



**CITY OF NEWPORT  
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MINUTES  
NEWPORT CITY HALL  
April 1, 2021**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Elliott called the City Council Workshop to order at 6:06 p.m. on April 1, 2021.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Present (5): Mayor Laurie Elliott, Council Member Kevin Chapdelaine, Council Member Tom Ingemann, Council Member Marvin Taylor, and Council Member Rozlyn Johnson.

Not Present (0): None.

**3. COUNTY 38 TRAIL**

Kevin Peterson, Engineer and Project Manager with Washington County Public Works Department gave a presentation on the County 38 Trail. Washington County was awarded \$460,800 in federal funding for this multi-use trail along County Highway 38. Mr. Peterson stated there is detailed project information on Washington County's website. Mr. Peterson discussed goals of the project, trail design alternatives, project costs, and community feedback. The goal would be to start construction in the Spring/Summer of 2023.

Mayor Elliott stated she spoke to the owner of Newport Plaza on the corner of 21<sup>st</sup> Street and 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue who is concerned from a safety perspective with a trail on 21<sup>st</sup> Street because of the number of accidents that have involved damage to his building. Mr. Peterson stated they can design a roadway that generally slows people down, and by getting pedestrians off the road that will also increase safety. Mr. Peterson will bring this concern back to his team for review.

County Commissioner Wayne Johnson addressed the Council. Commissioner Johnson stated this project was Newport driven and wanted to make sure Newport knows the potential costs upfront for this type of project. If Newport decides this is not the right time due to costs or safety, the County will not move forward.

Council discussed and agreed we should move forward with this trail segment in the safest way possible. City Engineer Jon Herdegen stated he is also working closely on this project, so if anyone has concerns you can reach out to him directly and he can pass it to the project team.

**4. CITY LOGO**

This item will be discussed at the next workshop meeting.

## **5. RIVER ISLANDS PRESENTATION**

Member Taylor gave a presentation on the Island Evolution and Ownership in Newport. Member Taylor has been researching the evolution of the island and believes that the northern part of the island might be owned by the State. He found that islands that were not surveyed are ownership of the State. Member Taylor contacted the DNR and shared his findings. Currently Peacebunny Island owns Government lots 5 & 6.

City Administrator Deb Hill stated there is still one property that needs to be acquired for the Cedar Lane levy area.

Council discussed we should reach out to our City Attorney for advice on this matter. Administrator Hill will contact Flaherty & Hood.

## **6. BUILDING INSPECTIONS CONTRACT**

Administrator Hill stated Cottage Grove is planning to update our building inspection contract. Initially, Cottage Grove proposed increasing the plan review fee from 28% to 100%. After speaking to St. Paul Park and Newport, Cottage Grove is now proposing to increase the plan review fee to 75%. St. Paul Park has agreed to the 75% increase. Staff explained that it would cost more to go to a private entity.

Mayor Elliott is concerned that Newport is being taken advantage of. Council discussed the possibility of a phased approach as a compromise to the increased fees. Member Chapdelaine stated that these fees are intended to cover the costs incurred.

Mayor Elliott will set up a meeting with Mayor Bailey to discuss this contract from a high level. Administrator Hill will inquire if Cottage Grove would consider a two-year phased approach to this increase.

## **7. SUMMER REC PROGRAMS**

Assistant to the City Administrator Travis Brierley stated last year's summer rec program was cancelled due to COVID. In previous years Newport has not had good participation for this 2-day per week program consisting of games at Pioneer Park. It has also been hard to find good people to lead this program. Newport has an agreement with the City of Woodbury for their summer rec program where our residents pay Woodbury resident pricing. Staff is recommending we cancel summer rec for 2021.

Council discussed and agreed that the summer rec program should be cancelled for 2021.

Member Taylor stated the Park Board is requesting a kids t-ball or soccer program. Member Taylor stated he is trying to get the Newport Athletic Association (NAA) program up and running again, so we could hopefully have recreational sports programs in Newport in the future. Member Taylor stated we have fields that are being maintained but not getting used by Newport. Council discussed that we would need volunteers and/or the NAA program to have recreational sports programs in Newport.

## **8. LIQUOR LICENSE RATES**

Assistant Brierley stated it is time to renew liquor licenses in Newport. There are still restrictions for bars and restaurants due to COVID, so staff is recommending we reduce liquor license renewals for on-sale liquor.

Council discussed that we should give these establishments a break again this year and charge \$200 for on-sale. Council discussed charging Opinion Brewing \$250 as they have both on-sale and off-sale liquor licenses.

**9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Mayor Elliott stated that future agenda items include discussion for the new logo and code enforcement.

Administrator Hill stated other upcoming items include Mastertech Auto review, pay equity report that will be on the consent agenda, the audit will be the first meeting in May, and we have been receiving some inquiries for the Planning RFP.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Laurie Elliott adjourned the City Council Workshop at 8:32 p.m. on April 1, 2021.

Respectfully Submitted:  
Jill Thiesfeld  
Administrative Assistant II

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Laurie Elliott, Mayor