

**CITY OF KALAMA
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
OCTOBER 4, 2017**

1. OPENING

Mayor Pete Poulsen opened the City Council meeting at 7:00 p.m. Mayor Poulsen led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilmembers present were Mike Truesdell, Sandra Macias, Mike Dennis Langham, and Rosemary Brinson Siipola. Councilmember Mary Putka was absent. City staff present were City Administrator Adam Smee, Superintendent of Public Works Kelly Rasmussen, Clerk/Treasurer Coni McMaster, and Police Chief Ralph Herrera. City Attorney Sam Satterfield was also present. Members of the public present are listed on the sign-in sheet.

2. EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

3. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA - None

4. PRESENTATIONS & AWARDS - None

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Preliminary Plat Extension Request – Water’s Walk 4 & Columbia Pointe

Mayor Poulsen opened the hearing at 7:02. City Planner Mark Person explained the City received a request for extending the plat of Water’s Walk 4 and Columbia Pointe. The last extension was approved in May 2013 where the applicants cited increased costs of construction and the market downturn. There has been no additional progress since 2013. The 2013 extension approval was predicated that it would be the last extension to be granted on these plats. Based on this and the lack of any substantial progress staff is recommending the City Council deny the request for the plat extension. Mr. Keith Pfeifer, applicant and owner of Kalama Development LLC addressed the Council noting that there are some additional facts to be considered. The full history to the projects begins with Water’s Walk, which they purchased after the original owner lost it in foreclosure. At that time Kalama Development constructed phases 2 and 3 plus the made the required improvements to Fifth Street which was to have been a joint effort of the Water’s Walk and River Watch Developments. They funded the complete Fifth Street project and have never received any funds from the River Watch Developers. This basically front loaded the project. They have experienced hardships due to the real estate depression which the area is just coming out of.

It is still a hardship due to the housing crisis and costs to develop lots were at \$35,000 and are now \$65,000 per lot. Before the downturn the lots were selling for \$125,000 and they couldn’t sell anything during the depression. Recently they have sold 3 lots for \$75,000 each.

If the extension is not granted, and they were forced to reapply, the City would get the same product since codes have not changed substantially since it was approved, but it would become even more expensive. They are reacting to the market conditions and want to move

forward with the project but only when it makes economic sense. Councilmember Rosemary Siipola asked what is going to change in 5 years? Mr. Pfeifer explained they can now sell lots where couldn't in the past. He also noted they were invited to attend a meeting with the Port and City where both entities encouraged developers to do more building of homes. He continued that conditions will change and costs will moderate. Councilmember Mike Truesdell asked what would the timeline be or when would something happen on the sites. Mr. Pfeifer answered that it is hard to say as they watch market and contractor availability. Councilmember Sandra Macias stated that she lives in Stone Forest where she is seeing the homes go up and sell to the point of where nearly all the lots are gone. Mr. Pfeifer noted that the contractor is the developer so it costs less for them to develop the lots. He is afraid they are creating or helping the problem with the lower lot prices. Councilmember Siipola noted the City issued 47 homes permits through August, so lots and homes are selling. She added that 5 years is a long time and she doesn't see things changing that much. That is too long to wait to see it move forward. The area has a need for new housing. Mayor Poulsen noted that one of the partners also owns Cedar Springs and the City has worked with them over the years as shown by the prior extensions. Yet there has really been no movement or improvements to either of these plats. He asked if any further studies of the sites had been conducted since the initial approval. The developers had studies done when they did the Columbia Pointe plat and have continued to preserved the sites until the right time to construct the plat. They can't provide a timeline due to economic issues as the area is just coming out of the real estate depression.

It was noted that the developers are in the development business and don't get guarantees. They noted that is why they need the flexibility of phasing the project so they can build if economically feasible. It was asked why they don't consider selling, to which they noted they have attempted to market, but buyers have not been interested. Buyers are sensitive to the economy as well. Mr. Pfeifer stated he believes they will be building within the 5-year period and they want to see the development happen. This is a hard decision for the Council as they can't regulate something to happen. It was asked what is their "plan B". They could develop in other ways including just one large lot with a view where the City would lose out on utility improvements and more homes. Councilmember Siipola asked Mark what would be a reasonable timeline, a year or eighteen months, but not five years. Planner Person responded that the code allows for two years, but the Council can do more. The issues are the economics, volume of sales, and costs of development. Mr. Pfeifer explained that if they can include in the extension development in phases it will help to build in smaller bites. They are not trying to make extra profit, but just get a return of the investment made. Councilmember Macias noted she is seeing housing going up, so is struggling with why their lots are not selling and if there are issues that keep the lots from being sold. They have sold only 3 in the past year. They believe it is a combination of lots of factors which includes resistance from contractors to come this far north of Clark County. They don't know the builders in Longview area and have not gotten response when they marketed there. There is a great need for housing here and they are beginning to get some traction. The lower value lots are selling first. Mr. Skip Urling, consultant to the developers stated that Longview is having a crunch too, as the contractors can make more in Clark county, so they don't come this far north. Mayor Poulsen asked the Council how they want to proceed. Councilmember Siipola noted that five years is not reasonable, but maybe 2 years. Councilmember Macias agreed suggesting a year to get a plan into place. Superintendent of Public Works Kelly Rasmussen noted that the high-end homes in Dave's View are being constructed and sold.

City Administrator Adam Smee noted Eagle Cliff with the recent extension is still valid, as is Victoria Heights for a few more months. The delay with the Chilton Annexation has put that development on hold and Cedar Springs has not filed for preliminary plat. So, he has some concerns that there are no developments under construction. Staff estimates there are maybe 40 lots available for building which equal one good year. Then the City will be facing a shortage. Hearing this, Mayor Poulsen asked if this information helps the developers in planning how to proceed. It does, as they may gain an advantage in not having to complete with lower price lots. They currently only require 1800 square foot homes, so they aren't looking at larger more luxury homes as they recognize the City needs a variety of housing types. Mr. Pfeifer noted they are experienced and know how to get it done but won't make promises. They prefer to keep a low profile, going with a marketing plan and trying to attract a builder. It was noted that Stone forest developed the infrastructure and that made it more appealing to builders while these two are all bare ground. Mr. Pfeifer informed them that infrastructure is a \$3 million investment and there is a need to know they will get that money back as investors. Several of the Council could see the vision, but didn't understand why no movement has been made. Administrator Smee noted that the City Averaged less than 20 permits during the slow years and nearly 30 in 2016, with 47 through August of this year. Dan Ohall, resident on Eli Avery stated he came to Kalama in 2003 and built his home in the River Watch development which progressed fairly well and then went into recession. He noted that 4 empty lots remain and would love to see these developments happen. However, there are lots of people that can't afford \$400,000 homes. The developers noted that if the extension is denied they won't reapply. With the plat expiring at the end of the year they don't have time to do anything so without it, the plat is done. Any new owner would also have to start all over. They would need at least two years to get any construction completed. Councilmember Siipola suggested a 30-month extension as five years is just not feasible. This would give them time to have infrastructure in and lots for sale. Councilmember Siipola made a motion the Council grant the extension of the plats for a total of 30 months and no further extensions to be granted. Councilmember Mike Truesdell seconded. It was noted that the 30 months would start January 1, 2018. Mr. Pfeifer noted the request included phasing so the project could be done in smaller bite. City Administrator Smee noted he does not oppose phasing as it can limit exposure and assists them in getting the project done, but he would like a condition that the City engineers review and be sure that infrastructure is built to the needs of the City which would include all the stormwater facilities in the first phase. Mr. Pfeifer stated he had no issues in working with the City engineers. They would plan to start at Spencer Creek, doing about 16 homes and recognize that some infrastructure has to be completed for all phases up front. Councilmember Siipola amended the motion to "the Council grant the extension of the preliminary plats for a period of 30 months, with no further extensions and phasing is approved provided the City engineer approves the infrastructure phasing to meet the needs of the City and the stormwater is fully completed before final plat is approved. Councilmember Truesdell seconded the amended motion, and the motion carried.

6. PUBLIC COMMENTS/CONCERNS - None

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Update on Police Design – Preparation for Town Hall

City Administrator Adam Smee informed the Council the architects will have 100 %

construction drawings by end of the month as they are getting the cost estimations completed. It will be tight and realistic. There are concerns as the estimates will reflect the market and cost increases are common in today's market. The City is looking at going to bid in the winter and hopefully seasonality will help to keep the bids on target. Cost escalations are happening. The current bond proposal sets the maximum amount by law the City will be able to collect. The estimate is just that and we have to wait on the bids. The longer the wait the more expensive the project gets as costs go up. Staff is preparing information for next week and will recap all the previous information that has been presented. The hope is the voters will turnout for the Town Hall and vote on the facts and not hearsay.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. Preliminary Budget Information for City Council

City Clerk Coni McMaster provided the 2018 revenue estimates in preparation for the hearing on October 18th. The hearing will include property taxes, any raises to rates or fees proposed in the budget. If the Council has any questions regarding the revenues, Ms. McMaster invited them to come and see her. The expenditure portion of the budget is still being processed.

9. ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS - None

10. CORRESPONDENCE - None

11. MAYOR'S REPORT & COUNCILMEMBERS' REPORTS

A. Mayor Pete Poulsen had no report.

B. Councilmember Mike Truesdell talked with Coni regarding the work on the budget and that she has filled the open position in her department.

C. Councilmember Sandra Macias reported on the First Street work completed by the City crew to install an 8-inch stormwater line and then another 6-inch line to connect to the existing west side of the street. They completed the job in two days, ahead of schedule and under budget. It was incredible work to watch. The paving will be completed tomorrow and they will include 3 other areas. The downtown area will be first and then to Fir Street where a contractor hit the main, then out at Stone Forest and OPH where they disconnected an old main line to fix a leak, and then at the end of Gwynne Road where repairs are needed and 7th Ave at Cedar. This will end the work in the downtown area to prepare for the winter rains. Public Works will continue to monitor and watch mother nature as we move through fall and winter. Ms. Macias voiced her appreciation for all the work that the PW crew did to accomplish this and the administration staff in helping to work out the funding issues.

D. Councilmember Mike Langham reported the 911 budget for 18 and 19 was adopted and does not create impacts for Kalama.

E. Councilmember Rosemary Siipola asked that we include the proposal for how the Park will be mitigated at Maruhn Park in the information for the town hall.

F. Councilmember Mary Putka was absent.

12. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

A. City Administrator Adam Smee noted that there will be other capital facilities in the works besides the Police facility to be discussed during the budget hearings. The Water line loop at Robb Road including upsizing the old undersized pipe in the Cloverdale system which has long exceeded its life span. Many are 4 and 6-inch old lines connection to 8-inch lines. Staff is working to figure out to rebalance the system on the south end of town and many of the projects were included in the rate study. They are areas that could fail due to age. They will also look at expanding some sewer lines and upgrade the lift stations. Many of these are large projects and costly. The City has been restricted by the debt service for loans on the WWTP, but can now begin making progress to make system improvements. Adam added that the City received the property tax assessment from the assessor which adds additional valuation of \$15,000,000 to the City for new homes. This is a significant increase for us showing just how much we are growing.

B. Superintendent of Public Works Kelly Rasmussen presented a written report. He noted the crew assisted Steelscape with fire testing required for their insurance with pretty impressive results. There were no drawdowns of the water supply and no alarms at the plant which indicates that the WTP is operating as properly set up to deal with this drop-in pressure within the system. They also helped Tapani with the tie in to Robb Road waterline at the rail crossing. This area will be paved next week. Kalama was lucky to get their paving done this week as everyone is trying to get final paving completed before the weather changes. Kelly stated that he, Adam and City Planner Mark Person are working on the sidewalk plan categorizing and rating them by usages, plus pulling demographics to show where it is more important or the need is greater. They will present the information to the Planning Commission next week for their consideration. Otherwise the crew is completing general maintenance work and preparing for fall rains.

C. Police Chief Ralph Herrera presented his statistical report for 119 calls with 19 reports. Coffee with a cop was well attended and his officers had good dialogue with the public. He discussed general issues with the public including that while Kalama has a low crime rate it is important to call immediately if you feel like or see something wrong. Don't wait, just call and let the officers take a look. Officers Wong and Ross attended as well. The Department will be doing more events, both during business hours and after hours for working folks. He will be participating in emergency planning with the school tomorrow. Also at 6:30 on Friday they will have a Neighborhood watch meeting at the Community Building with the Stone Forest Community. Mayor Poulsen noted that the new female officer will be coming on board soon. Chief Herrera added that Caitlyn Neill is doing well at the academy, is a team leader and getting good reports. She graduates on November 16 and then will be on duty during her field training. With the four officers, one sergeant, the clerk and the Chief the department is staffed as it should be. He noted that is working to have candidates within the department that will be able to assume upper level positions when they come available in the future.

D. Clerk/Treasurer Coni McMaster reported the September report is available, along with the 2018 revenue budget. She is preparing a powerpoint presentation for the

Town Hall meeting. She has hired a new person who will start on October 23rd. Her name is Mary Gleason and she has experience in government account and with our current software having worked in Woodland previously.

E. City Attorney Sam Satterfield had no report.

13. CONSENT AGENDA

Councilmember Rosemary Siipola made a motion the City Council approve the Consent Agenda including:

Claim and Payroll warrants 38150-38213 and ACH/EFT transactions for September totaling \$237,758.47;

The Minutes of the September 20, 2017 City Council Meeting; and

Set the following 2018 Budget Hearings

1. 2018 Revenue & Property Tax Hearing – 7pm on October 18, 2017
2. 2018 Expenditures Budget & Capital Facilities Plan – 7pm on November 15, and December 6, 2017.

Councilmember Mike Langham seconded, and the motion carried.

14. EXECUTIVE SESSION - None

15. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Poulsen adjourned the meeting at 8:34 p.m. These minutes are not verbatim. A copy of the recording for this meeting is available for review upon request.

Pete Poulsen - Mayor

Coni McMaster - Clerk/Treasurer