

BINGEN CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

July 5, 2017

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Betty J. Barnes at 7:00 p.m. Council members present: Catherine Kiewit (by telephone), Ryan O'Connor, Laura Mann. Council members absent: Stephanie Porter and Izzy Schroder. Staff present: City Administrator Jan Brending, City Attorney Chris Lanz, Police Chief Tracy Wyckoff. Audience present: Ken Park, Phil Jones, Carl Warren.

Public Comment

Carl Warren, Bingen

Carl Warren said he wanted to thank the fire department of watering down areas around town. He said he has also seen Bingen-White Salmon Police Department officers providing kind assistance. Warren said it is nice to the police out and about patrolling the community. He said he appreciates the services of the police department

Warren asked the council how they feel about the city's growth – is it good or bad.

Laura Mann said she recently attended a gathering at a residence in Bingen and met several new young couples who have moved to Bingen. She said she thinks that great things are happening in Bingen. Mann said she is excited about the Bingen School Inn project, particularly since there is a need for overnight lodging on this side of the river.

Warren asked with all the new businesses that are coming in, is the city taking the time to go through all the processes. He said he is excited about the new businesses and the anniversaries of businesses recently established in Bingen. Warren said he feels the city's park is a pretty special place to a lot of people.

Phil Jones, Bingen

Phil Jones said that he likes the way things are going and working in Bingen.

Bingen-White Salmon Police Department Update

Tracy Wyckoff said things were not bad during the 4th of July. He said there was one call in Bingen. Wyckoff noted there may have been other fireworks incidents that were not called into dispatch. He said he remained in Bingen until about 8:30 p.m. Wyckoff said fireworks going off may have picked up after the Port event finished.

Wyckoff said he is driving the new car which will remain unmarked at this time. He said that if the city receives any complaints about an unmarked car they can come to him to discuss the issue.

Betty Barnes noted there were quite a few fireworks going off in her neighborhood – more so than in the past. She said it was nice to have the fire department available as they would move a fire truck to an area where fireworks were going off which helped put a stop to the fireworks.

Laura Mann noted that the Tribal site has closed up for the season with tarps placed over the structures. She noted that with the wind those tarps have started blowing off onto other people's property.

Approval of Meeting Minutes – June 20, 2017

Changes to the minutes of the June 20, 2017 regular council meeting were noted as follows:

Page 1, 5th paragraph, last sentence should read: "Wyckoff noted that Pedro Virgen is doing really well and is an asset to the department in that he is bilingual."

Page 1, 8th paragraph should read: "Jan Brending noted that in a discussion with Leana Johnson she expressed Bingen's support for 5 officers. She noted that there are changes occurring to how the city's share of retirement for police officers will be calculated. Brending said in the past the state has paid a portion of the city's share but that will no longer happen beginning July 1, 2017. She said it could have a significant impact on the department's budget. Brending said it is her understanding when renegotiating the interlocal agreement last year, it was based on 6 employees for the department not 7."

Page 2, 14th paragraph should read: "Page 5, 1st paragraph, add the following sentence: 'Stephanie Porter noted she will not be present as she will be out of town.'"

Page 3, 13th paragraph, last sentence should read: "Mann said no one approached her regarding combining the two cities. She said when solicited opinions were offered."

Page 4, 8th paragraph, first sentence should read: “Chris Lanz said he can identify with and respect everything he has heard.”

Catherine Kiewit moved to approve the meeting minutes of the June 20, 2017 regular council meeting as corrected. Ryan O’Connor seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

Public Hearing – Proposed 6-Year Transportation Improvement Program

Betty Barnes opened the public hearing on the proposed 6-Year Transportation Improvement Program.

Betty Barnes and Jan Brending provided an overview of the program and the projects that area currently included. It was noted that depending on the availability of funds, both city and grant funding, projects can move up in priority. It was also noted that projects can be added to the program through an amendment. Projects associated with traffic calming may be added in the fall after information is provided to the council for review.

Phil Jones, Bingen

Phil Jones said it sounds like the program is very fluid and that several lower priority projects could be done before a higher more costly project.

Betty Barnes closed the public hearing.

Proposed Resolution 2017-011, Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program, 2018-2023

Laura Mann moved to adopt Resolution 2017-011, Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program for 2018-2023. Ryan O’Connor seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

Proposed Resolution 2017-012, Authorizing Interfund Loan to the Water Capital Reserve Fund from the Sewer Capital Reserve Fund in the Amount of \$71,000 and Setting Repayment and Interest Calculations

Jan Brending said the proposed resolution authorizes a \$71,000 interfund loan to the water capital reserve fund from the sewer capital reserve fund to cover the costs of the Underwood Fruit Vault and Meter Replacement project. Brending provided updated interest rates and payment calculations based on the state’s Local Investment Pool June 30, 2017 investment rates. She said the interest rate is 0.9863% with the first year payment of \$35,500 in principal and \$700.27 in interest and the second year payment of \$35,500 in principal and \$350.14 in interest.

The council asked that the language in the second and third “whereas” clauses be revised as follows: “Whereas, the City of Bingen has entered into contracts with Gray & Osborne and Artistic Excavation; and Whereas, the City of Bingen has determined that additional funds are necessary to meet the obligations to Artistic Excavation and Gray & Osborne; and”.

Jan Brending noted the budget includes the interfund loan.

Laura Mann moved to approve Resolution 2017-012, Authorizing Interfund Loan to the Water Capital Reserve Fund from the Sewer Capital Reserve Fund in the Amount of \$71,000 and Setting Repayment and Interest Calculations as corrected. Ryan O’Connor seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

Process for Increasing Council Member and Mayor Salaries

Jan Brending provided information to the council regarding the process for increasing council member and mayor salaries.

Catherine Kiewit said she has raised the idea of providing a more attractive compensation package for council members as a way to attract more candidates for the vacant positions. She said that if the city was able to offer more compensation then it might allow a different demographic to participate in serving on the council. Kiewit said a higher compensation amount might provide a trade-off if they were working a part-time job that was needed for income and was preventing them from serving on council. She noted that current council members are not doing it for the money.

Laura Mann said she wonders if it would really make a difference or if the people who are interested are really doing it as a volunteer service. She said she would like to ask some people in Bingen that question.

Carl Warren, Bingen

Carl Warren asked if a council member could donate the salary back to the council.

Betty Barnes and Jan Brending said yes but the salary would first be paid to the council member and then the council member would donate the amount back to the city.

Betty Barnes said she does not think residents who are working a part-time job that may involve night work would give up that job for a position that meets twice a month.

The council discussed a range of possible increases. Jan Brending suggested that when the budget process begins it includes looking at an increase in council members and possibly the mayor salaries. It was noted that the increase in council members' salaries must take place prior to the November election.

Mayor's Update and Council Comments

Map of the City

Ryan O'Connor asked if there is a map of the city that could be placed on the wall in the council meeting room.

Betty Barnes and Jan Brending said there are a couple that could be put up on the wall.

Tree Inventory

Ryan O'Connor said he is impressed with the trees on Steuben. He asked if the city has an arborist.

Jan Brending said the city has hired arborists in the past – once to inventory the city's street and park trees and most recently to help assist with tree maintenance. She said it has been the council's desire to hire an arborist to develop the specifications for tree maintenance and to provide oversight for the company that is hired separately to do the actual maintenance.

Ryan O'Connor asked if the city has ever considered doing an inventory of every tree in the city.

The council discussed the possibility of conducting an inventory. It was noted the city currently does not provide funding to citizens for tree maintenance although it might be possible to establish a grant program that might be available to citizens to address problematic trees.

Bingen-White Salmon Police Department Staffing

Ryan O'Connor said he was wondering if the Klickitat County Sheriff's Office and/or the Washington State Patrol could assist the Bingen-White Salmon Police Department when they are short staffed.

Betty Barnes said both departments provide mutual aid when it is needed.

Jan Brending said because of staffing levels and department mandates it is not possible for the departments to provide dedicated officers to the Bingen-White Salmon Police Department when they are short staffed.

Laura Mann said she would like the city to send a letter congratulating Mike Hepner on his promotion and offering support for five officers and a chief position.

Catherine Kiewit said she likes that idea.

Laura Mann said that she does not support increasing the contract amount if White Salmon continues with a five officers and a police chief. She said she believes the city entered into a contract for service and there is no change in that service. Mann noted that if state laws are changed that affect the cost of running the department that may be different.

Park Trees

Laura Mann noted that the new Sequoia trees in the park seem really dry.

Betty Barnes said that is on her list to discuss with staff. She also noted there are some problems with some of the landscaping on Steuben being dry.

Independence Eve Celebration

Betty Barnes said the Independence Eve celebration was a great event. She said there was approximately 100 people in attendance. Barnes noted that Pedro Virgen spoke about what the 4th of July meant to him.

Bingen Overpass Update

Betty Barnes and Jan Brending said Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT) continues to evaluate possible locations for the overpass. It was noted that WSDOT will be mailing out a survey in August. Jan Brending said she has suggested using Huckleberry Festival as a way to disseminate information and obtain comments with a possible follow-up open house in October or early November 2017.

Bingen School Inn

Betty Barnes said a public relations firm has been hired to develop announcements about the project. She said the business is expected to open in the summer of 2019.

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 July 5, 2017. The council by unanimous vote does approve for payment the following list: EFT, checks 19306-19336 (dated 07/05/2017) totaling \$107,204.39. General Fund - \$35,135.30; Street - \$2,581.97; Water Fund - \$6,335.24; Sewer Fund - \$2,262.71; Treatment Plant Fund - \$4,227.35; Water Construction & Maintenance Fund - \$56,661.82.

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 July 5, 2017. The council by unanimous vote does approve for payment the following list: checks 19304-19305 (dated 06/30/2017) totaling \$971.71. Court Remittance Fund - \$971.71.

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 July 5, 2017. The council by unanimous vote does approve for payment the following list: EFT, payroll checks 19299-19303 (dated 06/30/2017) totaling \$24,796.52. General Fund - \$11,726.44; Street - \$3,647.07; Water Fund - \$2,714.35; Sewer Fund - \$463.39; Treatment Plant Fund - \$6,245.27.

The council adjourned 9:13 p.m.

City Clerk

Mayor