

BINGEN CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

September 5, 2017

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Betty J. Barnes at 7:00 p.m. Council members present: Ryan O'Connor, Laura Mann, Izzy Schroder, Phil Jones, Catherine Kiewit. Staff present: City Administrator Jan Brending, City Attorney Chris Lanz, Sergeant Mike Hepner. Audience present: Tammy Kaufman, Ken Park, Etta Hepner, Barbara Sexton, Bev Elsner.

Public Comment

Tammy Kaufman, Insitu

Tammy Kaufman reported on the Insitu leadership day where individuals representing different agencies and organizations throughout the Gorge from Portland/Vancouver to Sherman County were invited to view a ScanEagle flight in Arlington. She said Betty Barnes attended representing the City of Bingen and Jan Brending attended representing Mid-Columbia Economic Development District.

Betty Barnes said she was very impressed with the people that Insitu pulled together and felt that it was a true working meeting even during lunch.

Bingen-White Salmon Police Department Update

Sergeant Mike Hepner reported that nothing out of the ordinary has happened in Bingen. He said the department is wrapping up the investigation into a significant bar fight that occurred in Bingen. Hepner said the department is also preparing for Huckleberry Festival.

Laura Mann asked if the department is doing any planning for the fires in the Gorge.

Hepner said Skamania County is helping out with the fire in Skamania County but currently there is no assistance from Klickitat County.

Tammy Kaufman said that Insitu has a number of employees involved. She said there is a Red Cross shelter established in Stevenson where RVs and pets are also being allowed. Kaufman said the shelter is providing 3 meals a day for any displaced residents. She said it is her understanding that at the current time, Red Cross has enough volunteers.

Izzy Schroder said she is wondering if the city is doing anything related to preparing for evacuations.

Betty Barnes said the council can discuss that under "Mayor's Update and Council Comments."

Approval of Meeting Minutes – August 15, 2017

Izzy Schroder moved to approve the meeting minutes of the August 15, 2017 regular council meeting as presented. Ryan O'Connor seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

Gorge Heritage Museum – Request to Extend Lease

Jan Brending said the Gorge Heritage Museum has a current lease that expires in April, 2018. She said the lease provides for a two-year renewal. Brending said she and the mayor are requesting that the lease be amended to include water and sewer utilities in those utilities the museum would pay for. She noted the Museum does not pay any rent to the city.

Betty Barnes noted that when the city entered into the original lease, the city attorney at that time expressed concerns that the museum not paying for the water and sewer utilities could be considered a gifting of funds.

Etta Hepner, president of the Gorge Heritage Museum, provided an overview of the history of the lease and the ongoing maintenance the museum has conducted. She noted that the current lease was approved by the city's attorney, the city council and the museum board. Hepner noted the lease calls for insurance of \$1 million but the city doubled those requirements without a change in the lease. She said information regarding water and sewer utility billing was provided to the museum recently but they have never been contacted about any "overages" in the past.

Jan Brending said the water and sewer utility billing history was provided to the museum to show what the billing for water and sewer had been for the last two years. She said there are no "overages" for water as every customer pays for all gallons of water used based on a usage fee. Brending said the city is not asking for any back payment because the water usage has been consistent from year-to-year.

The council discussed water and sewer billing. The average billing for a single-year would be approximately \$1,500. Catherine Kiewit suggested the city pay for the base fees and the museum be billed for any water usage and sewer overages.

Etta Hepner said \$1,500 is more than they make in fees. She said she would have to go back to the board to see if they are interested in paying the water and sewer utility billing if that is what the council desires.

Ryan O'Connor asked Chris Lanz why not charging rent is not considered a gifting of funds.

Chris Lanz said there is consideration given because the museum is maintaining the facility. He said the city is getting something for something.

Etta Hepner asked why couldn't the water and sewer utility billing also be a consideration.

Chris Lanz said it would be an exception because the city charges all other customers for water and sewer.

Catherine Kiewit noted that the city would likely be incurring water and sewer utility billing costs if the city had no tenant.

Chris Lanz said that could be a justification for not charging the museum for water and sewer.

Laura Mann asked if there were other things that needed to be changed in the lease. It was noted that the under the renewal clause the lease would remain as it exists currently.

Jan Brending said she is not aware that the city required a change in the insurance amount. She said it could have possibly come about when the museum was subleasing the facility for events. Brending said she believes that if this was a new lease, the city's risk management insurance would likely require the \$2 million amount.

Laura Mann said she does not feel it is necessary to change anything if the \$1 million insurance clause covers any requirements.

Catherine Kiewit moved to have the city continue to pay for all of the water and sewer utility billing based on the fact the city would be paying those bills if the property was vacant. Ryan O'Connor seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

Catherine Kiewit moved to table making a decision on the renewing the lease for a two-year period until the first meeting in October so additional information could be obtained regarding insurance requirements. Ryan O'Connor seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

Equipment Surplus Sale – 1969 Ford Fire Engine

Jan Brending reported that the 1969 Ford Fire Engine was advertised in The Enterprise, Gorge Classifieds, Craigslist, and on the city's web page. She said the city did not receive any bids. Brending noted however that a company is interested in purchasing the engine but was unable to submit a bid because they were moving equipment out of a fire zone.

Brending presented Resolution 2017-014, authorizing the surplus of the fire engine. She noted that at the last council meeting the council had approved the resolution. Brending said she is recommending the resolution be adopted without a minimum bid requirement. She also recommended a language change in Section 1 reading "The following item is to be surplus as directed by the Mayor and/or designee:" She said this will allow the mayor to sell the vehicle to a sole source if appropriate or to rebid the surplus.

Laura Mann moved to adopt Resolution 2017-014, Authorizing Surplus of Equipment No Longer Useable to the City with changes. Phil Jones seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

Treasurer's Report – July 2017

Jan Brending presented the Treasurer's Report for July 2017.

Laura Mann thanked Jan Brending for the work she does in preparing and maintaining the budget noting that she always prepares a conservative budget. She asked how the Real Estate Excise Tax funds can be used.

Brending said state law restricts those funds to being used for capital projects that are listed in the city's capital facilities plan in the broader comprehensive plan. She said the city's comprehensive plan needs updated as does the capital facilities plan.

Jan Brending said the city council will see a 2017 budget amendment at its next meeting. She said the budget committee needs to meet the 3rd week in September to begin working on the 2018 budget.

Laura Mann moved to accept the July 2017 Treasurer's Report. Izzy Schroder seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

Mayor's Update and Council Comments

Letter to Yakama Nation Regarding Tribal Property in Bingen

Betty Barnes said a letter has been written to the Yakama Nation regarding the conditions of the property at Pine and Humboldt.

Jan Brending said there has been no response to the letter.

Letter to McDonald's Corporation

Betty Barnes said a letter has been written to McDonald's regarding their property in Bingen. She said they did respond saying they are actively marketing the property.

Huckleberry Festival

Betty Barnes said the Huckleberry Festival is still scheduled to proceed this weekend. She noted they are still looking for volunteers.

Insitu Leadership Day

Betty Barnes said the trip with Insitu was a great event. She said it was a working event and everyone got to enjoy a launch of a ScanEagle.

Tammy Kaufman said Insitu feels it is important that community leaders know what Insitu does and is about.

City Water System

Jan Brending reported that the city experienced a SCADA (communications) failure in its water system on August 29. She said this caused the system to lose communication between the reservoir and its water sources. Brending said the old reservoir was overflowing while water continued to come into the system. She said this caused some damage at the top of the reservoir. Brending said she and David Spratt were in communication with Gray & Osborne and the State Department of Health. She said the city's engineers have determined that the reservoir is safe to be used. Brending said David has been manually operating the water sources to make sure the reservoir does not overflow again. She said he is keeping it at a slightly lower level than recommended by the engineers to be on the safe side.

Brending said the council will be presented with a request at their next meeting to replace the existing SCADA system and to authorize a loan application to USDA Rural Development for the replacement of the reservoir. She noted the city had previously applied to the state for a loan to replace the reservoir but was turned down. Brending said USDA Rural Development's application process is more open rather than relegated to a specific time of year.

Port of Klickitat

Laura Mann said she is wondering what is being done at the port.

Tammy Kaufman said she attended the port meeting prior to the attending the city council meeting. She said they are installing a walking path and believes it will be paved.

Bingen Overpass

Betty Barnes said Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) has been meeting with property owners who may be impacted by the proposed overpass or underpass. She said WSDOT has identified 3 locations where an underpass might be feasible. Barnes noted that at the present time the underpass options are cheaper than the overpass options.

The council discussed having an underpass with a roundabout located in town and how that might affect traffic patterns in the surrounding neighborhood. Catherine Kiewit said she met with WSDOT as her property would be impacted during construction. She said she had a lot of questions which were answered. Kiewit said it is a very interesting process.

Barnes noted that WSDOT will have a booth at the Huckleberry Festival to answer questions about the project and present information about the different concepts.

Emergency Management

Izzy Schroder asked if the city has a way of placing evacuation routes on its web page and asked who would be in charge in an emergency management situation.

Jan Brending noted that if a situation was large enough that it required evacuation of Bingen, the county's emergency manager, Jeff King, would be in charge. She said it is difficult to place specific evacuations routes on the city's web page as it would depend on the type of emergency and where it was located. Brending said these types of emergencies are different than tsunami evacuation routes which can be standardized for the specific community, moving people to high ground. She said it is important for people to sign up for the county's emergency notification system. Brending said the city places inserts in the city's utility billing several times a year and also includes it in some of the city's newsletters.

Izzy Schroder asked how people would communicate if all phones, including cell phones went down.

Jan Brending noted that it is recommended that survival kits for the home include a radio and batteries as radio might be the only communication source. She also noted that because Bingen is small, city employees and volunteers would also likely be going door to door to get information out or assisting in evacuations.

Betty Barnes noted that the city is looking into getting some walkie-talkie radios for that very purpose.

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 September 5, 2017. The council by unanimous vote does approve for payment the following list: check 19426 (dated 08/18/2017) totaling \$33,160.42. Water Capital Reserve Fund - \$33,160.42.

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 September 5, 2017. The council by unanimous vote does approve for payment the following list: check 19441-19442 (dated 08/31/2017) totaling \$2,284.86. Court Remittance Agency Fund - \$2,284.86.

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 September 5, 2017. The council by unanimous vote does approve for payment the following list: checks 19443-19478 (dated 09/05/2017) totaling \$87,907.19. General Fund - \$37,260.00; Street Fund - \$3,247.22, Water Fund - \$7,663.64; Sewer Fund - \$3,880.85; Treatment Plant Fund - \$5,464.47; Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund - \$30,391.01.

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 September 5, 2017. The council by unanimous vote does approve for payment the following list: EFT (dated 07/14/2017) totaling \$2,870.49. General Fund - \$1,202.64; Street Fund - \$507.73; Water Fund - \$344.89; Sewer Fund - \$59.88; Treatment Plant Fund - \$755.35.

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 September 5, 2017. The council by unanimous vote does approve for payment the following list: EFT, payroll checks 19427-19437 (dated 08/31/2017) totaling \$26,521.82. General Fund - \$12,157.92; Street Fund - \$4,006.95; Water Fund - \$2,856.05; Sewer Fund - \$506.12; Treatment Plant Fund - \$6,994.78.

The council adjourned 9:45 p.m.

City Clerk

Mayor