

WKNA General Meeting

May 13, 2021 7 p.m.

At Keizer Civic Center lobby, 930 Chemawa Road NE, Keizer, OR

Submitted by Carolyn Homan, WKNA Secretary

Call to Order: Carol Doerfler called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. and welcomed about 16 people.

Approval of minutes – Art Mauer moved to approve the minutes of the April 8 meeting; Rhonda Rich seconded. Motion carried.

2020-21 Budget, Rhonda – Rhonda reported \$548.31 spent from the \$550 2020-21 budget. Expenditures were basically for getting the word out – WKNA signs, brochure boxes, a barrel wrap for the food donation barrels, the website, etc. WKNA has been approved for another \$550 budget for 2021-22. Anticipated expenses include brochure printing, a major cost, and the website fee, which will be about \$200 next year.

Guest speaker: Carol D. introduced the guest speaker, Shane Witham, director of the Keizer Planning Department. He was appointed to the post Feb. 1 this year after 24 years with the city. He discussed the city's current long-range planning work, specifically around the Urban Growth Boundary, which is shared with Salem. Among the related issues are transportation and land supply for jobs and housing. Growth for Keizer is limited in part because of the shared UGB. Infill development has been a focus in Keizer for many years because of the limited land supply. He said there's been no subdivision larger than 15 lots in the past 15 years.

The limiting factors led to the recent Revitalization Plan created around the River Road/Cherry Avenue corridor, with zoning changed from commercial to mixed use in that area. The city hopes to see some redevelopment and vertical development, with commercial at street level and housing above in that area. The corridor spreads out a few blocks into the residential areas next to River Road and Cherry Avenue.

The majority of Keizer housing is single family, creating barriers to lower income families, he said. The city is looking to increase more affordable options, including duplexes and triplexes. The city also got a grant to study the cost of expanding the UGB into farmland north of the city. Bottom line: it's very expensive, he said. The city studied land for jobs and housing. Costs just for transportation infrastructure needed would be \$35 million. The latest population projection for Keizer was down from previous estimates, which affects the Housing Needs Analysis and diminishes somewhat the need to expand. However, there also are costs to not growing, with added pressures of the need for diversity and equity. The city has to create affordable housing options and meet state requirements to provide a mix of housing, as well as commercial and industrial spaces.

In the 1950s, Keizer housing featured larger lots. Now, many of these lots are the site of infill projects and he expects additional housing to go up in existing neighborhoods over the next 10 to 15 years. As of June 2022, the state requires Keizer to adopt new regulations for additional development on properties. Keizer probably will implement some new rules within the next year, he said.

These may include 5,000 square ft. lots in single family home areas, with duplexes and triplexes also OK. Fourplexes are approved for 7,000 sq. ft. lots. In addition, cottage clusters and accessory dwelling units are acceptable developments. Parking may be an issue with denser development but he said there's hope people will become more open to alternate transportation modes. Bicycle/pedestrian facilities are another need. He said Keizer is looking at a grant to update the city's Transportation Plan.

He encouraged anyone with questions to contact him: withams@keizer.org

REPORTS

City Council Liaison, Kyle Juran – He said the city council approved the 2021-22 budget. Applications for the interim city manager position close on Monday. Then the city can move forward on hiring a new

permanent city manager to replace Chris Eppley, who resigned last month. The city also will be working on new Covid regulations in cooperation with the federal government and Oregon Health Authority.

Parks Board, Dennis Phipps – The city is redoing the Parks Master Plan, which is to be finalized in September. One facility which may be added is an ROTC Spartan exercise facility, which the Parks Board OK'd at its last meeting. The project now goes to Council. The facility requires no city funding – JROTC at McNary High will undertake fundraising for the \$200,000 project. The facility will be used by JROTC for training, but they also hope to host competitions for other JROTC units. It can be used by the general public as well.

Parks Board is working with the Keizer Points of Interest Committee, which wants to upgrade signage in city parks with more information about the site history, origin of the name, etc. Claggett Creek Park's new toy has been completed. City fountains and splash fountains still are not operating because of Covid. Another cleanup of the lower area at Wallace House is planned Saturday, May 22. WKNA has been asked to help recruit volunteers. The focus is elimination berry bushes. Parks Board may work with the Traffic Safety Bicycle Pedestrian Committee on ways to connect city sidewalks throughout Keizer and the city parks.

Wallace House, Kathy Lincoln – She said the City did some more bushwhacking in the lower area but the focus is to keep it cleared out and prevent areas of thick undergrowth. The grass that was planted is coming up but Japanese knotweed is a problem.

Food Donation barrels, Dennis – He said food donations are needed. Collections are down from recent weeks, although Dennis did get \$100 in cash donations. Carol will keep posting on Nextdoor and Facebook, which seems to spur food donations. The need is still high – the Keizer Community Food Bank served 48 customers on a recent day.

Round Table

In general comments, Colleen Busch reported on Salem Transit District news. Her last meeting as Keizer area representative will be in June. Three new representatives have been appointed – RJ Navarro, for Keizer, along with Maria Hinojos Pressey and Sara Duncan. Their terms start July 1. Colleen said the district has passed its budget and new electric buses will be in service next summer, with Lancaster becoming an "electric corridor." A Transit Center is being installed in South Salem. Sunday service is back as of September.

Traffic issues in West Keizer also were brought up, including speeding and lots of dump trucks in various areas because of construction. Carol D. said this issue will be revisited in the coming year for WKNA meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Next General Meeting of WKNA: Thursday, Sept. 9, at 7 p.m. Location to be decided.

Watch for a WKNA newsletter to come out in August, with highlights of current activities and a preview of the fall schedule, to be emailed and available in brochure boxes and other sites throughout West Keizer.