

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Jeannie L. Sanders called the workshop to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor Jeannie Sanders, Councilmembers Larry Bray, Eleanor Brodahl, Everett Cole, Kenneth Johnson, Marc Spohr, and Tim Wilson.

Also Present: Department Heads: Curt Andrews, Police Lieutenant Bob Hampton, Debbie Kudrna, Dick Lee, and Rhonda Miller, and City Attorney, James Whitaker.

Absent was: Councilmember Shannon McKay

Mayor Sanders welcomed members of Boy Scout Troop No. 801 and 802.

SANDHILL CRANE FESTIVAL PRESENTATION

Bob Flores, Dick Erickson and Marie Lotz, representing the Sandhill Crane Festival Committee presented a special edition Sandhill Crane Festival framed poster. They recognized the City and thanked them for the continued support. They reported that the festival attendance has grown from 1437 in 2003 to 1587 attendees in 2004. Mr. Erickson explained that some attendees have found it difficult to locate the Othello High School and suggested that signs be placed on city key intersections locating the school facility. Mayor Sanders thanked the committee members for their dedicated efforts to bring tourism into the Othello area.

Mayor Sanders also thanked the members of Proteccion Azteca for their hard work with crowd control and supervision.

O.M.C. 11.24 – PARK HOURS

Public Works Director Dick Lee noted that some of the signs at the parks designating park hours did not coincide with the designated hours of the O.M.C., which provides that parks are closed between 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.

Council's consensus was to keep the park closure times from 11:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.

O.M.C. CHAPTER 8.26 ENTITLED “NUISANCES”

Council was provided pictures of the bee boxes that are on the property used by Ken Caylor for bee storage. Mayor Sanders explained that she visited the site and found several bee boxes around the building and Mrs. Caylor had explained that if all the bees in the boxes were combined, they would only fill two boxes. Mrs. Caylor also said that there is no current hazard because most of their bees are out-of-town. The Mayor had visited several of the business owners in the area to find out if they had any concerns of the bees that are kept at the storage building. Several of the business owners expressed concern of allergies to bee stings, damage to vehicles, customer safety, and concerns of stray cats in the area. She noted that for the most part, the adjacent businesses did not like the possibility of bees flying into their buildings. The Mayor did indicate that she wanted to accommodate both the Caylor's and adjacent businesses. She explained that their bee business is in a commercial zone and verbiage could be inserted into the ordinance prohibiting beehives or bee keeping in residential zones.

City Attorney James Whitaker advised that the intent of O.M.C. 8.26.030 (R) was that as long as a beekeeper followed the Washington State Department of Agriculture rules and complies with the city zoning requirements, he can keep the beehives, under the current nuisance ordinance. He explained that there are other issues about how the bees are kept and this can be addressed by reviewing the zoning requirements and considering imposing requirements for keeping the bees or require them to be located within another zone under other conditions. Mr. Whitaker also advised that if the Council wanted to address bees as a nuisance, he suggested removing the reference of bees from this subsection of the nuisance ordinance and creating a new subsection at the end of the ordinance that deals with bees and bee keeping.

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Lou Blickfeldt, employee of Bears Den and Spirits Too, approached the Council and mentioned their concerns of the health and safety issues. She stated that she is allergic to bee stings and the store has had swarms of bees at their back door. Mrs. Blickfeldt also voiced concerns of the economic issue and impact to business patrons and the safety concern for the children that walk in the area going to the library or to the Boys and Girls Club. She stated that she thinks that the bees are not being taken care of properly and the condition of the area does not reflect well for the city. She also advised that she does not want to hurt the business, they only want to express their concerns for the health and safety of the citizens.

Councilmember Spohr stated that he didn't think that beehives should be inside the city limits. Councilmember Bray stated that the City has had bee swarms removed from the parks. Councilmember Johnson supported Caylor's bee keeping, as long as he follows the State's beekeeper rules and regulations and explained that his business, which is one block from the building, hasn't had a problem with bees. Mr. Johnson stated that he would like to invite Mr. Caylor to another Council meeting to discuss the issue further. Councilmember Wilson voiced his concerns of citizens being stung by the bees. Mayor Sanders stated she is concerned of the safety and nuisance issues. Councilmember Cole stated he has concerns of the safety issue. The City Clerk explained that the original business license application for Caylor Bee Enterprises, dated 1992, was for the building located at 44 E. Main Street and the description of the business was for honey sales and bee supplies. She stated that it did not include keeping bees in the storage building.

Mayor Sanders stated that while she was visiting with adjacent business owners, several had expressed problems of stray cats in the same area. She was advised that several of the cats in the area are sick and a business owner voiced her concern of two people feeding the stray and feral cats (she saw an open bag of cat food in the back of a pickup). One business owner asked if the Council would consider an ordinance that would prohibit feeding stray and/or feral cats. One citizen asked if the sick cat could be trapped and removed. Another business owner expressed problems with the cats getting into parked cars, if the windows are rolled down a bit.

Mr. Whitaker advised that Council could prohibit feeding stray animals, unless they are an animal shelter or veterinary clinic. This could be included within the animal control section of the code. He advised that the nuisance ordinance is for property related issues and was not intended to be used for animal control.

Council consensus was to review the current ordinances to see if this issue is already addressed. Mr. Whitaker explained that section R of O.M.C. 8.26.030 was intended to deal with situations not covered in other sections of the code; such as when a person claims responsibility of an animal but the animal creates a safety situation.

NEW BUSINESS

Debbie Kudrna, City Clerk shared a basket that was put together by the Chamber's Tourism Committee. She explained that the baskets have been purchased with tourism funding and items were donated by businesses to put into the baskets. The baskets are put into rooms at the Cabana Motel, Best Western Hotel and the Eagles Lodge as a gift to tourists to help promote tourism in Othello.

Lieutenant Hampton stated that the Othello Police Department has received surplus officer uniforms from the City of Puyallup. The officers are going through the uniforms to see if any fit and the ones not used by the O.P.D. will be passed onto another agency. He noted that the donation is worth approximately \$15,000.

Mayor Sanders announced that Police Officer Jason Corcoran has been appointed as the Utility Officer and that several Dispatchers have been out on sick leave. She also reported that the K-9 dog has had screws and other apparatus removed and will be returning to duty soon.

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The Mayor announced that the pool was reopened on Friday, July 2nd for the citizens. Councilmember Spohr announced that Othello is sponsoring an All-Star Bambino tournament later this week and they expect 240 ten-year old bambino players and their families in the City. The Mayor mentioned that the City would be calling for bids on the ballfield lighting project soon.

She then reported that Initiative 864 petition did not have enough signatures to be certified. The Mayor reported that the Department Heads are holding down their expenses to help with a year-end balance and noted that there will have to be serious cuts made in the budget process, to the tune of \$400,000.

Councilmember Johnson stated that the City needs to work with the public to see what services they want to keep because if Eyman is successful next year with a similar initiative, there will be serious revenue deductions. Mayor Sanders stated that Mr. Sheldon is still researching setting a levy lid lift and another initiative similar to 864 would be very detrimental to all Police Departments across the State.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further items to discuss, Mayor Jeannie L. Sanders adjourned the workshop at 7:55 p.m.

By: _____
JEANNIE L. SANDERS, Mayor

ATTEST:

By: _____
DEBBIE L. KUDRNA, City Clerk