

BINGEN CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

January 16, 2018

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Betty Barnes at 7:05 p.m. Council members present: Isolde Schroder, Laura Mann, Catherine Kiewit, Phil Jones. Council members absent: Ryan O'Connor, Student Council Member Cesar Robles. Staff present: City Administrator Cindy Marbut, Deputy Clerk Cheyenne Willey, Police Chief Mike Hepner. Audience present: Ken Park, Dale Robins, Rob Kimmes, Jonathan Blake, Tammy Kaufman, Elizabeth Vaivoda, Megan Dixon.

Bingen-White Salmon Police Department Update

Police Chief Mike Hepner said the department would be moving into new office this week. Hepner extended an invitation to the council and staff to stop by for a tour of the new facility. Hepner asked the room to keep the family of Pierce County Deputy Daniel A. McCartney in their thoughts. Hepner explained that Deputy McCartney had been shot and killed responding to a burglary in Fredrickson, Washington, leaving behind his wife and three sons. Hepner said Officer Tony Warren would be attending the memorial service to represent the Bingen-White Salmon Police Department.

It was noted that Inter-Tribal Law Enforcement has increased their presence in the area recently.

Approval of Meeting Minutes – January 2, 2018

Council Member Kiewit commended Council Member Schroder on the minutes taken at the previous meeting in the absence of Deputy Clerk Willey.

The following corrections were made to the meeting minutes of the January 2, 2018 regular council meeting:

Page 1, paragraph 2

“Police Chief Mike Hepner asked the council if they had any questions regarding the ~~loss of the resident officer in Bingen~~ **Bingen-White Salmon Police Department Officer moving out of the city.**”

Page 1, paragraph 3

“Council Member Kiewit said it brought to light that the loss may invoke questions from the community and residents reaching out to the officer **asked if the Police Department should inform the residents about etiquette regarding reaching out to off-duty officers.**”

Council Member Mann moved to approve the minutes of the January 2, 2018, regularly scheduled council meeting as corrected. Council Member Schroder seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Oath of Office – Cindy Marbut, City Administrator

Mayor Barnes administered the Oath of Office to Cindy Marbut, City Administrator.

Oath of Office – Cheyenne Willey, Deputy Clerk

Mayor Barnes administered the Oath of Office to Cheyenne Willey, Deputy Clerk.

Skyline Hospital Board – Update

The Skyline Hospital Representatives spoke about the planned improvements coming to Skyline Hospital's Emergency Room. The explained that they were looking for public support, and hoping for

an endorsement from the Bingen City Council. According to the representatives, a study was done three years ago that found the Emergency Department at Skyline Hospital to be woefully inadequate. After the initial study, the representatives explained that a feasibility study was completed to assess funding. The representatives explained that with the planned updates, the Emergency Room would be doubling in size and adding new features to meet the needs of the community. They noted that the updated Emergency Room would include a separate, designated “Safe Haven” room, for sexual assault and domestic violence victims.

Council Member Kiewit asked who owns Skyline Hospital.

CEO Rob Kimmes said the Hospital is a non profit, public district hospital owned by the community. Kimmes said the board of directors is comprised of elected volunteers.

Council Member Kiewit asked where revenue goes that is received from bill payments.

CEO Kimmes explained that the revenue goes back into the facility, community, equipment, and hiring. Kimmes said the Hospital Board was trying to be proactive regarding future area growth, intending to grow the services to match the community needs. He said providing necessary medical services to community is highest priority.

Administrator Marbut asked if the referenced growth was based on White Salmon or Bingen

CEO Kimmes said the Hospital serves the area from Stevenson to the West, Dallesport to the East, and Trout Lake to the North, encompassing about 20,000 year-round residents.

Council Member Schroder asked what timeline would be if sufficient funding is secured.

CEO Kimmes said construction would begin during the fall of 2018. He noted that the project was well into design phase, and that five million dollars had been secured through bond financing. Kimmes noted that project cost would total seven million dollars. Kimmes said the Skyline Foundation had started conducting a campaign to raise the final two million dollars.

Police Chief Hepner said his experience so far with the new, dedicated Emergency Room staff had been amazing. He noted that in the upcoming renovations, adding a Crisis Room would be crucial.

The Skyline Hospital Representatives mentioned a Cultivate Columbia event scheduled for March 17th, 2018.

There was a consensus from the Bingen City Council to write a letter of support for the project, to help secure funding.

Council Member Mann moved to draft a letter of support for Skyline Hospital. Council Member Jones seconded the motion and the Council voted as follows: Mann – Yes, Jones – Yes, Kiewit – Yes, Schroder – Abstain.

Council Member Kiewit asked what would happen if the final two million dollar goal was not met.

CEO Kimmes said the project would be downsized and completed with space to expand in the future.

The Council thanked the Skyline Board and Foundation members for their information. The Skyline Representatives thanked the City Council for their support and time.

Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council (RTC) – Traffic Circulation Study Update

Dale Robins, RTC

Robins explained that the Washington State legislature had passed a funding package that included the Bingen Point Crossing Project. He said as part of that funding package, money had been set aside for study of Bingen and White Salmon area.

Robins said the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) had turned the study over to RTC. He explained he would be giving a summary of the study memorandum.

Robins noted that the need for traffic improvements was obvious, as area traffic is growing. He said it has grown increasingly difficult to get on SR 14. He explained that he wanted to inform local decision makers about how to streamline the Bingen and White Salmon area. Robins said the study area is from the SR 141 alternate to SR 14, east of Bingen. Robins said the data had been collected in the fall of 2016, and reviewed train traffic, parking, travel patterns, collision data, and bike and pedestrian access as well. Robins said to finalize the study, stakeholder interviews were conducted to solicit local opinions.

Robins said overall everything had been working fairly well. He noted that traffic gets worse in summer, and that there was a noticeable slow point at the Oak Street and SR 14 intersection. He said parking was sufficient in Bingen, and that there were no high collision locations noted.

Robins said the study reflected a regular delay at the Hood River Bridge. He said an immediate improvement would be a green arrow to signal the right turn while eastbound traffic turns left onto the bridge. He encouraged the council to let WSDOT know that the city supported that improvement option, as the change would not be implemented within the Bingen City limits but would help the residents.

Robins stated that traffic along SR 14 and across the existing railroad crossings will get much worse without improvements. He said the planned underpass and roundabout update would be key to traffic issues. According the study, if Maple Street continued to be unrestricted, traffic at the Oak Street and SR 14 intersection would worsen. Robins pointed out that signals at Oak and Maple streets would cause traffic to back up through several intersections, and possibly even into the planned roundabout. Based on the results of the study, Robins recommended restricting Maple Street but not closing it entirely.

The council talked about options to improve traffic flow through east downtown Bingen.

Robins explained that WSDOT currently has a call for city safety projects and that some of the proposed traffic improvements could do quite well. He noted that the funding would require a ten percent match.

Robins wrapped up his presentation saying that the improvements recommended by the study are nothing more than recommendations this is in your hands now. He reminded that council that they could choose to do nothing, or talk with partners and move forward with some of the improvements.

The council thanked Dale Robins for his time and for explaining the results of the study.

Proposed 2018 Agreement Building Inspection and Plan Review Services, Skamania County

Council Member Schroder moved to renew the proposed 2018 Agreement Building Inspection and Plan Review Services, Skamania County with the proposed increases. Council Member Kiewit seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mayor Pro Tempore Appointment

The council discussed the Mayor Pro Tempore positions. As part of the discussion about the Mayor Pro Tempore signatory powers, it was agreed that City Administrator Cindy Marbut would be granted signatory powers on all City Accounts and remove Deputy Clerk Cheyenne Willey and the previous Administrator Jan Brending as a signatory on all accounts.

Council Member Schroder nominated Council Member Kiewit to the position. Council Member Jones seconded the nomination and it passed unanimously. Council Member Kiewit accepted the nomination and appointment.

It was decided that Mayor Pro Tempore Kiewit would retain signatory powers. As part of the discussion about the Mayor Pro Tempore signatory powers, it was agreed that City Administrator Cindy Marbut would be granted signatory powers on all City Accounts.

Evergreen Rural Water of Washington Income Survey Update

Mayor Barnes said she had spoken to the volunteer interpreters regarding previous door to door surveying efforts.

It was noted that there would be another door-to-door survey attempt, and that Klickitat County had extended the deadline for the funding.

Council Member Kiewit said obtaining more surveys would provide a better representation of the community's earnings.

2017 Agreement Washington Gorge Action Programs (WGAP)

Deputy Clerk Willey asked the council to retroactively sign the 2017 WGAP agreement to help fund the youth center services in the amount of \$4,000, as it had been approved in the minutes of the December 6, 2016, regular council meeting but no signed copy had been recorded.

2018 Agreement Washington Gorge Action Programs (WGAP)

Council Member Jones moved to approve a \$4,000 contribution for the year of 2018 to Washington Gorge Action Programs to help fund the Youth Center Services. Council Member Kiewit seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Mayor's Update and Council Comments

Mayor Barnes reminded the council that the members had been invited to attend the meeting to be held by the Port of Hood River regarding the SR 35 Bridge, and she reminded the Water and Sewer committee members about a meeting scheduled with the City of White Salmon.

Mayor Barnes informed the council and audience that Thursday, January 18, 2018, the City of Bingen would be hosting a "Coffee Connections" networking event at Pine Shed Ribs at 8:00 am. She asked Deputy Clerk Willey to prepare an informational packet to share with attendees.

Mayor Barnes said the solid waste committee would be meeting with Klickitat Solid Waste soon as well.

Council Member Mann brought up the rate of pay for the Mayor of Bingen. She asked that the council consider increasing the amount of compensation per month. Mann said she had done some research, and a memo from June 29 discussed rates of pay for comparable cities, and she felt that \$500 per month seemed appropriate. She asked City Administrator Marbut to provide information on the rate of pay for Mayors in Washington towns with a population range from 400-600 residents.

The council discussed leaves of absence and minimum meeting attendance requirements.

Council Member Kiewit spoke about a dog issue that occurred over the weekend. She described walking with children and her small dog when another, larger, dog had jumped a fence and tried to attack her dog. She said she contacted Animal Control Officer Mike Solomon and he had responded immediately. Kiewit said Solomon took care of the issue and made contact with the dog and its owner.

Council Member Kiewit commended Animal Control Officer Mike Solomon for his service. She said he did a wonderful job and provided great follow-up.

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 January 16, 2018. The council by unanimous vote does approve for payment the following list: Checks 19718-19737 (dated 12/31/2017) totaling \$43,128.37. General Fund - \$7,047.34, Street Fund - \$1,502.57, Water Fund - \$21,726.41, Sewer Fund - \$330.12, Treatment Plant Fund - \$12,521.93.

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 January 16, 2018. The council by unanimous vote does approve for payment the following list: Payroll EFT, Checks 19714-19717 (dated 01/16/2018) totaling \$16,892.65. General Fund - \$6,085.64, Street Fund - \$3,112.54, Water Fund - \$2,197.18, Sewer Fund - \$385.18, Treatment Plant Fund - \$5,112.11.

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 January 16, 2018. The council by unanimous vote does approve for payment the following list: Checks 19738-19750 (dated 01/16/2018) totaling \$85,875.88. General Fund - \$74,449.04, Street Fund - \$1,015.11, Water Fund - \$10,063.01, Sewer Fund - \$215.12, Treatment Plant Fund - \$133.60.

The council adjourned 9:55 pm.

City Clerk

Mayor