**BINGEN CITY COUNCIL MINUTES**

**November 21, 2023**

**Meeting Via Teleconference and In-Person**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Catherine Kiewit at 7:00 p.m.

Council members present: Phil Jones, Ryan O’Connor, and Brittany Spratt. Staff present: City Attorney Chris Lanz, City Administrator Krista Loney, Officer Garique Clifford. Audience present: Michael Stahl, Craig Trummel, Kevin Driscoll, Paul Rudinsky

Councilor Jones stated that there is a lot on the agenda and made a motion to limit every agenda item to 10 minutes maximum. Councilor Spratt provided the second and the motion carried.

**Public Comment**

None.

**Meeting Minutes – 11/7/2023**

Councilor O’Connor made a motion to approve the meeting minutes as presented. Councilor Jones provided the second and the motion carried.

**McKenzie River Subdivision Preliminary Plat**

Administrator Loney provided a memo and the McKenzie River subdivision preliminary plat. The plat has been reviewed by Mandy Hertel with Skamania County Planning and by Administrator Loney, Public Works Superintendent David Spratt, and Mayor Kiewit. Administrator Loney has approval authority for the subdivision and Council has final approval, so Loney requests Council’s approval to the preliminary plat. Paul Rudinsky stated that there is a need for housing and that the development is somewhat hampered by the cliffs at the back of the property and the location of the water main. He feels that the plat is a good layout and offered his appreciation to the City for working with them.

Mayor Kiewit asked what ultimately happens. Loney explained that Bingen municipal code mandates that the final plat must be approved by Council and submitted to Klickitat County within 3 years of completion.

Councilor Jones made a motion to approve the preliminary plat for this McKenzie River subdivision. Councilor Spratt provided the second and the motion carried.

**Public Hearing Revenue Sources for 2024 Budget**

Mayor Kiewit opened the public hearing at 7:08 p.m. Administrator Loney provided a memo to Council outlining the three items that are part of the ad valorem tax process: the ordinance, the levy certification form, and the levy contacts sheet. Loney explained that the Klickitat County Assessor’s office reviewed and approved the paperwork prior to it being presented to Council.

Ordinance 2023-14-747 Ad valorem taxes raises the property tax by the maximum of 1% which amounts to an increase in the amount of $2,527.03 in revenue. There was no public comment and Mayor Kiewit closed the public hearing at 7:12 p.m. Councilor Spratt made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2023-14-747 Ad Valorem Taxes. Councilor Jones provided the second and the motion carried.

Council was asked to come to consensus on the City of Bingen sewer rates for 2024. Loney explained that Ordinance 2020-02-707 allows for sewer rates to increase 5% each year, rounded to the nearest dollar. At the rate study workshop, the sewer fund was identified as healthy, and a rate increase isn’t necessary for 2024. Council came to consensus that the sewer rates will not increase for 2024. Administrator Loney will craft an ordinance for public hearing at the December 19, 2023 Council meeting.

**Public Works Board East Steuben Waterline Section 1 Grant Application**

Administrator Loney provided a memo to Council regarding the planned application for Emergency funds to replace the two-inch waterline from approximately 200 to 400 east Steuben. The application requires that the waterline be on Bingen’s Capital Improvement Plan, which has not been revised in 2023 until this time.

Administrator Loney walked Council through the Capital Improvement Plan and Councilor Jones made a motion to adopt the current version. Councilor Spratt provided the second and the motion carried.

The Public Works Board also requires an Applicant Certification. Councilor Jones made a motion to adopt Resolution 2023-018 Public Works Board Applicant Certification. Councilor Spratt provided the second and the motion carried.

The Public Works Board also requires a Preparers Certification. Councilor Jones made a motion to adopt Resolution 2023-019 Public Works Board Preparers Certification. Councilor Spratt provided the second and the motion carried.

**Continued Public Hearing – Ordinance 2023-13-746 Stopping, Standing, Parking**

Mayor Kiewit opened the continued public hearing for Ordinance 2023-13-746 Stopping, Standing, Parking at 7:28 p.m. This hearing was continued from the November 7, 2023 meeting. The purpose of reviewing this chapter of the Bingen Municipal Code is to more closely align with both State of Washington code and with White Salmon code. Administrator Loney provided a memo to Council stating that City Attorney Chris Lanz agrees that adding definitions in section 10.14.020Q is recommended. There was extensive discussion around 10.14.060C with parking a recreational vehicle, camper, or motorhome in City right of way. This is allowed with a permit for up to 14 days in BMC 10.14.080. The public hearing was closed at 7:51 p.m.

Councilor Jones made a motion to adopted Ordinance 2023-13-746 with corrections. Councilor Spratt provided the second and the motion carried.

**City Council Candidate Interviews**

Bingen City Council position number four is vacant. Michael Stahl and Craig Trummel submitted applications and were interviewed at the meeting. Each candidate shared their background in Bingen, the reason they are interested in serving, and their thoughts about how to implement diversity, equity and inclusion in Bingen.

Councilor Spratt made a motion to appoint Michael Stahl. Councilor Jones provided the second and the motion carried. Council position number two will be vacant as of January 1, 2024 and Craig Trummel was asked to return at that time.

**October 2023 Treasurers Report**

Administrator Loney provided the coversheet and Treasurers Report for October 2023, all is as it should be with Bingen’s books. Councilor Jones made a motion to approve the October 2023 Treasurers Report. Councilor Spratt provided the second and the motion carried.

**Staff Updates**

Administrator Loney had the following updates for Council:

* The SAO supervisory team is working on final review of Bingen’s 2021-2022 audit.
* Mayor Kiewit, David Spratt and Loney met with White Salmon today about the waterline improvements. Bingen’s share will be $310,000, not $1.8M as previously discussed. This information has already been sent to Ashley Emery. White Salmon asked for the ERU rate to increase over time instead of going up this year and next year and then back down for 2026. Ashley is working on this, and he and Loney will connect early next week.
* Loney followed up again with the Amtrak platform. The handrail people will be installing next week, then the fence will come down and the project will be done.
* The meeting with Loney, Frank and Nancy Wetch about the O&M manual went well. Nancy will make her edits and send a revision to Frank for another review.
* Loney is working with J&J Overhead Door on a quote for the fire department.
* Bingen has signed an agreement with Riverside Electric out of White Salmon to repair the electric to 8 trees on Steuben that have ribbons on them. Public Works plans to put up the tree lights on November 29 and decorate the tree in Daubenspeck on December 1.
* Loney is working on a HB 1168 grant application for the fire department for wildland turnouts, a wildland shelter, and wildland tools. Due date is December 15.
* At an all staff meeting on 11/17 Loney shared a graph with staff about how Bingen spends its money.
* Loney will be out of the office on vacation November 22, and December 26-30. None of these will impact council.

**Mayor’s Update and Council Comments**

Mayor Kiewit announced that Santa in the Park will be on Saturday, December 22. There will be a ribbon cutting, perhaps on the early-release Wednesday before winter break. The last day for Brush pickup is November 22.

Councilor O’Connor stated that his collaboration with White Salmon about water and sewer improvements is going great. He would like to set up some type of meeting or recurring data sharing to keep both cities in touch with what the other is doing. O’Connor plans to visit with Frank and the Wastewater Treatment Plant team sometime soon and will include Jason Hartman from White Salmon and whoever else would like to join.

**Voucher Approval**

Payroll Checks (Dated 11/15/2023) and Payroll EFT (Dated 11/15/2023) totaling $32,965.37; General Fund - $11,101.14, Street Fund - $5,535.37, Water Fund - $3,160.76, Sewer Fund - $952.50 and Treatment Plant Fund - $12,395.60.

Councilor Jones made a motion to approve the Payroll dated November 15, 2023. Councilor Spratt seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Claims Checks (Dated 11/21/2023) totaling $28,175.52; General Fund - $18,183.99, Street Fund - $2,026.06, Hotel/Motel Tax Fund - $2,198.50, Park Construction & Maintenance Fund - $275.02, Water Fund - $2,475.11, Sewer Fund - $892.73, and Treatment Plant Fund - $2,124.11.

Councilor Spratt made a motion to approve the Claims dated November 21, 2023. Councilor Jones

seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

**Adjournment**

Mayor Kiewit adjourned the meeting at 8:32 p.m.