



Council Meeting Synopsis



Council met in regular session at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers on July 23rd, 2024.

- ★ Everyone was present except Councilor Winklepleck who was excused. Mayor Craven presided.
- ★ *Friends of Gap Road | Muddy Creek Solar Farm | Troy Jones and Steve Hood* presented their efforts in opposition to the Muddy Creek Solar Farm. Jones shared all the key points of their collective concern that included, wetlands removal, wildlife habitat destruction, farmland loss, potential contamination to the water supply. To learn more about their efforts, visit <https://www.friendsofgaproad.com/>. Also, please see the document posted on the City's website at <https://www.ci.brownsville.or.us/citycouncil>.
Mayor Craven opened public comments pertaining to this issue. Betty & Michael Doren shared their experiences with solar. Betty said that NASA did studies that show warming concerns for the ground as well as the atmosphere. She said no one is interested in really looking at the science concerning these kinds of projects. Michael shared his personal experience with solar panels stating that the average life for a solar panel is 5 years. He shared concerns about DC current and AC current as it relates to efficiency of the solution. He stated that wind is far more efficient than solar.
- ★ *Cybersecurity Review | McDowell* provided Council with an overview of cyber related issues as required by the City's insurance. He highlighted concerns including the recent CrowdStrike update failure, the fact that all agencies continue to require everything be done on-line, and the threat that certain State laws pose to the City's network security. McDowell also gave a brief tour of the City website highlighting the full-time Public Works Operator opening, shared a few civic organizations links, and where to find the Policy FYI document that contains many City policies and practices that are helpful for the public to know.
- ★ *Halsey-Shedd Fire Department | Chief Travis Hewitt | Hewitt* was unable to attend.
- ★ *Citizen Input | Patrick Starnes* reported that Stand By Me Day was a tremendous event held in the City. He said that it was amazing to see people from all over the world 'loving on' Brownsville. He thanked the Public Works team, the Museum Staff and the many volunteers who helped make the day a huge success.
- ★ *Linn County Sheriff's Office | Sergeant Steve Frambes | Frambes* shared the challenge that is the Fourth of July. The Office is always spread extremely thin. Complaint calls for fireworks being shot off on the Fourth is not a complaint the deputies can attend to due to the workload required. He reviewed the June statistics. Frambes stated that Brownsville is the safest city in Linn County. He shared concerns about DUI's. Many people never come home because people make bad decisions under the influence. There were two DUI's in town last month.
- ★ *Public Works Report | Public Works Superintendent Karl Frink* reported that the Water Treatment Plant experienced a significant failure on Sunday. The battery backup unit failed causing a chain of events that flooded the Plant and the Park. Frink was able to troubleshoot the issues, make the necessary repairs and restart the Water Plant. He said the Plant has been working normally since the failure. The Rally on the River went well. Public Works has experienced a lot of equipment failures over the last month, shored up the Park Staffing concern, only to have a full-time operator resign. Frink asked for patience as the crew continues to work hard to execute necessary tasks.
- ★ *City Administrator Report | Administrator Scott McDowell* briefly highlighted concerns with the migration of the City's website to a new platform. The reservation system the City currently uses will be changing soon. The GR12 project and the Rec Center Renovation project are experiencing delays due to a variety of reasons. Staff continue working with contractors. The City would like to thank all property owners for their work in maintaining their properties. Properties that were

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notified for nuisances and abatements have been very easy to work with in resolving those issues. The cooperation is greatly appreciated by Staff. Thank you!

- ★ *League of Oregon Cities Priorities* | Council will be voting on these priorities this summer.
- ★ Council will review Councilor Winklepleck's nuisance abatement modification at the September Council meeting.
- ★ *Citizen Input* | *Patrick Starnes* asked about the Solberg situation. Mayor Craven turned the floor over to McDowell who reviewed City Attorney Ross Williamson's recommendation, the arbitration attempt that did not happen due to private lawyers being hired by one of the persons involved, and the details of what the City did since the last meeting. He explained the City does not determine whether something is harassment, a hate crime, or hate speech. All those matters are handled by the Linn County Sheriff's Office. A deputy reviewed this situation and found that neither party acted in a way that would warrant a harassment charge.

Several other speakers including Michael Purkerson, Peggy Purkerson, Pam Solberg, Patrick Starnes, Kira Hughes, Adelind Coy, and Lily Giannone spoke. Their comments and follow-up comments from Council and Staff can be found in the full minutes of the meeting that will be released September 20th, 2024. Anyone interested in the audio from the meeting, please contact Scott McDowell at City Hall, 541.466.5880.

- ★ Council observes a recess in the month of August.

All information the Mayor & Council received for the meeting can be found on-line prior to every meeting and afterwards at <https://www.ci.brownsville.or.us/meetings>. Please contact City Administrator Scott McDowell with questions at 541.466.5880 or email at admin@ci.brownsville.or.us.

For more information, please visit <https://ci.brownsville.or.us>.



Upcoming Events

Council Meeting | August Recess | No meeting
Council Meeting | September 24th, 2024 | 7:00 p.m. | City Hall
Antique Faire | August 3rd | Chamber of Commerce
Hands on History | Saturday, August 24th | Linn County Museum

