

Tuesday, June 16, 2020

NESCA Meeting Minutes

Recorded by Lucy Beringer

1. Meeting began with welcome and introductions by Mike Beringer, NESCA Chair
2. Approval of previous meetings minutes as recorded – Approved without objections.
3. Councilor Chris Hoy spoke about the state of the City of Salem. City has been on a bit of a “Shutdown”, but a lot has been going on. The budget had to be adopted by end of June. Many emails regarding defunding Salem Police (500?). Police Chief is officially retired, but is on contract until new Chief can be selected and hired. Three Councilors made a joint statement supporting the police department, but suggested now would be a good time to do a policy review. He spoke about the Willamette Town Center, most all entirely leased now, DMV moving to old Sears Auto Center building. TJ Max coming in. Strip mall in front will have Pinera Bread, Mod Pizza, and Crumble Cookie. Police facility is on budget and on schedule. Library as well.
4. Rob Romanek spoke, (City of Salem Parks Planner). Geer Park classified as a “Community Park”, 44 acres, mostly owned by the State of Oregon. Preparing now to develop other half of park. In the first of 4 steps, a “visioning step”, with online surveys. Have had 250 responses so far, people wanting a playground, a dog park, something for all ages. Probably a year to figure it out, one or two more to actually get it done.
5. Richard Berger (Mountain West) spoke next. North Campus moving forward, construction to begin August 15, 2020. Affordable units 20%, pedestrian path open day and night.
6. Kudos to Marilyn Moritz, NESCA Vice President, for her successful efforts to win a grant and have a kiosk built at Thorpe Park. This was Marilyn’s second successful kiosk grant and build, the first being at Hoover Park.
7. Chris Hoy spoke about the protests. Said that after 10 pm, people started throwing frozen water bottles, rocks, and explosive fireworks directly at police. Police then deployed CN gas (Tear Gas) for the first time ever in the City of Salem, to disperse the crowd as a defensive measure. When asked about the city’s budget, Councilor Hoy stated that Salem is in a good place right now, because the budget relies on property taxes only, so the crisis has not impacted city services. The only 3 businesses that have been hurting due to the crisis are the Gilbert House, Travel Salem, and The Bush Barn, which depend on tourism.
8. Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:15 pm.