

**RIO DELL CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
JANUARY 16, 2024**

The regular meeting of the Rio Dell City Council was called to order at 6:05 p.m. by Mayor Garnes.

**ROLL CALL:** Present: Mayor Garnes, Mayor Pro Tem Carter (Attended Remotely), Councilmembers Orr, Wilson, and Woodall

Others Present: City Manager Knopp, Chief of Police Allen, Finance Director Sanborn, Community Development Director Caldwell (Attended Remotely), and City Clerk Dunham

Absent: Water/Roadways Superintendent Jensen, Wastewater Superintendent Kelly and Senior Fiscal Assistant Maciel (excused)

### **CEREMONIAL MATTERS**

#### Proclamation – National Human Trafficking Prevention Month

Mayor Garnes read the proclamation declaring January as National Human Trafficking Prevention Month. Deborah Scaife, President of Soroptimist International of Eel River Valley was present to receive the proclamation.

**Deborah Scaife** thanked the City Council for presenting the proclamation and said that the mission of the Soroptimist is to raise awareness through education and other efforts to help women achieve economic empowerment so they are less likely to human trafficking. She said if you see something or hear something, tell somebody.

### **PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS**

Mayor Garnes invited public comment on non-agenda matters.

**Jeana McClendon**, candidate running for 2<sup>nd</sup> District Supervisor, introduced herself to the City Council and the community and said that she is taking an interest and hoping to get up to speed with the campaign as soon as possible. She commented that she has been a business owner in Fortuna for 25 years and raised in District 2 since she was 3 years old.

She said that as she was out knocking on doors and talking to Rio Dell residents campaigning, some of the things that she heard over and over from residents was what a great asset the Rio Dell Volunteer Fire Department is to the community, what a great job Chief Allen and the Rio Dell Police Department is doing with limited resources, and about the great work by Sarah Reback and the Community Resource Center.

**Suzanne Maese**, from Margro Advisors addressed the Council and urged everyone to vote “No” on Cannabis Measure A. She said that the proposed cannabis ordinance was written by two individuals and positioned to help small farmers and keep large growers out but what it does is restricts the small farmers. It will stop in its tracks, any monies coming to the County with regard to environmental grant funding. CDFW has earmarked \$13 million for cannabis farmers and they are working with various agencies to try and secure that funding for such things as water tank storage for small farmers.

### **CONSENT CALENDAR**

Mayor Garnes asked if any councilmember, staff or member of the public would like to remove any item from the consent calendar for a separate discussion. No items were removed.

A motion was made by Orr/Woodall to approve the consent calendar including the following items:

- 1) Minutes of the January 2, 2024 Regular Meeting;
- 2) Appointment of Councilmembers as the City’s Representatives to Humboldt Transit Authority (HTA);
- 3) Resolution No. 1595-2024 Amending the Adopted Budget for FY 2023-24 to increase Appropriations for Per Capita Park Development Grant (Dog Park);
- 4) Resolution No. 1596-2024 Amending the Adopted Budget for FY 2023-24 to Increase Appropriations for Clean California Gateway Beautification Grant;
- 5) Authorize City Manager to Execute Agreement with Mobley Construction for the dog Park in the Amount of \$198,600; and
- 6) Check Register for December 2023.

Motion carried 5-0.

### **REPORTS/STAFF COMMUNICATIONS**

City Manager Knopp provided highlights of the staff update and reminded everyone of the annual Homeless Point in Time (PIT) Count to take place on the morning of Tuesday, January 23, 2024. Anyone interested in volunteering for the count was asked to contact the City Manager.

Councilmember Wilson asked how many homeless individuals are typically counted.

City Manager Knopp recalled a dozen or so people identified in previous counts.

Councilmember Woodall asked if the Community Resource Center could be utilized to help with the count.

Mayor Garnes said that the Community Resource Center would be helping.

Mayor Garnes called for public comment.

**Nancy Nally** suggested looking on the river bar for homeless encampments. She said that she lives on N. Pacific Ave. and there has been one person that has been homeless there for two years and in the summer, there are typically 5 or 6 people camped at the river bar.

### **SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS/STUDY SESSIONS**

Presentation – Eel River Trails Project/Approve Resolution No. 1597-2024 Adopting Mitigated Negative Declaration and Adopting the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting  
City Manager Knopp introduced Andrea Hilton from GHD who was present to provide a brief overview on the Eel River Trails Project and answer any questions the Council might have.

Andrea explained that in order to begin the project, the city is required to complete CEQA including the preparation of an Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration. The document was circulated for 30 days between November 13, 2023 and December 13, 2023 to allow agencies and the public the opportunity to review and comment on the document. It was also submitted to the State Clearinghouse for review by state agencies and to agencies with jurisdiction over resources affected by the project. The document reviewed all of the environmental resources on the CEQA checklist and found no significant impacts related to the project.

She noted that the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) did not submit any written comments but requested a field tour to review the project site. The tour occurred on December 4, 2023 and during the tour, CDFW requested incorporation of wildlife friendly trash cans at the trail heads and incorporation of additional invasive species removal into the project's Habitat Monitoring Plan, specifically English Ivy and French Broom. As such, the document was updated and resubmitted to CDFW.

Mayor Garnes called for comments or questions from the Council.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter commented that she was looking forward to having shovels in the ground.

Councilmember Wilson asked if this includes the modification made at the last meeting to include the ADA ramp.

Andrea explained that GHD performed a full-scale CEQA report and analyzed the maximum potential environmental impact likely to occur to avoid going back and amending the document which would result in additional expense.

Mayor Garnes called for public comment.

**Tommy Norton** asked if adding the modification for the additional ADA ramp resulted in additional costs to the City.

City Manager Knopp explained that the project from its inception had to be 100% ADA compliant so the strategy that has been implemented would be to phase in the full ADA implementation into a second phase if bids come back in a manner that would not allow the project to move forward. This allows the City to move the project forward without incurring additional costs.

Andrea explained that the CEQA document encompassed the entire project even if it is done in phases and said that the CEQA document does not expire.

**Suzanne Maese** said that she understood at the last meeting that the \$170,000 change order was for engineering for the ADA ramp which does impact the cost of the project.

Andrea reiterated that everything was included under CEQA and the City could construct the entire project or do portions of the project under the same CEQA document.

Motion was made by Woodall/Orr to approve *Resolution No. 1597-2024 Adopting the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Eel River Trail Project (State Clearinghouse Number 2023110319) and Adopting the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program*. Motion carried 5-0.

## **ORDINANCES/SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS/PUBLIC HEARINGS**

### Second Reading (by title only) and Adoption of Ordinance No. 401-2024 Establishing Residential Rental Housing Inspection Regulations in Title 8 as Chapter 8.40 of the Rio Dell Municipal Code

Community Development Director Caldwell provided a staff report on the proposed Rental Housing Inspection Program.

He said that the ordinance was introduced at the meeting of January 2, 2024 and is back before the Council for its second reading and adoption.

He said that in 2011, the City considered establishing a Rental Housing Inspection Program but at that time there was concern about the cost being passed onto tenants who could least afford it which was estimated at \$150.00/year per unit. He said that staff has

gotten the cost down to roughly \$2.78 per month for City inspected properties and \$3.75 per month for self-certification properties.

He further explained that the draft ordinance was presented to the Planning Commission for review and to the Nuisance Advisory Committee on multiple occasions and both committees voted unanimously to recommend approval.

He said that staff believes that the Rental Housing Inspection Program is a win-win for the City as well as the landlords and tenants and for those reasons, staff is recommending the City Council adopt the ordinance.

He said that staff is proposing a slow rollout of the program with registration through 2024 with inspections beginning in January of 2025. He said that based on the current numbers of roughly 640 rental units in the City, the City would be responsible for inspecting roughly 465 with the Rio Dell Fire Department responsible for the remaining rental units containing more than three units.

Councilmember Wilson asked if inspection sheets would be sent out to tenants and landlords once the ordinance is passed so they know what is going to be required.

City Manager Knopp explained that the idea is to have a year-long rollout period where the City will be providing that information to both landlords and tenants and getting them signed up and registered for the inspections.

Councilmember Orr referred to **Section 8.40.030 Purpose (4)** of the proposed regulations which read: "*Complaint initiated enforcement actions are sufficient to provide the essential level of abatement of substandard housing conditions needed by this community*" and asked why the City would need a second standard.

Community Development Director Caldwell explained that it is ultimately up to the City Council however, there are tenants that have legitimate concerns but are afraid to complain to the landlord for fear of retribution.

Councilmember Orr commented that as far as fear of retribution, tenants are protected under the California Rental Code and is highly against the law and punishable.

Community Development Director Caldwell commented that the problem is that tenants need money to fight landlords and although there are some pro-bono legal services in northern California, it is very difficult to go through the process.

Councilmember Orr said that it was mentioned that CalOSHA inspectors went through residences after the earthquake and found a lot of sub-standard conditions and asked if

they identified how many of those were rentals versus owner-occupied units. He questioned why the regulations were renter specific rather than having the regulations for all properties.

Community Development Director Caldwell said that they did not determine if they were renter or owner-occupied units but when they were able to contact occupants of the dwelling units, they asked if they were a tenant or property owner and the majority said they were tenants. He noted that property owners tend to maintain their properties better than renters.

Councilmember Orr said that the assumption is that homeowners take better care of their property than renters but it is not necessarily the case and asked again why the enforceable standards only apply to rental units.

Community Development Director Caldwell said that it would be up to the City Council to include all properties which would require amending the ordinance and bringing it back to the Council for consideration.

He pointed out that based on the recent inspections, it appears that the majority of the substandard housing conditions are with rental properties. Owners and property managers sometimes lose sight of what is going on and neglect maintenance issues. He mentioned a recent situation where a tenant was forced to wash dishes in the bathroom sink because the landlord would not fix the plumbing to the kitchen sink. He said that this ordinance is a stepping stone to help the community, the tenants, property owners and neighbors to hopefully improve the housing stock and make Rio Dell a better place to live.

Councilmember Orr said in going through the check list of inspection items, it is a very subjective list as to what is wrong with the property and there are no established criteria for what makes a property livable or not and asked staff to address that.

Community Development Director Caldwell said that it is not subjective and that all of the inspection items are followed by the code and section of the International Property Maintenance Code, the California Health and Safety Code, California Building Code, California Fire Code or Rio Dell Municipal Code which are all prescriptive code requirements on the books now so they either apply to the code or not.

Councilmember Orr noted that when it says that balconies should be in good condition, what determines "good condition."

Community Development Director Caldwell explained that balconies and guard rails need to be in good condition and to not be in a state of disrepair where they fail and cause an injury to somebody.

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Councilmember Orr said that California rental laws already call for a pre-rental inspection and asked if the City's inspection would be the same as the state's inspection but with a fee attached.

Community Development Director Caldwell explained that the City will be acting as a third-party verification and acting as an ombudsman between the tenant and the landlord.

Councilmember Orr commented that they basically have five years of self-inspection to "pull the wool over our eyes."

Community Development Director Caldwell said that the tenants are required to attest to the self-certification by the landlord.

Councilmember Orr expressed concern that tenants may attest to the self-certification simply to avoid getting kicked out of their house.

He then referred to Section 8.40.150 and asked staff to explain the necessity for the Community Development Director and the Community Services Director to have police power to enforce the Residential Rental Inspection Program.

Community Development Director Caldwell explained that it is already allowed under the California Building Code.

Councilmember Orr said that the regulations say that the City will go the fullest extent to recoup expenses for maintenance, notices, and legal action and asked if it is talking about kicking people out of their homes under the authority of the RHIP.

Community Development Director Caldwell said that the only time a tenant would be displaced is if there was a health and safety issue making the dwelling unsafe.

Councilmember Orr referred to Section 8.40.170 related to the authority to enter and inspect and asked for clarification that inspections can be done earlier than one year.

Community Development Director Caldwell explained that if the City receives a complaint from either the landlord or tenant and requests an inspection, they can have that done. Life-safety inspections are already allowed for a \$75.00 inspection fee.

Councilmember Orr said that the regulations say that inspections can be done "at will" not by request of the tenant or the landlord and said that the language needs to be clear.

Councilmember Orr asked for clarification whether the inspector could inspect "at will" if he happens to drive by a house and see that there are no address numbers on the house or the garbage cans are left outside.

Community Development Director Caldwell explained that they would not enter the home unless there was a life-safety concern and they would have to have an inspection warrant.

Councilmember Orr commented that there is a housing crisis in Humboldt County and acknowledged that there are a lot of rental units that need work. What he sees happening is landlords taking their rentals off the market because they can't afford to do the repairs, or the City going in and deeming a property unfit to occupy forcing the renters to move when they can't afford it. He expressed concern about where these people are going to go and what the City is going to do when these people end up on the streets in Rio Dell.

Community Development Director Caldwell pointed out that landlords can take rental properties off the market by converting them to vacation rentals which is a popular thing to do because they get to come in and inspect the property every time someone leaves. He agreed that there is a huge demand for rental properties in the County and this gives property owners a chance to bring substandard rental units up to code and then rent them out.

Councilmember Orr pointed out that they could unless the cost for the improvements is prohibitive and they pull it off the market.

Community Development Director Caldwell said that this would be a rare case and pointed out that rentals in Humboldt County are a "cash cow."

Councilmember Orr's comment was "you don't live in Rio Dell, do you?"

Mayor Pro Tem Carter said that she personally has spent months researching this issue and gone over the ordinance multiple times and talked to staff about it. She noted that she also talked to a lot of other jurisdictions both inside and outside Humboldt County and there are a lot of cities that have similar programs and are very common. She clarified that the City is not profiting from the program in any way and not doing it to line its pockets to use these fees for other things. She also pointed out that this is not going to be used as an eviction tool or as a punishment for the renters or landlords.

She added that she would rather the City not have to adopt these regulations but everyone has the right to live in a safe home but this is not always the case in Rio Dell. She said that she sees this as a way to protect renters who aren't in the position to buy their own homes. She said that she has heard countless stories from renters complaining about broken windows, black mold, and porches that are falling down and the landlords are not willing to do the repairs.

She said that the City is not going out and telling landlords to raise the rent but saying that low income people, renters and every person has the right to a safe home whether they own the home or not.



She said that those of us that were actually out on the streets after the earthquake saw people crying and were devastated because they lost their home and were displaced. Having this program in place would likely reduce the amount of damage to homes during a natural disaster.

She said that regarding applying these regulations to owner occupied dwellings, the Nuisance Advisory Committee addresses all dwellings. She pointed out that the way Rio Dell is geographically located, there is not a lot a space for new housing development so it is important to protect the current housing stock to stay in compliance with the State.

Councilmember Woodall said that she firmly supports the program. She said that the City pursued the adoption of a RHIP years ago when there were more slum-lords here but the regulations did not pass because they were too restrictive. She agreed that everybody has the right to live in a safe and healthy home and as stated in the ordinance to have enforceable minimal health and safety standards which the owners should be required to follow. She said that some owners take advantage of renters and charge whatever they want while not maintaining minimal health and safety standards.

She referred to homes with black mold, faulty plumbing and electrical and said that she thinks this program is a great start to solve some of these issues.

Mayor Garnes supported the program and said that she has not only been a renter but had a rental and every time the renter called with a problem, did whatever she could to fix the problem. She said that there was an issue with the porch at her rental which she was unaware that it was unsafe. During an inspection, the Building Inspector pointed it out to her as a safety issue so no matter how diligent a landlord is, things can be missed.

She said that landlords don't always step up and do the right thing for whatever reason but it is important to protect people that need to be protected. If you are a homeowner and you want to live in a house in disrepair, then it is on you but a renter needs to be protected. The inspections are not a punishment but to address health and safety issues. Looking out for vulnerable people is what the City should do. She commented that many people were displaced after the earthquake because of water heaters not being strapped properly which is a simple fix.

Councilmember Orr said that there seems to be a misconception that other councilmembers think that he wants people to live in squalor however, that is not what he is saying. What he is saying is that the state has already given the City tools to address these issues but apparently is not using them. He said that he also wants people to have a nice safe place to live but this will force landlords to make repairs that either they don't want to do, don't care about, or can't afford to do. He said that this will force people to wash their dishes in the river rather than the bathroom sink. He reiterated that he does not want people to live in squalor or have black mold in their lungs but this will force

landlord to either take the house off the market or they will be forced to raise the rent. He said that homeowners have the option to live in squalor if they want to but renters have the right to move if they want to.

He said that if the Nuisance Advisory Committee is going out and hitting all the owner-occupied properties with abatements what is the difference between an owner-occupied home or a rental property and why does the City need regulations that only applies to rental properties. The City already has laws in place to protect renters and said that he went online and researched renter's laws, and 16 law firms popped up offered to help sue landlords.

He added that he doesn't see why there needs to be another fee for people to pay when the City already has the tools to address these issues.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter said that one of the problems the Nuisance Committee runs into, is that there are many landlords that live out of the area and don't physically see their units which is often times where the committee has to step in. An ordinance like this will actually lift some of the burden that has been placed on staff and the committee to get these properties cleaned up.

Councilmember Wilson asked if the initial inspection for self-certification properties would be done by the City then re-inspected by the City every five years.

Community Development Director Caldwell clarified that every rental property would be inspected by the City the first year then have the choice of inspections by the City every three years or every five years for self-certification properties. If a tenant challenges the information, then an inspection can be done and as stated before, a tenant or property owner can request a life-safety inspection at any time provided they pay the inspection fee of \$75.00.

Councilmember Wilson asked how many red-tagged homes are remaining after the earthquake and if any of those homes went back to the bank.

City Manager Knopp estimated less than nine structures being red-tagged. Community Development Director Caldwell said that it was around six; three of which are in the que for CDBG funding. He indicated that only one home that he is aware of, went back to the bank.

Councilmember Orr asked for clarification that initial inspections would be done during the first year noting that it was mentioned at the last meeting that it would take three years.

Community Development Director Caldwell projected it would take up to three years to roll out the program and do initial inspections of every rental unit.

Mayor Garnes called for public comment.

**Tommy Norton** addressed the Council and said that he understands where the City is coming from and that people do have a choice if they want to live in squalor. He said that he has dealt with renters being afraid to complain for fear of retribution but he does understand that in California, renters have more rights than property owners have. If a renter decides that they don't like something that is broken in their home and don't say anything and decide they just won't pay rent they can take landlords through a long lengthy process which costs a lot of money and time. California laws are designed for the renter. There are already so many safe guards in place, he doesn't see why more regulations are necessary.

He pointed out that he has a few rentals with only a \$50/month profit so that \$50 computes to \$600 a year. If the City goes in there and decides they see something that they want fixed and done with a permit, there is not only a permit fee but the cost for the repairs. He said that in his opinion, this is government overreach and opening the door for something bigger. He said that he understands where the city is coming from and strongly supports the program in some ways but feels there are other programs and things that could be done without this.

He commented that the City is focusing on improving rental housing but asked what is being done about the main business district. He said that there are no businesses and nothing is even being talked about. He said he heard that a motorcycle club is coming into town which is something the City doesn't need. He said that he doesn't like slum lords and would like to see landlords maintaining their properties but if they are required to pay for something then you need to get what you are paying for and thinks there is a better way of going about it.

Community Development Director Caldwell clarified that the cost of the program is much less than \$50/month. He commended Tommy Norton as a landlord and said that he has done some very good things with rental properties and is someone who should be considered as a model landlord in our City.

**Staci Nally** said that she manages several rentals in town and that she definitely has a problem with the proposed ordinance. She agreed that everyone has the right to live in a safe place however, as stated over and over, there are already tools and laws in place to protect renters.

She said that as previously mentioned, the majority of property owners comply with the State housing laws so only a small percentage violate these laws yet the City is asking every landlord to pay which is not fair.

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She said that as Councilmember Orr stated, the ordinance allows the City to enter a property to prevent a violation that seems like an overreach.

She referred to Section 8.40.300 where it establishes an annual rental housing compliance fee due annually on July 1<sup>st</sup>., an annual registration fee due on January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year in addition to the inspection fee. She said that the City is essentially asking for three fees every year for each property whether they are in great shape or need to be torn down. She said that this is the unfairness of the program and that it should not be the responsibility of good landlords to pay for those that aren't.

She noted that the City already has a Nuisance Committee and if it is true that they are overworked, is not the property owner's problem. She said that it is not the responsibility of the responsible landlords to pay for those that are not and that the City Manager, the Finance Director and the City Council should come up with a solution for taking care of those properties; that's why the City has a Nuisance committee.

Discussion continued regarding the three fees under the RHIP.

Community Development Director Caldwell said that the recommended registration fee is \$15.00 in addition to the inspection fees but he couldn't recall a third fee. He said that the fees will be established by resolution and will come before the Council for consideration at a later date. He noted that the fees cannot exceed the actual cost of providing the service.

Mayor Garnes asked for clarification on the process to inspect properties "at will."

Community Development Director Caldwell explained that the City does not do surprise inspections. All inspections including those deriving from complaints will be done on a reactive basis and not on a pro-active basis. City staff will not drive by somebody's house and knock on the door and ask to come in and do an inspection. There is a process and inspection warrants are very rare and would only apply to immediate life-safety issues. He explained that if a complaint is received, staff will write a letter to the property owner or property manager to let them know the City received a complaint. This is a courtesy letter asking them to confirm or deny whether the situation exists.

Councilmember Orr once again referred to Section 8.40.170 which states in part that the Director has the authority to enter and inspect any dwelling or premises whenever necessary to secure compliance with or prevent a violation of, any provision of this chapter and any regulation adopted pursuant to this chapter. He said that it sounds like the Director can go into a dwelling and inspect if he has a concern even if there is no complaint. He noted that it goes on to say that the Director may obtain an inspection warrant pursuant to the provisions set forth in the California Code of Civil Procedure.

Community Development Director Caldwell said that the only way that would occur is if the City received a complaint and the City always does its best to apply common sense with enforcement of any ordinance.

Councilmember Orr said that his experience has been that common sense in government doesn't work well together and if it is not spelled out exactly how it should be, there is a whole lot of room for interpretation.

**Staci Nally** reiterated that it is unfair to tax every landlord for the few irresponsible landlords and the City Council should figure out a way to deal with those people.

Councilmember Woodall said that there are multitudes of other cities that have RHIP's and the City is not creating anything new.

**Faith Hansen** addressed the Council and said that she is a homeowner and also owns a rental in town which she will not be renting out because as a property owner of a rental it is scary. With the City tacking on more fees and regulations, it will remain empty. She said that they take care of their properties but they are not going to have the government coming in an overreaching. She said that the wording of the ordinance definitely needs to be more precise.

Mayor Garnes asked if there were any written comments submitted.

City Clerk Dunham said that one public comment was received in support of the RHIP which she then read (included with these minutes as Attachment A). A second public comment was received after the meeting began which is included as Attachment B.

**Staci Nally** commented that it is also California State law that allows landlords to inspect rental properties every six months or every year whichever they prefer. If landlords are not doing that and the properties are getting trashed then it's on them. There is no reason for the City to impose more laws on people that are abiding by the law.

There being no further public comment, the public hearing closed.

Motion was made by Carter/Woodall to approve the second reading (by title only) and adopt *Ordinance No. 401-2024 Establishing Residential Rental Housing Inspection Regulations in Title 8 as Chapter 8.40 of the Rio Dell Municipal Code*. Motion carried 4-1; Councilmember Orr dissenting.

Introduction and first reading (by title only) of Ordinance No. 402-2024 Related to False Alarms and Fees

Chief Allen provided a staff report and explained that Ordinance 402-2024 establishes false alarms and fees. Rio Dell Police Department responds to commercial and residential

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alarms. Alarm responses are the most safety conscious responses that they have and most of the time officers are working alone but alarm calls typically require two officers to respond since the circumstances of the alarm are unknown. As such, other resources are called from outside agencies to back up the officer.

He said that after extensive research, it was determined that multiple agencies have municipal codes to enforce false alarm regulations and associated fees. He said that is was discussed with the Nuisance Advisory Committee and they recommended the City Council approve the ordinance. If adopted, it will start in January 2025 and the fees will be \$20.00 every two years with the first two years waived. He explained that false alarms refer to excessive alarms so the first two false alarm calls would not be charged. The third false alarm would result in a fee of \$75.00 and would increase with subsequent false alarm calls.

He noted that a lot of other jurisdictions already have this in their municipal codes and the Police Department was responding to false alarms without anyway to force the alarm user to fix the alarm or any way to access a fee for responding to excessive false alarms. He noted that this has been an ongoing issue with alarm systems in the City, some of which have gone off four time in a day, even after asking the alarm user to fix the alarm.

Councilmember Woodall noted that the Rio Dell Fire Department is having the same issues and looking at adopting a policy.

Councilmember Orr said that under Section 9.20.050 *Alarm Permit*, it says that it shall be unlawful for any person to use, install, or cause to be installed an alarm system on any premises within the city without first applying for and receiving an alarm permit. He asked what kind of alarms require a permit.

Chief Allen explained that it only refers to alarms that are professionally installed and not ring camera alarms. It includes any alarms that go through dispatch.

Mayor Garnes called for public comment on the proposed ordinance. No public comment was received.

Motion was made by Orr/Woodall to approve the first reading (by title only) of Ordinance No. 402-2024 Related to False Alarms and Fees and to continue the public hearing to the February 6, 2024 meeting for its second reading and adoption. Motion carried 5-0.

## **COUNCIL REPORTS/COMMUNICATIONS**

Mayor Pro Tem Carter reported she would be attending a RREDC meeting on Monday and she attended a Rio Dell School Board meeting last week and the best news that came out

of that meeting is that their gymnasium is no longer red-tagged so the gym is now in use.

They still have some repairs to do with demolition of a couple of red-tagged buildings and replacement of some playground equipment.

Councilmember Orr reported that he has an HCAOG meeting next week and announced that the Scotia School gym will be opening soon which is great news.

Councilmember Wilson reported that he attended a HWMA meeting and would be attending a RCEA meeting in a couple of weeks.

Councilmember Woodall announced there would be a Nuisance Advisory Committee meeting at 3:00 tomorrow and invited the community to attend.

Mayor Garnes reported that she would be attending a League of California Cities meeting on Thursday and Friday and attended the event at the Resource Center last Saturday to commemorate the first anniversary of the earthquake and said that it was unbelievably well-attended in spite of the weather. The community appreciated being there and the Long-Term Recovery Group, Pay It Forward, and the Community Resource Center did a fantastic job putting it together.

She then announced that there would be a Disaster Preparedness Academy on March 2, 2024 at the Rio Dell Fire Hall. She urged everyone to go online and register and said there are flyers at City Hall and at the Community Resource Center. They will be giving out first aid kits, disaster preparedness kits and disaster plans and encouraged everyone to attend.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Woodall/Carter to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m. to the February 6, 2024 regular meeting. The motion carried 5-0.

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Debra Garnes, Mayor

Attest:

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Karen Dunham, City Clerk



January 9, 2024

City of Rio Dell

RE: Rental Housing Inspections

I am writing regarding the proposed rental housing regulations. I have owned numerous rentals in Rio Dell over the years and have had nothing but problems with my renters maintaining my properties. I have spent thousands of dollars on repairs and disposing of trash and other items left behind. I had one rental where the entire garage was filled with garbage.

I have sold all my rentals due to renters trashing my places. The last rental I sold sat vacant for almost three years. Because of the damage, I had to sell the property at a reduced price.

I support rental housing inspections mandated by the city, provided the cost is reasonable. I believe it will not only benefit the renters who rent from slum-lords, but will also benefit responsible owners who unknowingly rent to folks who do not take care of the properties.

I also encourage the city to step up code enforcement activities in the city on all properties. I see front yards littered with debris, vehicles, trailers, overflowing garbage cans, etc. I grew up in Rio Dell and I don't remember so many properties not being maintained and so many vehicles parked in the wrong direction and the number of trailers parked on the streets.

Unfortunately, the city has a reputation for poor housing conditions and poorly maintained properties. Hopefully, the proposed rental housing regulations and increased code enforcement will help the city improve its image.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Terry Mell'. The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Terry Mell  
P.O. Box 1931  
Redway, CA. 95560

**ATTACHMENT A**



**Karen Dunham**

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**From:** Jonathan Brodeur <humpaint@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 16, 2024 5:27 PM  
**To:** Public Comment  
**Subject:** 1/16 CCM Comment

Comment from Jonathan Brodeur

In regards to the housing inspection ordinance. I do not agree with this being passed. I see that The nuisance advisory committee has recommended this under the guise of the people calling for this. This committee is made mainly of the that are responsible for the regulation and inspection. I see this as a conflict of interest, invasion of privacy, over regulation, collective punishment for a few bad apples, ineffective and unnecessary tax and regulation and treading on the 4th ammendment.

I have to drive by a drug house with trash all over every day, but do not feel erosion of privacy and rights for all is just.

2nd: There should be a community outreach liason. Going beyond posting on the city website. It seems there is and has been attempts to slide controversial ordinances through without healthy community input. One reading last meeting and a possible vote today is not enough.

3rd: Please answer- What is the real goal with this, intended outcomes? What are concerns the council has for untended affects? Of the properties that would be inspected how many are really not up to standard?

A well informed citizenry is the best defense against tyranny. - Thomas Jefferson