

## **BINGEN CITY COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES – June 19, 2018**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Pro Tempore Catherine Kiewit at 7:00 pm. Council Members Present: Laura Mann, Isolde Schroder, Phil Jones Staff Members Present: City Clerk/Treasurer Cheyenne Willey, City Attorney Chris Lanz, Public Works Superintendent David Spratt. Audience Present: Ken Park, Marla Keethler.

#### **Metropolitan Parks District**

*Marla Keethler, White Salmon City Council*

Keethler introduced herself and said she was a member of the White Salmon Parks and Recreation Committee. She explained she was looking for the Bingen City Council's feedback regarding the proposed Metropolitan Parks District (MPD), and ways to include Bingen as a whole.

Keethler gave a brief history of the White Salmon City Pool and said she felt strongly about having a pool in the community for the kids as well as for adult recreation. Keethler noted that previous efforts to create a Parks and Recreation District had stretched too far East and tried to take on more than just providing a pool. She pointed out that the newly seated White Salmon City Council members are new to the issue.

Keethler said the portion of the pool funded by levy is less than 50 percent. She explained that funding the pool that way would not be sustainable for the long haul especially with plans for a new pool. Keethler said the idea of an MPD was brought to attention by the Community Partners, and was immediately appealing because it had the ability to address larger concerns. She said creating an MPD would allow the pool to be the sole focus.

Keethler noted she had heard about the trust issues concerning pool funding, but an MPD would solve that. Keethler said the District could always expand but the initial proposal would create a White Salmon Valley Pool District. She explained that creating an MPD required a petition led movement, or government entity could choose to move it forward. She mentioned the choice to go the route of a petition allowed for a broader tax base to help spread the burden and include residents that would be excluded if a city were to propose the district.

Keethler said the determined levy amount was 25 cents per thousand, so that the district could be established at a level that would be sustainable when considering funding and maintenance of the new pool. She said the current focus was to provide a seasonal pool, but estimate for a therapy pool and other improvements and services would be provided so that it would not have to go back to voters.

Keethler pointed out that funding the pool would be brand new to Bingen voters, and said she felt White Salmon voters may be fatigued on the issue. She said at this time the MPD would be restricted to Klickitat County, with a goal of having a pool that is functioning and sustainable. She said the proponents of the MPD had been taking community input through workshops and going from there. She noted that this time there would be responsibility to the future.

Councilmember Mann asked what White Salmon residents pay now for the current pool levy.

Keethler said 18 cents per thousand.

Councilmember Mann clarified that the proposed MPD would increase the levy amount by 7 cents

Keethler listed the proposed MPD communities to be White Salmon, Bingen, Husum, Snowden, and BZ Corners.

Councilmember Mann asked about pool admission fees.

Keethler said the fees would be reevaluated. She noted that currently Bingen residents are charged an “out of district” rate, and being part of an MPD would remove any out of district surcharge.

Councilmember Mann asked if the ballot item would be all-in-one or separated out like the Mt. Adams Parks and Recreation District (MAPARD) had been. She noted the separated structure would allow for a district to be formed and not funded, as happened with MAPARD.

Keethler said she had heard from people who were involved with MAPARD and that she liked the proposed MPD because of its all-or-nothing format. Keethler said the levy rate could be lowered in the future if the community never wanted anything more than a seasonal pool.

Keethler said that if the ballot measure were to fail, there would be no levy and no district.

Councilmember Mann asked if the 5 District Commissioner Positions would be on the ballot as well.

Keethler said yes, but 700 signatures would be needed. She said if the signatures were obtained then a special filing period would be opened.

Councilmember Mann asked if the petition wording had been finalized.

Keethler said yes, and shared the wording with the council.

Councilmember Jones asked how many signatures had been obtained so far.

Keethler explained that recent efforts at the White Salmon farmers market, White Salmon City Pool Open Swim, and local businesses had so far yielded 250 signatures. She said some citizens had also taken petitions to collect signatures, but she was unsure of the number collected that way.

Councilmember Kiewit asked about representation and the structure of the board of commissioners.

Keethler said the conversation had not landed in a final place, but that they had gone with at-large commissioner seats.

Councilmember Kiewit said she thought it was a consideration for the entire area, to be aware that if the MPD is created that the residents of the District communities could end up being represented by commissioners that live elsewhere. Kiewit said when looking at criticisms for the MPD, her main concern is that it might be formed without specific goal. She said she was worried it would be hard for voters to know where money would be going because the MPD would take charge.

Keethler agreed that unless clearly outlined, the MPD could be an open funnel. She explained that as the MPD had been proposed, the only authority would be over the pool.

Councilmember Kiewit said she felt that was good.

Keethler said there had been lots of enthusiasm in support of the proposed MPD, but that going back to MAPARD she knows the District needs to stay dedicated. She said she didn't want to the District to appear as MAPARD coming back again.

Councilmember Kiewit said she could see how that would be an issue.

Councilmember Jones I said he supported spelling out the function and goals a little more for voters, with emphasis on the point that any further projects would have to come back to voters, as well as any increase over 1% per year. He said he was definitely in favor of the District.

Councilmember Kiewit noted that the proposed MPD would have an impact for the City of White Salmon as parks are funded through the general fund, and having a separate district would free up funds. She also pointed out that the levy would be very noticeable for Bingen residents, who are already taxed at a higher rate.

Keethler agreed the ballot would be heavy, and said she wanted everyone to have a chance to vote yes or no.

Councilmember Kiewit asked if Keethler had heard of any pushback from the community.

Keethler said that before the petition went to local community groups she heard a lot of apprehension about the cost and the fact that it would be yet another levy on the ballot. She said it was all about proper management.

Councilmember Kiewit said it might help voters decide if they could see who would be running for commissioner. She suggested it might help inspire trust and help make the outlying areas feel like they had a voice.

Keethler agreed that the larger community needs to feel connected. She said the commissioner aspect will be critical.

Councilmember Mann asked if there was any Bingen-specific information the council could share with their constituents.

Keethler said the push was to get community involvement from either individuals or groups.

Councilmember Schroder said she felt one important point was that the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) District levy on the ballot was just asking to continue the current rate, not asking for an increase, but that voters are still going to want to choose one levy or another. She said education about all the levies on the ballot would be important in order to accurately represent the proposed taxes.

Councilmember Mann agreed and suggested using the point that the EMS levy was not an rate increase. She said voters may feel as though they have to make a choice, and that would be inaccurate because the EMS levy is already in effect and is just asking for the current rate to be continued.

Councilmember Schroder said she would hate for people to make an uninformed choice.

Keethler agreed.

Councilmember Kiewit clarified the allocation of the 18 cents per thousand current White Salmon Pool levy.

Keethler said the current levy helps pay for maintenance on the existing pool. She said that should the MPD levy fail, there would be no funding for a pool as of January 1, 2019. She said the entire process had been eye-opening for the new White Salmon City Council members.

### **Approval of Meeting Minutes – June 5, 2018**

The Council expressed appreciation for the detail provided in the meeting minutes.

Corrections were noted as follows:

*Page 1, paragraph 2*

“He said three ~~on~~ of the ambulances had been remounted.”

*Page 2, paragraph 3*

“Gilmer said yes, that ~~an~~ and Yakima.”

*Page 2, paragraph 10*

“The Council expressed ~~appreciated~~ appreciation”

*Page 4, final paragraph*

“Councilmember ~~Kiewit~~ Mann asked”

Council Member Mann moved to approve the meeting minutes of the June 5, 2018 regular council meeting as corrected. Council Member Jones seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

### **Amend Washington State Department of Commerce Contract 15-62210-020 CDBG Extension**

Council Member Mann moved to authorize the Mayor to sign the Amendment for an extension of Washington State Department of Commerce Contract 15-62210-020 for the Community Development Block Grant. Council Member Jones seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

### **Bingen Municipal Code 5.20 Public Dances, Public Dancing, and Dancehalls**

Clerk Treasurer Cheyenne Willey gave an overview of the question of relevance regarding Bingen Municipal Code (BMC) 5.20 Public Dances, Public Dancing, and Dancehalls.

City Attorney Chris Lanz said in regard to recent citizen concerns, this particular chapter of the Bingen Municipal Code doesn't apply, but the noise ordinance would.

Councilmember Mann drew attention to the requirement that under BMC 5.20, permits may only be issued to persons with good moral character. She noted that she really liked that BMC 5.20 referred to Law Enforcement as “Peace Officers”.

There was a consensus that the Council would like to see a proposed ordinance repealing BMC 5.20.

### **Depot Street Parking, Commercial Parking, Public Parking Lot**

Clerk Treasurer Cheyenne Willey gave an overview of parking issues reported and how Bingen Municipal Code (BMC) 5.14 Stopping, Standing, and Parking failed to address those issues.

Willey explained that there had been several motorhomes observed being used as residences parked on the north side of Depot Street, including one whose residents were running a generator in the dry grass behind the Pacific Pride fuel station. She noted that the Public Works department couldn't maintain the area in that location due to the vehicles left parked for days and weeks at a time. Willey also mentioned that a local business had been using the public right of way as an overflow storage parking lot, causing the same maintenance issues for the Public Works department.

Willey said there were also transient persons observed living in their cars in the public right of way along Depot Street.

Willey said that in looking into the parking ordinance it had been discovered that the signage in the 400 West Steuben public parking lot prohibiting camping, parking in excess of 48 hours, and vehicle or product sales was not based off of any ordinance and therefore not enforceable.

Councilmember Mann said she felt it was a difficult topic, and noted that in this area people are able to park and camp in the National Forest. She said she felt putting up signage preventing parking or camping would push the same issues to residential areas.

Councilmember Kiewit asked Willey to find out if Washington Gorge Action Programs had temporary parking available on their property for those living in motorhomes or vehicles.

Councilmember Jones said he would like to see the signage in the 400 West Steuben public parking lot be made enforceable.

The council asked Clerk Treasurer Willey to look into parking time limits that could be a solution to the Depot Street parking issues.

## **Staff and Committee Reports**

### *Public Works Department*

Councilmember Kiewit asked Public Works Superintendent Spratt if he tracked the amount of water purchased from White Salmon and asked for clarification on that process.

Public Works Superintendent Spratt said the incoming water from the City of White Salmon is set to a rate of 100 gallons per minute and remains constant unless there is an event which causes White Salmon to become unable to provide that flow rate.

Councilmember Mann asked if flushing hydrants or working with the water system could cause a change in the ratio of White Salmon to Bingen water, and if that might affect the odor of Bingen's water.

Spratt said that was a possibility but to combat that, the Public Works department makes sure to flush the hydrants early in the year. Spratt said the increase in water usage due to irrigation and summer activities was much more influential on the odor. He said the increase in water usage means that more Bingen water is pulled which changes the ratio of White Salmon to Bingen water.

Mayor Barnes joined the meeting at 8:30 pm.

Councilmember Kiewit said it would be good to have a way for Clerk Treasurer Willey to document complaints so the data could be used to look for correlations. She said the ideal solution would be cost effective but keep the ratio of water sources more consistent.

Public Works Superintendent Spratt gave an overview of the water system, explaining that any changes made to chlorine levels or water source ratios reached customers about 10 hours later, due to the changes being made before the water reached the reservoir.

Councilmember Mann asked if in the future Bingen were to install a filtration system, where Spratt would recommend it be located.

Public Works Superintendent Spratt said a filtration system would be most helpful at the reservoir, and that a chlorination system installed at the wells would make a big difference in continuity and would enable the Public Works department to treat all of the water at the source, instead of treating at the reservoir.

Councilmember Mann asked if water leak in white salmon would affect the ratio of White Salmon to Bingen water.

Public Works Superintendent Spratt said yes.

Councilmember Mann said that would be important to note.

Clerk Treasurer Willey pointed out the 10 hour delay would affect when the ratio change would reach customers.

## **Mayor's Update and Council Comments**

### *Mayor's Update*

Mayor Barnes thanked Clerk Treasurer Willey for putting the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) amendment on the agenda, and thanked the council for authorizing her to sign it. She said that Jan Brending would be administrating the grant.

Barnes noted that the Regional Transportation Committee (RTC) Traffic Circulation Study was updated but did not change very much. She said there may be more questions to be addressed in the future in regard to the study's preparation and outcome, and that she would keep the council updated.

Barnes said crews from the Washington State Department of Transportation had been drilling for ground water levels and testing in preparation for the Bingen Point Access Improvement Project. She noted that once the project is finalized the area will be released and turned over to the City of Bingen and the Port of Klickitat to be maintained as they would not be purchasing our property.

Barnes said she had attended the Port of Hood River meeting regarding the bridge replacement environmental requirements. She said it was very interesting and that she got some good questions in. She said everyone understands the need to move forward as fast as possible.

Barnes said the Port of Hood River would try to use the 2003 draft Environmental Impact Study that the Washington side did and then work off of that instead of starting from square one.

Barnes said she had received a call from The Society Hotel regarding a possible quiet zone through Bingen. She said The Society Hotel had been working with the Federal Government to try to achieve that goal. Barnes said she shared information about past efforts to do the same, and said it might be feasible to find funding for wayside horns and quad gates. Barnes mentioned that getting the underpass constructed would help the effort.

Councilmember Kiewit said Jessie with the Society Hotel is a community organizer and was interested in revitalizing the train station. She said she thought someone with the enthusiasm for projects should be supported and that she wanted the City of Bingen to be collaborative with the community and local businesses.

Councilmember Mann asked about the cost of a quad gate.

Mayor Barnes said that when the Walnut Street crossing was first addressed, the Unified Transportation Council (UTC) had said the average grant was \$20,000, and that quad gates would cost \$800,000 instead of \$450,000 for single arm gates.

Councilmember Mann suggested that maybe in the future community interest would support a levy or fundraising efforts.

Mayor Barnes said she had attended a meeting after she joined the Bingen City Council in 2004, and that there had been a good turn out and lots of community support for solutions to the train noise.

Barnes thanked the City employees for their hard work and said that Public Works Superintendent Spratt will be attending one council meeting per month.

Councilmember Kiewit asked about the 4<sup>th</sup> of July temporary no fireworks signs.

There was a discussion about temporary versus permanent no fireworks signage.  
Councilmember Mann asked about the cost of additional permanent signage.

There was a discussion about providing information to new Bingen residents, with the possibility of using business license mailings as a route of information delivery.

### **Voucher Approval**

Vouchers audited and certified as required by RCW 42.24.080 and expense reimbursement claims certified as required by RCW 42.24.090 as of this date June 19, 2018.

The council by unanimous vote does approve for payment the following list:

Checks 20055-20058 and Payroll EFT (Dated 6/15/18) totaling \$15,920.64. General Fund - \$6,814.10, Street Fund - \$2,591.85, Water Fund - \$1,844.93, Sewer Fund - \$320.35, Treatment Plant Fund - \$4,349.41.

Checks 20059-20079 (Dated 6/19/18) totaling \$24,776.99. General Fund - \$7,031.98, Street Fund - \$369.85, Street Construction & Maintenance Fund - \$5,455.01, Water Fund - \$7,882.78, Sewer Fund - \$1,257.63, Treatment Plant Fund - \$2,779.74.

The council adjourned at 9:30 pm.

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City Clerk

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Mayor