**BINGEN CITY COUNCIL MINUTES**

**February 20, 2024**

**Meeting Via Teleconference and In-Person**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Catherine Kiewit at 6:00 p.m.

Council members present: Phil Jones, Ryan O’Connor, Brittany Spratt, Michael Stahl and Craig Trummel. Staff present: Bingen-White Salmon Police Officer Garique Clifford, City Attorney Chris Lanz, City Administrator Krista Loney. Audience present: Kip Miller, Tammara Tippel.

**Public Comment**

None.

**Meeting Minutes – 2/6/2024**

Councilor Spratt made a motion to adopt the February 6, 2024 meeting minutes. Councilor Jones provided the second and the motion carried.

**Art of Community/NorthShore Community Foundation Presentation – Art Placement in Bingen**

Kip Miller and Tammara Tippel provided a document to Council outlining their plans for Big Art in Bingen. The NorthShore Community Foundation is the 501(c)(3) arm of the Mt. Adams Chamber of Commerce and they joined with Art of Community to participate in this successful program.

Kip and Tammara came to Council with two asks.

Ask 1: Approval of the southeast corner of Steuben and Oak Street as the installation location for the Oh Joy of Joys Statue

Kip Miller stated that Art of Community would work with a master installer to place the concrete pad and handle solar uplighting. Art of Community’s insurance would cover any damages. Councilor Stahl inquired about maintenance responsibility. Kip Miller stated that Art of Community volunteers would take care of simple maintenance and insurance would cover repair of any vandalism.

The Oh Joy of Joys statue would remain at this location in a permanent capacity. Art of Community pieces stay in their location for two years at a time and then are replaced with new art. The cost to have art at each location is $3000 that is split with $1500 going to the artist as a stipend and $1500 going to Art of Community for installation costs and overhead costs. Art of Community plans to recruit business sponsors for each art piece. Tippel stated that she hopes to create a walking map of Bingen under a separate grant, similar to the Visit White Salmon published maps, which has the art installations identified as destinations to visit.

The group traveled from Council Chambers to the southeast corner of Steuben and Oak to look at the proposed installation spot. Mayor Kiewit voiced concerns about possible damage from a snowplow and Tippel suggested putting the snow-measuring sticks used by WSDOT in during the winter. Art of Community will need to work with Superintendent of Public Works David Spratt to see what irrigation, power, or other lines run under the proposed location.

Councilor Trummel is in favor of installing the piece in the eastern side of the bulb-out. Councilor Jones is in favor of either that location or the bulb-out closer to the corner. Councilor O’Connor is in favor of the eastern location. Councilor Stahl is in favor of either location. Councilor Spratt is in favor of either location. Council came to consensus that the Oh Joy of Joys statue is allowable to be installed on the requested corner.

Ask 2: Approval to consider Daubenspeck Park as a second location for art installation

The document that was provided showcased some other Art of Community pieces that could be installed at Daubenspeck Park if Council would consider it. Mayor Kiewit inquired if this would come at an additional cost to the city. Tippel stated that Art of Community will find a sponsor. Mayor Kiewit asked if there was a plan to approach the Port of Klickitat. Tippel stated that there was not. Mayor Kiewit suggested a piece in the commercial land that is currently for sale by Dickey Farms. Tippel stated that the location is too temporary at this time as it will eventually be purchased. Council came to consensus that they would consider an installation in Daubenspeck Park.

Mayor Kiewit inquired if either the City of Hood River or Port of Hood River have a memorandum of understanding in place with Art of Community. Kip Miller said that he would look into this with the Art of Community board and let Mayor Kiewit know. The City of Bingen will want a memorandum of understanding in place that outlines the responsibilities of Art of Community and those of the City regarding the art installations. This MOU will need to be in place before any installation work occurs.

**Police Update**

Officer Garique Clifford attended the meeting and shared January 2023 and January 2024 crime data for Bingen and White Salmon. Officer Clifford stated that the notification flyer alerting those who live in Washington and illegally register their cars in Oregon has been working; several people have voluntarily registered their cars in Washington. Officer Clifford stated that parking enforcement is going well and that most problem vehicles have been moved off city streets.

Councilor Jones thanked Officer Clifford for the work especially the problem vehicles. Mayor Kiewit inquired about the increase in calls between January 2023 and January 2024 and asked if this was a trend or a weird coincidence. Officer Clifford stated that it was a weird month and that there were 16 alarm calls in White Salmon that were all the same alarm going off repeatedly. There were also 6 motor vehicle accidents because of the snow.

Officer Clifford announced that Officer McIlwain has submitted her two weeks’ notice that she will be leaving the police force. A recruitment will begin as soon as possible.

**Resolution 2024-002 Adopting the 2024 Bingen Water System Plan**

Administrator Loney provided a memo to Council stating that the Water System Plan was submitted to the Washington State Department of Health in September 2022, received back in summer of 2023 with comments, and resubmitted to Health in September of 2023. Health responded with comments mid-January. Those comments included a request for the meeting minutes for the public hearing about the water system plan, the signed resolution adopting the water system plan, the final plan, and signed meeting minutes from the meeting at which the plan was adopted.

Neither Councilor Stahl nor Councilor Trummel were present at the meeting where Gray and Osborne presented the water system plan. Administrator Loney will send them the link to view the presentation. Both Councilors were comfortable with the recommendation to adopt the plan.

Councilor Spratt made a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-002 Adopting the 2024 Bingen Water System Plan. Councilor O’Connor provided the second and the motion carried.

**Public Hearing Ordinance 2024-04-753 Amending the 2024 Budget**

Mayor Kiewit opened the public hearing at 7:02 p.m. Administrator Loney provided a memo, draft budget amendment, and associated ordinance to Council. The changes to the budget are largely updating 2024 beginning balances to align with 2023 ending balances, adding a bit of projected investment interest, and updating 2024 ending balances according to the budget. Council walked through the changes line by line. Mayor Kiewit closed the public hearing at 7:16 p.m.

Councilor Jones made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2024-04-753 Amending the City of Bingen 2024 Budget. Councilor Spratt provided the second and the motion carried.

**WSDOT Agreement Review – Bingen Point Water and Sewer Design**

Administrator Loney prepared a memo for Council regarding the two agreements with WSDOT to cover projects being designed by Gray and Osborne.

Project 1 is the Bingen Point Access Water and Sewer Line Engineering. Loney explained that the contract with Gray and Osborne is already in place and work has commenced. The financial responsibility for this work belongs to WSDOT and in order to bill for this work an agreement needs to be put in place.

Councilor O’Connor made a motion to authorize Mayor Catherine Kiewit to sign the Utility Preliminary Engineering Agreement Work by Utility – WSDOT Cost document. Councilor Jones provided the second and the motion carried.

Project 2 is the East Steuben Waterline Section 1 Undercrossing. The WSDOT agreement was not ready at the time of the council meeting.

**Staff Updates**

Administrator Loney reviewed the project status reports for the month and had the following additional updates for Council:

* Bingen’s water right that was supposed to be updated by 12/31/2019, which the City was made aware of in late 2022, has now been extended until 2034. Official paperwork from DOE has been received.
* Fire Hall door replacement will cost approximately $10,000, will be covered by RMSA insurance, and the work will be done by J&J Overhead Door. The door is on order.
* Loney is working on the following grant applications:
  + Secretary of State: $27,500 for digitization of records. Submitted 2/13/24. We should hear by June 1, 2024.
  + AARP: $25,000 for bus shelters. Due 3/6, we should hear June 26.
  + COAF: $100,000 pre-application for repairs to skate park. We should hear if we are invited to submit further application by May 10, 2024.
  + WSDOT Regional Mobility: $50,000 for bus shelters. Pre-application due March 4. Actual application due June 25, 2024.
  + TIB Complete Streets Early Grant: $TBD for RRFD across SR-14, application due 3/1. Funds must be spent by 12/31; meeting with WSDOT and G&O this Thursday to see if schedule can be met.
  + USDA RD Rural Business Development Grant: $38500 for Amtrak platform information kiosk, murals on Beneventi’s and WAGAP, over-street signage and holiday display.
  + Humanities Washington: $5,000 for Centennial Sense of Place event. We should hear by 4/8.
* Bingen was awarded $3726 from the South Central Workforce Incumbent Worker Training program to help support travel costs for the OITs in-person trainings.
* Loney is Working on 2023 SAO report. Plan to convene Budget committee in early March to review progress to date. Due May 30, 2024.
* Loney has ten of the eleven chapters of BMC Title 3 ready for public hearing at the March 5, 2024 council meeting.
* Loney, Mayor Kiewit, Councilor Stahl and Councilor O’Connor had great meeting today with White Salmon leadership about planned improvements to the WWTP. Loney will procure data and set follow-up meeting for early June.
* Community Cleanup will be Friday and Saturday April 26 and 27 this year. Committee has already begun meeting.

**Mayor’s Update and Council Comments**

Mayor Kiewit stated that anyone who hasn’t been to see the 50 Photos and 100 Years of Bingen on the Columbia installation at the White Salmon library should see it. It will remain installed until February 29, 2024. The Gorge Heritage Museum would like to give one of the framed photos to the City of Bingen. Councilors should recommend one or two of their favorites to Mayor Kiewit for selection.

Mayor Kiewit and Administrator Loney are meeting on March 6, 2024 with the Go Forth carshare team. The car in Bingen now isn’t “our” car because the Bingen car is in the shop again. The car in Bingen presently is on loan from another location; it doesn’t have snow tires or the breeze by transponder. Councilor Spratt stated that there is someone at WAGAP who is struggling to get registered to use the car and isn’t hearing back from Go Forth.

Mayor Kiewit is a member of the Hood River-White Salmon bridge aesthetics committee. This involves approximately 35-40 people and is focused on beautification and appearance of the bridge.

Mayor Kiewit stated that Mike Briggs with WSDOT contacted her to make her aware that the roundabout and underpass schedule has slipped. The original advertisement date was April 22, 2024. The new date will be late May at the earliest and is likely to be in September with work to begin in 2025.

Mayor Kiewit notified Council that she requested another extension with the judge overseeing the Utilities and Transportation Committee (UTC) petition that Bingen had filed for the roundabout and underpass project. Anytime a project like this impacts the railroad the UTC must approve the plans. At present WSDOT and BNSF are working well together and would like to get the Construction and Maintenance agreement in place by late May at the latest. Once this is done, a new petition can be submitted and BNSF is expected to waive their right to a hearing.

Councilor O’Connor stated that the meeting with White Salmon about the Treatment Plant was really positive. He added that the general consensus is that the original interlocal agreement for the Treatment Plant [from 1991] needs to be updated to better plan for managing capacity and how to allocate capacity and apportion expenses. Both Bingen and White Salmon will provide additional data to flesh out the population model and possibly add in Pucker Huddle to the White Salmon sewer system.

**Voucher Approval**

Payroll Checks (Dated 2/15/2024) and Payroll EFT (Dated 2/15/2024) totaling $32,531.68; General Fund - $11,088.40, Street Fund - $5,225.39, Water Fund - $3,164.41, Sewer Fund - $978.30, and Treatment Plant Fund - $12,075.18

Councilor Jones made a motion to approve the Payroll dated February 15, 2024. Councilor Trummel seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Claims Checks (Dated 2/20/2024) totaling $31,887.72; General Fund - $8,254.91, Street Fund - $1,806.63, Water Fund - $12,197.74, Sewer Fund - $1,277.07, Treatment Plant Fund - $6,068.70, and Sewer Capital Reserve Fund - $2,282.67.

Councilor Trummel made a motion to approve the Claims dated February 20, 2024. Councilor Jones seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**Adjournment**

Mayor Kiewit adjourned the meeting at 8:11 p.m.