**BINGEN CITY COUNCIL MINUTES**

**January 23, 2024 Special Meeting**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Catherine Kiewit at 5:31 pm. Council members present: Phil Jones, Ryan O’Connor, Brittany Spratt, Michael Stahl, and Craig Trummel.. Staff present: City Administrator Krista Loney. Guests present: None.

The Bingen City Council has two new members since last year: Michael Stahl and Craig Trummel. The group did some “getting to know you” ice breakers

**A Look Back – 2023 Achievements**

The top five short-term priorities for 2023 identified by the City Council were:

1. Park improvements to Daubenspeck – Goal achieved! New park equipment was installed and the footprint of the playground expanded.
2. Revising the Comprehensive Plan – Goal in progress, one component at a time. The housing component will be completed under the middle housing grant.
3. Installing a permanent bus stop with weather protection and art at 400 W Steuben – Applied for a grant through AARP for bus shelters and were not awarded. Planning to apply again under another opportunity.
4. Developing/offering free municipal wifi – No progress made.
5. Water/sewer rate study - Goal achieved!

The top five long-term priorities in 2023 identified by the City Council were:

1. Adding a pedestrian walkway/bike trail along 141 between Bingen and White Salmon – This is a Complete Streets project and is WSDOT’s responsibility. Design work will come in 2025 and the project will take some time due to extensive design, necessary right of way purchase, etc.
2. Installing sidewalks throughout Bingen – Goal in progress. Bingen was awarded Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds for design on Alder and Cedar.
3. Establishing a railroad Quiet Zone – Goal in progress. Bingen must complete the roundabout and underpass project to ascertain how much funding is available for the quiet zone.
4. Building a Community Center – This is a long-term goal.
5. Hydrogen Sulfide Mitigation – Once the Oak Street Reservoir project is over Bingen can do a taste and odor study to see what else can be done.

Council reviewed the vision statement for Bingen:

*Bingen is a vibrant, friendly, walkable town nestled in the heart of the Columbia River Gorge. We are proud of what makes our community unique: our entrepreneurial and working-class spirit, having cultural & economic diversity, our proximity to outdoor recreation, providing a range of housing choices, and being a collaborative partner for regional services.  We envision planning and policy directives which preserve Bingen’s authenticity, history, and natural environment with consideration for equity and long-term livability.*

Council remains committed to this mission. Administrator Loney will add it to the website.

Council identified these items as the top short-term priorities for 2024:

1. Community involvement survey and then hosting responsive event(s)
2. Installing flashing beacons at crosswalks on SR-14 and SR-141
3. Placing bus shelter at the lot at 400 W Steuben
4. Working on the Bingen comprehensive plan which must be updated and adopted no later than June 30. 2027
5. Free municipal WiFi in Bingen

Council identified these items as the top long-term priorities:

1. Establishing a railroad quiet zone
2. Bike/Pedestrian path along SR-141 between Bingen and White Salmon
3. Hydrogen Sulfide Mitigation
4. A pavilion in Daubenspeck/cover the basketball court
5. Sidewalks in Bingen, at least one street that has sidewalks all the way from one end of Bingen to the other
6. A community center
7. A Bingen recycle/compost center/community garden

The council adjourned at 8:04 pm.