

**PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

August 27, 2015
3:00 PM

The meeting was called to order by Chair Jason Leonard on August 27, 2015, at 3:04 p.m. at the Public Works meeting room, 1515 Willow Lane, Philomath.

ROLL CALL:

COMMITTEE: Jason Leonard, Doug Edmonds. Eric Niemann

STAFF: Kevin Fear, Public Works Director; Garry Black, Public Works Operations Supervisor; Chris Workman, City Manager and Ruth Post, City Recorder.

MINUTES:

MOTION: Councilor Leonard moved, Councilor Edmonds second, to approve the minutes of the August 6, 2015, meeting as presented. Motion APPROVED 3-0.

PUBLIC WORKS BUSINESS:

1) Benton View Drive Local Improvement District (LID) discussion

The Committee reviewed the process for considering an LID. Mr. Fear described properties that are within the proximity that requires hookup to city sewer per city ordinance. Mr. Workman stated there are four homes that are within that proximity that could be forced to hookup per the city code. He stated the code can be enforced or the LID can be used which would likely result in a lower cost per homeowner. He stated the alternative is for everyone to keep their head in the sand and ignore the situation. Mr. Black stated that failure of any one of those septic systems could be a disaster.

Mr. Leonard questioned if homeowners could sue the city for having not been told that they could be required to hookup. Mr. Fear stated that the city faces exposure if someone has a septic fail that flows into someone else's home. Mr. Workman described the scenario of the city failing to uphold the code and stated there is a health and sanitation standard that comes with living in a city. He described the difficult situation of a homeowner who may have recently purchased their home and paid top dollar for a home that wasn't hooked up to city sewer and now has to hook up due to an LID.

There was discussion about estimated monthly payments for the homeowners. Councilor Edmonds stated in the 20 years he has lived there he has not heard of any septic issues or failures.

Mr. Workman reviewed the LID process, including the Committee directing staff to forward this issue to the full Council. Council would then consider directing staff to proceed with having the full LID report assembled and prepared. After the LID report is completed, a public hearing would be held and; if the threshold for objections from included property owners is reached, the process ends. He stated that, at that point, the Council can at least feel like they addressed the issue and the homeowners accepted the risk of septic failures.

Councilor Niemann questioned if there have been any septic failures in the city in recent years. Mr. Fear stated he knows of one at the corner of 19th and Chapel that was annexed into the city limits due to the health hazard created by the ground saturation level at that location. Mr. Workman stated he knows of two recent septic repairs that happened without public knowledge.

There was discussion about whether an LID has ever been considered in the Benton View Drive neighborhood. Staff did not have any recollection of such a discussion.

Councilor Edmonds stated his concerns about creating a \$1,500 monthly payment for a homeowner as shown in the estimate spreadsheet. There was discussion about creation of the public record if the property owners opted out. Councilor Niemann questioned if there were any other neighborhoods in the city with homes on septic systems. Mr. Fear stated these are the only septic systems still in existence within the city.

MOTION: Councilor Niemann moved, Councilor Edmonds second, to forward a recommendation to the Council for consideration of a Local Improvement District to extend sewer service to the homes on Benton View Drive currently on septic systems and to install curb, gutter and sidewalks on Benton View Drive. Motion APPROVED 3-0.

Mr. Workman stated the septic is a health hazard issue, while the curb, gutter & sidewalks are a safety issue. He suggested that the Council could fall back on pursuing the septic issue at this time and approach the street issue in the future. He noted that this may be a more financially acceptable scenario for the homeowners involved.

2) Other business:
None

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 3:35 pm.

Recorded by: Ruth Post, City Recorder