

**RIO DELL CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
APRIL 2, 2024**

The regular meeting of the Rio Dell City Council was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by Mayor Garnes.

**ROLL CALL:** Present: Mayor Garnes, Mayor Pro Tem Carter, Councilmembers Orr and Wilson

Absent: Councilmember Woodall (excused)

Others Present: City Manager Knopp, Chief of Police Allen, Finance Director Sanborn, Wastewater Superintendent Kelly, Senior Fiscal Assistant Maciel, and City Clerk Dunham

Absent: Community Development Director Caldwell and Water/Roadways Superintendent Jensen

### **SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mayor Garnes offered sincere condolences to the friends and family of the 7 humanitarian workers from the World Central Kitchen who were killed in an IDF strike in Gaza this week. She commended the World Central Kitchen for their efforts and helping our community after the December 2022 and January 2023 earthquakes and said that they help anywhere they are needed. She encouraged anyone listening to send as much strength from their hearts as they can and offer deepest sympathy to the loved ones of the victims.

### **PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS**

**Steven Saunders** thanked the City Council for finally seeing his way regarding the waiver of sewer charges for red-tagged homes. He also thanked the Council for the future of Rio Dell and said that he is still not back in his house and said for future disasters and emergencies they won't have to go through what he has had to go through.

**Richard Newman** thanked the Mayor for expressing condolences to the World Central Kitchen victims.

City Clerk Dunham read a public comment related to the cleaning schedule for the Rio Dell-Scotia Bridge and removal of the graffiti.

Mayor Garnes pointed out that maintenance and cleaning of the bridge was the responsibility of Caltrans.

## **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 Carter/Orr to approve the consent calendar including the following items:

- 1) Minutes of the March 19, 2024 regular meeting;
- 2) Resolution No. 1601-2024 Opposing Initiative 21-0042A1-Taxpayers Deception Act AKA: Taxpayer Protection and Accountability Act;
- 3) Resolution No. 1600-2024 – Resolution to Borrow – Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC);
- 4) Letter of Support - \$20,000 Start-Up Grant - California Veterinary Emergency Team;
- 5) General Plan Annual Progress Report;
- 6) Payment of Invoice to Larry Walker Associates in the Amount of \$12,032.50.

Motion carried 4-0.

## **REPORTS/STAFF COMMUNICATIONS**

City Manager Knopp provided highlights of the staff update and said that he was able to confirm with the County today that the 2017 Monument Road Storm Damage project had cleared the last FEMA hurdle for funding authorization although there are still some final steps to work through. He expressed thanks to Congressman Huffman and his staff for helping to get the project moving forward.

He also reported that the flags are out in the median marking the locations for the City's new Cherry Trees as part of the Gateway Beautification project. He noted that the red and green flags represent the tree locations and the white flags identify the sprinkler system. He said that the work is expected to begin soon.

He then reported that staff sent off correspondence today to State officials related to the Cal Fire Headquarters project in Rio Dell. He said that the engineering agreement was executed on January 2, 2024 however, the City did not receive notification on that until March 21, 2024. In reviewing the agreement, staff developed a conceptual site plan, confirming that those facilities can fit on 6 acres of the 18.4-acre parcel, leaving surplus Property for other commercial and residential development beneficial to the community and Cal Fire.

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Mayor Garnes also expressed thanks and appreciation to Congressman Huffman and his staff for their help with the Monument Road Storm Damage project.

Councilmember Wilson questioned the City's match related to that project.

City Manager Knopp said that the City was looking at a minimum match amount of \$200,000 because the slip-out was half on City incorporated land and half on the County unincorporated land. It was agreed that the County would take the lead on the project and the City would share in the cost of repairs. As such, there is a Federal funded portion, a State funded portion, with the remainder shared between the City and the County.

He noted that there are multiple other problems on that section of Monument Road further up on the County side but the work will only cover the repair of the slip-out. He said that there was some geotechnical work done which confirmed that a soldier pile method was the best approach for the repair however, FEMA put a cap on what they would contribute toward the overall cost of the project which is the reason for the City and County match.

**SPECIAL CALL ITEMS/COMMUNITY AFFAIRS/PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Authorize the City Engineer to Issue Bid for the Clean California Eel River Trails Project

City Manager Knopp provided a staff report and said that the Eel River Trail Project has been on the City's radar for at least 7 years. In 2021, Governor Newsom launched the Clean California \$1.1 billion initiative to revitalize California's streets and public spaces through litter abatement and local beautification projects. The City put together a grant application for two projects; the Gateway Beautification Project which is underway, and the Eel River Trails Project.

He said that it has been a long path and a lot of work to get to the trails project. He noted that Rio Dell deserves a bike trail and the river is one of the City's best assets. The river bar area has been abused in the past with a lot of litter and debris but has been used frequently by fishermen and recreators over the years.

He explained that this grant will allow the city the opportunity to formalize the entrance to the river from Edwards Dr. for vehicles as well as pedestrians.

He introduced Rebecca Crow and Luke Halonen from GHD to provide a brief presentation on the project.

Luke provided a presentation on the Eel River Trail Project Update including the main project elements, and the bidding and construction schedule.

He explained that the project is a Class 1 trail from Edwards Dr. to Davis St. and includes 1/3 mile of paved trail with a 200-foot ADA ramp, parking improvements, informational

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kiosks, trail interpretation signage, and community art installation.

He reviewed the bidding strategy and said they set up a strategy to bid as much of the project as possible and still be able to seek additional funding in the future if necessary. The base bid included an asphalt paved trail from Edwards Dr. to Davis St. just before the ADA ramp then as funding allows, an additive bid would be awarded for the ADA ramp itself. He said if the ramp cannot be awarded with the initial bid, it would be phased to a future shovel-ready project. He noted that they coordinated with Clean California grant administrators to make sure this is approved in the grant agreement because it is a scope change to remove a portion of the project by phasing in the ADA ramp to a future project, which they approved.

Luke then reviewed the schedule and said if the Council approves this item tonight, GHD will bid the project tomorrow and in the next two weeks have a non-mandatory pre-bid conference. The bid opening was scheduled to occur on April 25, 2024 with the approval of the bid coming before the City Council at their May 7, 2024 regular meeting.

The tentative construction schedule included the notice to proceed by the end of May, construction to occur from June to October with the closeout of the project in November or December.

Councilmember Wilson asked if the project included a City match.

City Manager Knopp explained that the project was 100% funded because Rio Dell met the criteria as a disadvantaged community where no match was required.

He reiterated that the ADA ramp was not included in the original grant application which is why it may need to be phased into a future shovel-ready project to protect the City from having to cover any unforeseen costs due to inflation or higher bids.

Mayor Garnes asked if there would be a way to access Davis St. without the ADA ramp.

City Manager Knopp explained that staff had a recent conversation with the State and if the ramp ends up being phased which is likely, the trail will end where there is a pre-existing trail so there will be access to Davis St. for able-bodied individuals by use of the stairs that were installed by Public Works. He commented that it is likely that the contractor will want to access the trail from Davis St. using heavy equipment so the only way to do that would be to create a road which is incidental to the project but in theory could be left behind for pedestrian use.

He said that there is still a chance that the bids will come in low enough to cover the entire Project but if not, the ADA ramp would be a shovel-ready project that should be

competitive for other sources of funding.

Rebecca Crow commented that the project has been very appealing to funders.

Motion was made by Carter/Wilson to authorize the City Engineer to Issue the bid for the Clean California Eel River Trails Project. Motion carried 4-0.

### **COUNCIL REPORTS/COMMUNICATIONS**

Councilmember Orr reported on his attendance at the last HCAOG meeting and said that they had an opportunity to fast track a couple of projects and they also presented a study on the trails based on safety and accessibility and overall, the report was positive and supported by the community.

Councilmember Wilson asked if there is a timeframe required for installing the ADA ramp on the trails should it need to be phased-in.

City Manager Knopp said that it is basically plan set and the only thing that might need to be updated is the cost estimate due to potential cost escalations.

Councilmember Wilson reported that he had an RCEA meeting and they are working on another set of micro-grids in the County. They have partnered with four of the local tribes and are attempting to secure funding. The project was too large for the tribes to take on alone so they partnered with RCEA.

He said that the last HWMA meeting was canceled due to the lack of a quorum and the next meeting is scheduled for next week.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter said that the last RREDC meeting was also canceled due to the lack of a quorum so she had nothing to report. She said that she would be attending a Chamber of Commerce meeting on Friday and a Board of Director's meeting with Critters without Litters on April 12<sup>th</sup> and reminded everyone that this is the new low-cost spay and neuter clinic coming back to Fernbridge.

She expressed special thanks to the Rio Dell Volunteer Fire Department and the Community Resource Center for putting on the Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday. She said that there were at least 60 kids that attended and it was a great kid-friendly event.

Mayor Garnes announced that she had an HTA meeting tomorrow morning and a Seismic Safety Committee meeting next week where they will be presenting a report on the Ferndale Earthquake. She thanked the City Manager for his assistance in providing accurate information for their report.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Carter/Orr to adjourn the meeting at 6:36 p.m. to the April 16, 2024, regular meeting. The motion carried 4-0.

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Debra Garnes, Mayor

Attest:

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Karen Dunham, City Clerk