

City Council Action Item Cover Sheet

March 7, 2018

Agenda Item:

Discussion of draft letter to Maxine Johnstone

Question Before Council:

Mayor Stanley to present letter for discussion

Person/Group Initiating Request:

Mayor Gerald Stanley

Item Summary/Background:

Discussion of letter to Maxine Johnstone regarding list of concerns



CITY OF YACHATS

PO Box 345 (441 N. Highway 101), Yachats OR 97498

Phone (541) 547-3565

Fax (541) 547-3063

Relay Oregon 800-735-2900 (TDD)

February 23, 2018

Maxine Sheets-Johnstone
Address

Dear Maxine:

Thank you for coming to the February 7 Meeting of the City Council and for presenting to the Council a list of concerns. In this letter, approved by the members of the City Council and the City Manager, I wish to address each of the concerns you presented

Your suggestion about putting wood chips on the 804 Trail where it goes from Aqua Vista Loop to the ocean is a good one. We have followed up on it and the trails committee will be investigating options. .

There is not much a city can do about an unfinished property, other than call the owner's attention to the issue. If the owner is actively seeking funds to complete the project, he (she) has the right to do this. If the owner is not interested in completing the project, the City might be able to recommend some alternate plans to deal with the situation.

Many people, as I am sure you are aware, have reported to the City difficulties that they have encountered negotiating, as pedestrians or motorists, parts of the recently completed Highway project. The several parts of that project all belong to ODOT and can only be revised by ODOT. The City has made ODOT aware of difficulties when they are reported, and will continue to do so.

The covering of the wood planks on the wetlands walkways was done some years ago by the Yachats Trails Committee. I took part in that endeavor. The purpose was to prevent walkers from slipping on the wet boards. I will alert the Trails Committee to the issue you have raised to see if the situation can be remedied.

The City Planner was involved with all the Yachats governance people who worked with ODOT on the Highway plan. I agree that the more that Yachats "officials" could be visible in the town, the better our ambience could be. But we should probably also be aware that people hired by an agency don't have to take on further working hours to help an agency's reputation.

You may by now know that the latest reworking of Commons use fees allows for individual groups to use Room 3 for a two-hour meeting with less than about 25 people present without cost.



CITY OF YACHATS

PO Box 345 (441 N. Highway 101), Yachats OR 97498

Phone (541) 547-3565 Fax (541) 547-3063 Relay Oregon 800-735-2900 (TDD)

These proposed changed fee structures have not yet been officially adopted, but if you had been at the Council meeting when that part was discussed (I forget if you were or not), you could clearly surmise the mind-set of the Council Members about this issue.

Maxine, it is always a pleasure to talk with you. Thank you for taking the time to present your thoughts to us. Let me know if you would like to discuss any of these issues further.

Yours sincerely,

Gerald Stanley, Mayor

Yours sincerely,

Gerald Stanley
Mayor

I: The 804 trail: the 804 trail meets Aqua Vista Loop and then runs west, down to the ocean. That trail needs wood chips!! Wood chips were available free to citizens some time back! Why doesn't the city use them to enhance the 804 trail, i.e., make the trail actually walkable instead of sloshy, muddy, and puddled????

II: Why does the City Council allow unfinished construction—for umpteen years—to exist right across from Commons, all the while ostensibly improving Yachats in all kinds of ways and exalting the beauty of Yachats as the gem of the Oregon coast. The unfinished construction has been an eyesore long enough!

III: “Sidewalks”: An obstacle course at times for anyone who walks around Yachats, especially just past C& K Market, at corner of #101, Beach Street, and 2nd Street. An obstacle course too for drivers who are turning up or coming down 7th St. and who meet a car in the opposite direction, neither of them being able to proceed, the result of an utterly unaesthetic and functionally useless jutting-out planter and sidewalk.

IV: The wetlands: Whose idea was it to cover the wood plank path through the wetlands with a covering that allows water to collect along the path in big puddles during rains, and thus makes it impossible to walk through the wetlands without getting your feet all wet.

V: Was the City Planner, who works here in Yachats half-time, involved in #2, #3, and #4 above? If so, shouldn't one of his responsibilities be to acquaint himself in person with the city by walking on the trail, walking on the wetlands, not to mention driving in and around Yachats prior to making any decisions about it. In fact, should it not be the responsibility of all administrators (paid and unpaid) of this small city of no more than 740 people (voting population 661 people) to do the same?

VI: Several years back, I made a suggestion and in fact a request that the City Council consider a yearly Yachats Commons Celebration Day and do away with “suggested donations,” and, in effect, to live up to its motto of caring for the mental, physical, artistic, and spiritual development of its citizens. In short, citizens of Yachats must pay #5.00 at the door for their mental, physical, artistic, or spiritual development. As several people remarked to me and in fact stated at a City Council meeting several years ago when the topic was addressed, people can be embarrassed, for example, if they do not have the money. Moreover, has it ever occurred to the administrators of the City of Yachats, both paid and unpaid, that there is a sizable contradiction not only in asking for donations at the same time as avowing an unconditioned caring concern for its citizens, but in sponsoring a volunteer kitchen for those lacking resources sufficient to feed themselves. Wouldn't it be grand if those lacking resources could attend various Commons activities without being put on the spot to make a donation? Kindly do consider a yearly Yachats Commons Celebration Day!

Maxine Sheets-Johnstone
330 King St.
24+ year resident of Yachats