann Peters.

November stormwater/sewer ballot items:

City Manager Mike Matthes introduced John Glascock, Director of Public Works and Dave Sorrell, Sewer Manager. He explained that it was a necessary measure to have these items on a November ballot.

Mr. Glascock explained the main problems with the sewer system; aging infrastructure, private common collector sewers and inflow and infiltration (I&I). Additional problems are broken mains that leak groundwater, manholes in need of rehabilitation, roots that protrude in lateral connections and need to be cleared at the property owners' expense. He noted that the typical process is that owners are notified and given time to clean before action is taken on an ordinance violation. The solution to aging infrastructure is to continue sewer main and manhole rehabilitation and/or replacement. A bond issue would fund a 5 year program to rehabilitate sewer mains and manholes that are in structurally poor condition. A solution to private common collector sewers would be bonds that will finance a 5 year continuation of the Private Common Collector Elimination program to replace PCC with new public sewers. Another problem is Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) which is the term that describes the entry of ground water and storm water into the sanitary sewer collection system. This is problematic because the Waste Water Treatment Plant does not have the capacity to treat the volume of wastewater being conveyed to it. This results in Sanitary Sewer Overflows (SSO's) and backups into buildings. There have been 308 SSO's since October 1, 2008 and 71 reported backups since October 1, 2008. This is a violation of Federal and State Clean Water Laws as well as posing a public health issue and poor service to the sewer customers and the community as a whole.

Mayor McDavid asked how these SSO's and backups compare to the average. Mr. Glascock indicated the average rate is about 4 per 100 miles, compared to our rate, which is about 60, when it should be closer to 28. Mayor McDavid asked how the drought affected this. Mr. Glascock said that the dry weather likely caused additional cracks in mains.

Mr. Glascock showed a map of SSO's and basement sewer backup occurrences in the city. The solution would be to finance a 5 year program to reduce inflow and infiltration into the sanitary sewer collection. This can be achieved by performing work in individual sewer basins. Work includes: Identification of I&I sources, both public and private; Elimination of illegal connections, downspouts, sump pumps, area drains, etc.; Rehabilitation of sewer lines and manholes in each basin; Monitoring to determine effectiveness of the program. Mr. Glascock identified I&I reduction basins and noted the goals to reduce I&I peak flows at individual sewer basins and peak flows to the WWTP. They discussed the proposed bond issues totaling \$28 million. The Council thought it would be wise to add additional money to plan for expected growth.

Mr. Glascock moved on to storm water utility and showed some photos of failed storm water pipes. Mayor McDavid asked if these failures would have still occurred had there been funding to proactively fix these issues. Mr. Glascock explained that some wouldn't have been caught, but many would have been because sinkholes can usually be detected. Larger catastrophes can be prevented by fixing them before they become larger problems. Council person Schmidt asked if there were liners to install to prevent collapse. Mr. Glascock said yes, liners can be done as a temporary fix if pipes haven't started to fold in on themselves. Many pipes are under sized and need to be larger. Council person Hoppe asked if developers are responsible for helping with repairs in areas of new developments. Mr. Glascock said that we typically work together, but don't make developers completely responsible. Council person Nauser asked what the current budget for storm water is. Mr. Glascock replied \$1.2 Million annually. Mr. Glascock continued to explain the solution is to provide funding to replace failing pipes. He showed a map of houses and street flooding complaints in City. He noted current solutions including: Management; Tree preservation; Stream buffers; Regulation for development; Education. \$3 Million annually in additional funding would: Construct Proposed Project List; Address failing infrastructure; Incorporate water quality improvements.

Mr. Glascock provided some additional ways to fund storm water. One being a rate increase phased in over 5 years, with transition from tiers to impervious surface calculation. The transition from \$1.35/month to \$8.60/month would generate an additional \$3 million/yr. Another solution would be a sales tax increase of 1/8 cent which will raise approximately \$3 million /yr. Another solution is a property tax increase resulting in \$0.18 per \$100 assessed value

which will raise approximately \$3 million /yr. Or some combination of all options could be considered.

Mr. Matthes noted that geobonds could produce revenue through property tax increase. The maximum issue for geobonds is a 20 year issue and the interest rate was estimated right around 3% for the 20 year life of the bond. He noted that at this time staff is seeking council direction for November ballot language. The language must be ready by August to get it on the ballot. Council person Skala suggested this be discussed further at retreat. Mr. Matthes agreed.

The full presentation on Sewer Utility can be viewed at the link:

<https://www.gocolumbiamo.com/CMS/bcmanager/downloadfile.php?id=9573>

The full presentation on Storm Sales Tax can be viewed at the link:

<https://www.gocolumbiamo.com/CMS/bcmanager/downloadfile.php?id=9574>

C-2 Zoning:

Due to time constraints, this topic will be discussed at the June 3, 2013 Pre-Council meeting.

Other Topics Council Wishes to Discuss:

None.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at approximately 6:54 PM.