

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY
COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COEUR D' ALENE, IDAHO,
HELD AT THE LIBRARY COMMUNITY ROOM

July 2, 2024

The Mayor and Council of the City of Coeur d' Alene met in a regular session of said Council at the Coeur d' Alene City Library Community Room on July 2, 2024, at 6:00pm., there being present the following members:

James Hammond, Mayor

Woody McEvers)	Members of Council Present
Christie Wood)	
Dan Gookin)	
Dan English)	
Amy Evans)	
Kiki Miller)	

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Hammond called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION: Grant MacLean, Trinity Lutheran Church

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Councilmember Gookin led the pledge of allegiance.

MAYOR'S MESSAGE: Mayor read a message of condolences to the family of former Mayor Jim Fromm who served the City of Coeur d'Alene from 1982-1986. He also thanked his wife, Lisa Fromm, for attending the Council meeting.

AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA: Motion by Gookin, seconded by Wood, to pull-out item 3c from the Consent Calendar regarding the establishment of the Coeur d'Alene Poet Laureate program funded through the Arts Commission funds, for separate discussion. Mayor Hammond requested to switch the items on Other Business and discuss first Council Bill 24-1010 or the adoption of a new chapter of the Coeur d'Alene Municipal Code, Chapter 9.23: Hate Crime.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Councilmember Miller shared that the Panhandle Area Council is putting together community outreach sessions in order to come up with a community economic development strategy report that is required by the Economic Development Administration. She explained that a lot of nonprofit organizations and cities rely on this report because it is a vision of what the strengths and weaknesses as well as directions the community is taking to remain economically viable. She said that the report will be posted to the Panhandle Area Council website in January. Councilmember English stated that this coming Saturday will be the last of the civil discussion series and thanked those who participated.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Tony Stewart, Coeur d'Alene, noted his support of the proposed hate crime ordinance stating that it will help to stop the verbal abuse of people of color in the City. He mentioned that 49 states and territories, including Idaho, have hate crime legislation. He rallied everyone to be good citizens to speak out and condemn such horrific behavior.

Shelley Rae Phillips, Coeur d'Alene, thanked the Council bringing in the hate crime ordinance and stated that it is important to make some statement against hate crimes.

Ralph Ginorio, Coeur d'Alene, spoke in defense of free speech and stated that the proposal is an introduction of the concept of thought crime into the local ordinance. He added that it is not the Council's job to monitor the conscience of its citizens.

Betsy Kovatch, Coeur d'Alene, stated that the hate crime ordinance is a step in the right direction toward making Coeur d'Alene safe for all people to live, recreate, or visit the city without fear of harassment, intimidation and violence towards them because of their skin color, sexual orientation, gender identity, nation of origin, or any mental or physical disability. She mentioned that this ordinance will send a strong message and hold accountable those who continue to make others feel intimidated and unsafe.

Jeanette Laster, Coeur d'Alene, asked the Council to adopt the hate crime ordinance on behalf of all the victims who sit in fearful silence. She stated that consistent and accurate data collection is vital to understand the scope of violence over time and what measures are effective and ineffective in combating hate crime. She thanked Councilmember Wood for participating in HREI's Juneteenth Community Leadership Panel where they discussed the need for more accurate reporting and the need for leadership to have the resources, tools or ability to prosecute.

Marty Modance, Post Falls, stated that hate is not the issue but penalizing straight white Christian conservative males for their freedom of speech.

Tyler Davis, Coeur d'Alene, noted that there was a breach of contract with the City on the live after 5 concert series and the reason stated is he did not pay the fees 30 days in advance which was never done in the past. He said that last year, he paid the day before the event started. Mr. Davis reasoned that prematurely cancelling the live after 5 concert series for no cause will harm the city and the community as well as the vendors and sponsors who already signed up for the event.

Bill Green, Coeur d'Alene, shared that everything begins with a thought and whenever people try to hurt someone or make them feel less worthy, they are really talking about themselves. He stated that the people of Coeur d'Alene are known to be friendly and would respond in a different way that when somebody harass someone, they know by example that they can cut that off. He pointed out that the Council can make a new rule but the complexity of enforcing it will be a challenge.

Dean Haagenson, Hayden, urged the Council to reject the hate crime ordinance saying that limiting speech by making it a crime threatens the right to free speech and would reinforce the opinion of some that the City is racist.