



**CITY OF RIDGEFIELD, WASHINGTON
CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 13, 2023**

Regular Meeting - 6:30 PM

I. GENERAL SESSION CALL TO ORDER - 6:30 PM

- 1. Flag Salute**
- 2. Roll Call**

Present:

Mayor Jennifer Lindsay
Mayor Pro Tem Rob Aichele
Council Member Rachel Coker
Council Member Matt Cole
Council Member Lee Wells
Council Member Ron Onslow
Council Member Judy Chipman

- 3. Late changes to the agenda**

II. PROCLAMATION - EARTH DAY

Parks Board Chair Davis and Board Member Schill accepted the proclamation.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Anyone requesting to speak to the Council regarding all items not subject to a specific Public Hearing may come forward at this time. Please state your name and address. Comments are limited to three minutes. Written comments may be submitted to the City Clerk prior to the meeting.

Comments received during public testimony can be heard on the City's website under <https://ridgefieldwa.us/government/city-council-meeting-audio-files/>.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION TO APPROVE AS PRESENTED.

RESULT:	ADOPTED (UNANIMOUS)
MOVER:	Mayor Pro Tem Rob Aichele
SECONDER:	Council Member Rachel Coker

AYES:	Mayor Lindsay, Mayor Pro Tem Aichele, Council Member Coker, Council Member Cole, Council Member Wells, Council Member Onslow, Council Member Chipman
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1. **Approval of Claims And/Or Payroll**
2. **Approval of Minutes from the March 23, 2023 Meeting**

V. PRESENTATION

1. **Skate Park Study - Galina Burley, Parks Manager, Chuck Green, Public Works Director**

Public Works Director Chuck Green presented a Skate Park Study and received feedback from the City Council.

2. **Boyse Park Concept overview - Galina Burley, Parks Manager, Chuck Green, Public Works Director**

Public Works Director Chuck Green presented a Boyse Park Concept overview and received feedback from the City Council.

VI. BUSINESS

1. **Second Reading of Ordinance No. 1395 – Utility Account Assistance Program - Kirk Johnson, Finance Director**

The city saw increased delinquencies during the years 2020 – 2022 due to many factors attributed to the economic uncertainty brought on by the Covid-19 health crisis. Council unanimously adopted measures to assist delinquent utility accounts using federal dollars received through both the CARES Act and the American Rescue Plan Act. The city has been able to proactively work with account holders in need by offering payment plans and referring them to a state-run utility assistance program administered by Clark Public Utilities. Utility staff researched available programs in Washington and modeled the current program brought to council after what Washougal and CPU are doing for utility assistance. During the 2023 budget discussions, council representatives brought up concerns about restricting funds to only be used for assistance rather than daily operations. The code language addresses this by making the assistance available only if the council has funded the program. The recommendation is to have council approve funding annually as needed during the budget process. Ongoing funding is proposed to come from delinquency fees paid to both the water and stormwater funds rather than General Fund transfers. The proposed level is 50% of delinquency fees each year, which accounts for approximately \$10,000 in water and \$5,000 in stormwater. Council would need to approve the funding annually. Staff will come back to council during the spring supplemental budget to adopt this funding approach if council approves this. The program would offer utility assistance up to \$250.00 one-time in any 12-month period. The assistance is only available to city utility accounts for water and stormwater. The utility department will continue to offer payment plans and work with account holders to reduce usage and manage due dates to reduce costs and fees.

MOTION: MOVED TO ADOPT ORDINANCE NO. 1395 AS PRESENTED.

RESULT:	ADOPTED (UNANIMOUS)
MOVER:	Council Member Ron Onslow
SECONDER:	Council Member Lee Wells
AYES:	Mayor Lindsay, Mayor Pro Tem Aichele, Council Member Coker, Council Member Cole, Council Member Wells, Council Member Onslow, Council Member Chipman

VII. PUBLIC HEARING/BUSINESS

1. Public Hearing and First Reading of Ordinance No. 1398 - Lahti Eminent Domain - Chuck Green, Public Works Director

The S. Royle Road, Fieldcrest to S. 5th Way project has been in the planning and design stages since 2017. The project would extend the current improvements being completed south of Fieldcrest northward to S. 5th Way, providing vehicular capacity, bicycle and pedestrian, and safety improvements. The project has a Transportation Improvement Board grant being matched with City transportation impact fees, Real Estate Excise Tax as well as water funds for a new waterline. Right-of-way plans were completed in 2022 and right-of-way acquisition has been in process for several months. Right-of-way is being acquired on both sides of Royle Road to establish a total 80 foot width, and is being symmetrically acquired on each side of Royle. Contacts with each property owner included in the acquisitions has been made, with offers being extended to each owner. Purchase and Sale agreements are in process with some having been completed. The Lahti property shown in the attached map and description is part of the properties being acquired. The property owner has largely been non-responsive to City contacts and requests for negotiation. A third party has voluntarily been serving as the principal conduit for communication between the City and Karen Lahti; however, Ms. Lahti has stopped responding to the third party as well. Multiple attempts to reach out to Ms. Lahti have been made in March via the City Attorney and the Public Works Director. These efforts have not yet been successful. The project is scheduled to go to bid in June 2023 with construction expected to start later this summer. All property needs to be certified as acquired before construction can begin. As all reasonable efforts to contact Ms. Lahti and seek at least a Possession and Use agreement subject to completing negotiations have been exhausted, the City's recourse is eminent domain proceedings. The first step to commence eminent domain is the adoption of an ordinance constituting the City's Final Planned Action, declaring the public use and necessity for the property, and authorizing the City Attorney to commence legal proceedings. The City has issued notice to Ms. Lahti of the final planned action ordinance in accordance with the statute.

Mayor Lindsay Opened Public Hearing: 7:42PM

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Mayor Lindsay Closed Public Hearing: 7:43PM

First reading only.

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IX. COUNCIL/PRESIDING OFFICER/STAFF REPORTS

1. Council

Council Member Cole - Attended Greely Park ribbon cutting ceremony, a tri-government meeting with

the Port of Ridgefield and Ridgefield School District.

Council Member Chipman - Attended Greely Park ribbon cutting ceremony, Main Street meeting.

Council Member Wells - Attended City Manager briefing, Ridgefield Junction Neighborhood Association meeting is May 15th at 7PM - doors open at 6:30PM.

Council Member Onslow - Attended C-Tran meeting, RTC meeting.

Council Member Aichele - Attended 9 meetings, Greely Park ribbon cutting ceremony.

Council Member Coker announced her resignation from City Council, and thanked everyone for continuous support. Councillor Coker will continue being active in the community.

2. Mayor

Council and Mayor Lindsay thanked Councilor Coker for her time on the City Council.

- a. Appointment of Planning Commission Member, Position No. 4

MOTION: MOVED TO APPOINT MARK TYLER TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION, POSITION NO. 4.

RESULT:	(UNANIMOUS)
MOVER:	Council Member Judy Chipman
SECONDER:	Council Member Rachel Coker
AYES:	Mayor Lindsay, Mayor Pro Tem Aichele, Council Member Coker, Council Member Cole, Council Member Wells, Council Member Onslow, Council Member Chipman

3. City Manager

City Manager Steve Stuart - Thanked Councilor Coker for her time on the City Council.

Public Works Director Chuck Green - Thanked Councilor Coker for her time on the City Council. Refuge Park update provided.

Community Development Director Claire Lust - Thanked Councilor Coker for her time on the City Council. Welcomed Mr. Tyler to the Planning Commission.

Finance Director Kirk Johnson - Thanked Councilor Coker for her time on the City Council. Financial statement awards update.

Deputy City Manager Lee Knottnerus - Thanked Councilor Coker for her time on the City Council. City events update provided.

Police Chief Cathy Doriot - Thanked Councilor Coker for her time on the City Council.

X. ADJOURN

8:12PM



Julie Ferriss, City Clerk



Jennifer Lindsay, Mayor