



City Council Work Session Minutes September 26, 2023

Mayor:	Robert Duncan, Presiding
Council President:	Mike Caughey, Present
Councilors Present:	Kimberly Downey, Robert Boese, Randy Klemm and Charlotte Thomas
Councilors Absent:	Cindy Knox (Excused absence)
Staff Present:	City Administrator Michele Eldridge, Public Works Director Chuck Scholz, Finance Officer/Deputy City Recorder Cathy Nelson and City Recorder/Municipal Court Clerk Lori Ross
Meeting Location:	Harrisburg Municipal Center Located at 354 Smith St

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL by Mayor, Robert Duncan at the hour of 6:31pm

CONCERNED CITIZEN(S) IN THE AUDIENCE. All in attendance were there for items on the agenda.

THE MATTER OF MEETING WITH A MEMBER REPRESENTATIVE FROM LCSO IF ONE IS AVAILABLE: Sergeant Frambes summarized the LCSO August 2023 Monthly Report noting the calls for service were down from July. He informed Council there were a couple death investigations and break-ins including American Market. LCSO believes the same group is responsible for an attempted break-in at EZ Stop Market and break-ins in Halsey and Brownsville. .

THE MATTER OF DISCUSSING LIBRARY CARDS FOR OUT OF CITY RESIDENTS: Library Supervisor Nelson informed Council that the Lebanon and Albany Libraries are issuing Library cards for non-housed residents at no charge. Nelson asked for Council's input as we prepare a policy on the topic.

- Klemm commented that any patron can read materials in the Library without having to check it out.
- Downey recommended holding materials in the Library for any patron who doesn't have a library card.

- *The consensus was to not allow free Library Cards for non-housed residents.*
- Nelson asked Council about closing the Library at 7pm on Thursdays instead of 8pm beginning in October, stating this would give the Librarians an opportunity to have an additional hour of working together earlier that day.
 - *The consensus was to allow the change in hours.*

To accommodate members in the audience, item no. 3 on the agenda was moved to the end of the meeting.

THE MATTER OF APPROVING THE CONSENT LIST

- Caughey asked about the payment to United Rental for \$7,895.48 as shown on page 79 of the agenda. Scholz responded it was for the rental of an excavator used at the sewer plant for the poplar trees. Nelson commented that this expense is budgeted for each fiscal year.
 - **Downey motioned to approve the consent list and was seconded by Caughey. The motion passed unanimously by a vote of 5-0.** (Yes: Caughey, Downey, Boese, Klemm and Thomas. No: None.) **A motion to approve the consent list approved the following:**
 - **City Council Minutes for August 8, 2023**
 - **The Payment Approval Report for August 2023**

CITY ADMINISTRATOR VERBAL REPORT

Eldridge informed Council of the following:

- Land Use Fees will be on the next agenda due to an increase in the cost of notifications.
- The updated 5-year TMDL has been submitted.
- The City received a \$96,166 Oregon Parks & Recreation Department Grant for Eagle Park which will go towards funding the Dog Park, wood chips for the trail, historical signs, and picnic tables.
- Eldridge will be attending the Oregon Infrastructure Summit Wednesday and Thursday with a scholarship received from Biz Oregon.
- Will Tucker informed Eldridge, at the Linn Co. Commissioners meeting, that they still have unused ARPA funds available and that she will be submitting a request for some of those funds.
- The deadline for the Construction and Maintenance Agreement with BNSF is the 28th of October. City Attorney Jim Brewer has contacted BNSF, and he is hoping they are close to meeting the deadline.
- At the Planning Commission meeting, it was recommended to bring back for review portions of the development code in relation to paving requirements for industrial and commercial properties. Mayor Duncan asked if the concern was financial, and Eldridge replied that it was for the smaller businesses. Scholz commented that he likes asphalt as it looks better but realizes it's a huge expenses for businesses to be able to afford it.
- The SMAC training meeting will be held in the Municipal Center on October 19th at 7pm.

OTHERS:

- Downey read a quote from Elon Musk; “Like Gulliver, tied down by thousands of little strings, we lose our freedom one regulation at a time” and commented we need to do what we can as Councilors and remember that we lose our freedom the more we regulate.
- Nelson informed Council interest rates are up three points to 4.8%.

After the consent list, Harrisburg Resident Troy Jones of 22335 Gap Road, who arrived late, asked to address Council.

Jones distributed **Addendum 1** and stated that he represents a group “Friends of Gap Road” that are against the Muddy Creek Energy Park that would cover over 15,000 acres of Exclusive Farm Use (EFU) property located on Gap Road. Jones was asking for the City’s support as this solar facility will affect the wetlands, wildlife and reduce the evaluation of their homes and property.

- Thomas asked if they are going straight through Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE) to waive the land use laws. Jones replied yes, noting that a new law passed that will allow ODOE to make the determination.
- Klemm asked if the property was being leased. Jones replied the Korean company owns some and they are leasing more from two property owners.
- Downey commented that she is familiar with this and would give her support as an individual Council member as she believes this will take away farming jobs.
- Thomas was concerned about regulating property owners’ rights to be able to lease their property. Jones replied that he is not against that, but he feels they didn’t get the chance to voice their concerns prior.
- Klemm asked who would make the final decision. Jones replied it’s the decision of the Energy Facility Siting Council.
- Mayor Duncan commented that Council would support the group.
- Jones provided his contact information if Council would like to bring it back as a future agenda item.

THE MATTER OF VIEWING A TRAINING VIDEO FOR MANDATORY REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE, AS REQUIRED BY HB 3071

- Eldridge reminded City Council that elected officials must report suspected child abuse and introduced the video which can viewed at <https://www.oregon.gov/odhs/report-abuse/pages/mandatory-reporting.aspx>.
- Downey and Mayor Duncan both thought the video was informative and it was nice to know what their responsibilities are as elected officials.

With no further discussion, the City Council Work Session adjourned at hour of 8:08pm.

Mayor

City Recorder

SAVE OUR FARMLANDS!

The Muddy Creek 'Energy Park' is NOT a park. It is an Industrial Solar Photovoltaic Facility.

The compound would cover over 1,500 acres of highly valued private land zoned for Exclusive Farm Use (EFU), located on Gap Road, 8 miles south of Brownsville in Linn County, Oregon. Along with the solar panels the complex would include a battery storage system, a collector substation, power collection system, 1/2 mile of overhead transmission lines, perimeter fencing, access roads, staging areas and more. **NOT A PARK!**

The applicants are a company called Hanwha (South Korea) and Qcells (California).

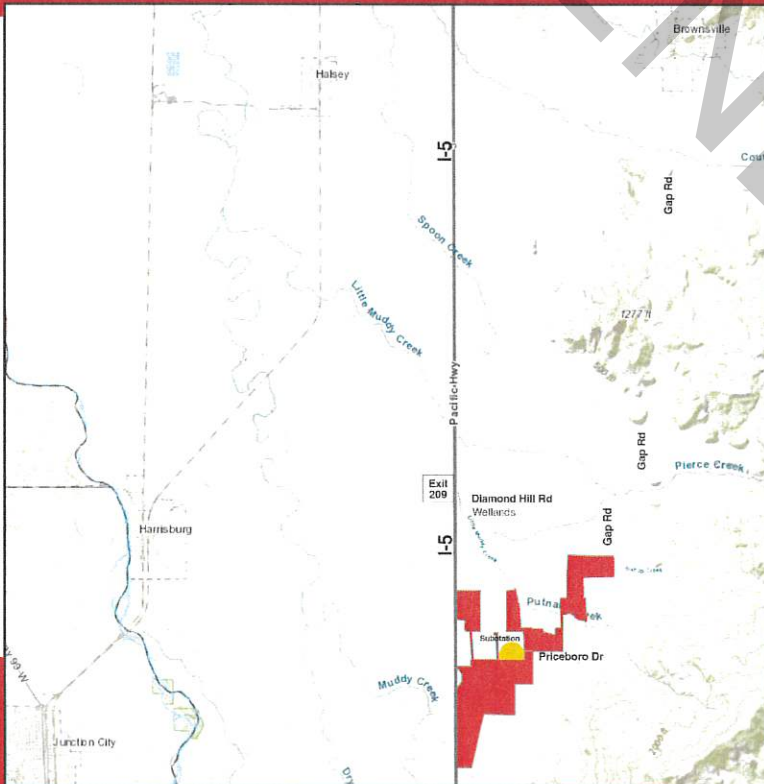
Their intent is to lease the land for 40 years. On July 25, 2023, a **Public Information Meeting and Notice of Intent** was held in Brownsville City Hall. They started the meeting an hour earlier than scheduled, and many people were unable to attend due to the lack of space in the small city council room. A video of that meeting and comments can be found on **YouTube** at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=bXACXeipTjg

There is more information about the 'Energy Park', a project timeline and comments on the ODOE website at: www.oregon.gov/energy/facilities-safety/facilities/Pages/MCEP.aspx

ANOTHER MEETING WILL BE SCHEDULED SOON

We need your attendance and support to **STOP** this project and oppose the destruction of our local farmlands! Your presence is crucial to our farmers, families and community.

We also encourage your comments or questions at the meeting. - *Friends of Gap Road*



Points to consider:

- Hanwha & Qcells chose to bypass the land use process in Linn County, by going through the ODOE, showing a lack of understanding or caring about the impact to the local community.
- The site they have chosen is next to wetlands fed by several creeks that run through the property.
- It is a flyway resting place for ducks and geese.
- Agrivoltaic facilities are experimental. Research is still being done on their long term impact/value.
- These solar panels will decrease agricultural productivity on the land.
- It will devalue the farmland and homes in the surrounding communities.
- There is evidence that solar panels have negative consequences to the soil and are a fire hazard.



**DON'T LET OUR
VALUABLE FARMLAND
BECOME THIS!**

**Please help us stop this experiment now,
before it comes to your neighborhood!**