**BINGEN CITY COUNCIL MINUTES**

**March 7, 2023**

**Meeting Via Teleconference and In-Person**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Catherine Kiewit at 6:30 p.m.

Council members present: Phil Jones, Ryan O’Connor, Izzy Schroder, Joseph O’Sullivan, and Brittany Spratt. Staff present: City Administrator Krista Loney, City Attorney Christopher R Lanz., Fire Chief Carl Spratt

Audience Present: Frazier Woodruff

**Executive Session**

Council went into executive session at 6:30 to discuss potential litigation per RCW 42.30.110.

**Public Comment**

Frazier Woodruff, a Bingen resident, discovered that the septic for his home is connected to his neighbor, as opposed to connecting to the city sewer. This has resulted in legal liabilities and a dispute with his neighbor. He asked for the City to waive the $2,000 sewer connection fee. Mayor Kiewit clarified that the council is not required to respond during public comment and asked him to submit the request in written form or ask for space on the agenda at a future meeting. Councilor O’Connor asked Frazier Woodruff for a copy of the notes he presented.

**Meeting Minutes – 2/21/2023**

Councilor Spratt identified two changes:

1. Under the Shoreline Master Program item, “A resolution o the city of Bingen,” the o needs to be changed to “of.”
2. Under the second paragraph of the Shoreline Master Program item, “Administrator Lone” needs to be corrected to “Administrator Loney.”

Councilor Jones made a motion to approve the February 21, 2023 meeting minutes with changes. Councilor O’Connor provided the second, and the motion carried. Councilors O’Sullivan and Schroder abstained from the vote as they were not in attendance of February 21, 2023.

**Fire Update**

Fire Chief Spratt provided a summary of the 27 calls for service in February. The fire department trainees in the EMT program are on their last month of classes, and some of the trainees have been pulling shifts with a local ambulance crew. The BFD was awarded a $100,000 grant from the Department of Natural Resources and it will be used to replace the transmission in Brush 37 (mechanic in Gresham), the transmission in Engine 5 (local mechanic), and purchase new radio equipment.

**Police Update**

Police Chief Hepner was not able to attend the meeting due to other obligations. He provided a service report for February of 2023.

**Energy Northwest Commerce Grant Interlocal Agreement**

Administrator Loney provided a memo and a copy of the draft interlocal agreement with Energy Northwest to install a Level 3 DC fast charger for an electric vehicle. Loney explained that Energy Northwest wasn’t awarded the earlier round of this particular grant from the Washington State Department of Commerce and isn’t eligible for the second round, but the City is eligible. Bingen, Goldendale, and Stevenson have each written a grant application in partnership with Energy Northwest and all applications are contingent on the others getting funded. The City will receive either an encourage or discourage to apply for the full grant. Energy Northwest would like the interlocal agreement in place prior to the initial ruling by Commerce. If the grant is awarded, Bingen will need to provide $19,300 in cash match. This cash match will entitle the City to 50% of the charging proceeds from the station.

Councilor Schroder made a motion to authorize Mayor Kiewit to sign the interlocal agreement with Energy Northwest. Councilor O’Connor provided the second and the motion carried.

**Forth Host Site Agreement Review and Approval**

Administrator Loney provided a memo and a copy of the draft host site agreement with Forth for the electric vehicle under the ZAP grant. The agreement spells out the financial responsibilities of each partner. Councilor Jones made a motion to authorize Mayor Kiewit to sign the agreement. Councilor O’Sullivan provided the second and the motion carried.

**Small Works Roster – Street Lights Contract**

Administrator Loney provided a memo, the scope of work, the quote and cover email, and the bid tabulation for the project. The only bid was submitted by Coburn Electric and must be awarded to them. Councilor Jones made a motion to accept the bid and award the Small Works Roster – Street Lights contract to Coburn Electric. Councilor O’Connor provided the second, and the motion carried.

**Small Works Roster – Tree Maintenance Contract**

Administrator Loney provided a memo, the scope of work, the three quotes and cover emails, and the bid tabulation for the project. Two of the three bidders are not on the current roster and therefore were disqualified. Klickitat Tree Operations was the only eligible bidder and the contract must be awarded to them. Councilor Schroder made a motion to award the Small Works Roster – Tree Maintenance contract to Klickitat Tree Operations. Councilor Jones provided the second and the motion carried.

**Planning Fee Discussion**

Administrator Loney provided a memo to council outlining the fees collected for conditional use permits (CUPs) and variance applications in 2022 ($600), the total costs for these applications in 2022 ($2,766.56), and the current fees for CUPs and variances in other municipalities. The highest CUP cost on the list of cities was $1,870 for a quasi-judicial CUP in Anacortes. The highest variance cost on the list of cities was $1,650 in Leavenworth.

Councilor Jones stated that he appreciates the way that the City of Pateros handles both CUPs and variances ($250 plus consulting fees, legal fees, postage and advertising). Mayor Kiewit stated that she likes the idea of a pre-conference that White Salmon does. Councilor O’Connor countered that the pre-conference should be free so as not to be a barrier. Councilor O’Sullivan stated that a pre-conference should have at least a nominal fee because when things are free people don’t value them. Council discussed a base fee of $300 that includes two hours of consulting and additional billed at the current rate. Administrator Loney asked for a continuation due to the late hour. Councilor Jones made a motion to continue this discussion to a future meeting. Councilor Schroder provided the second and the motion carried.

**Staff Reports**

Administrator Loney presented the following updates:

* Bingen has an opportunity to apply for funding through the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) for design for the Bingen-White Salmon Shared Use Path along 141. The meeting with WSDOT and White Salmon revealed that the shared use path is a Complete Streets responsibility. Bingen is considering applying for the TAP funds for design money for sidewalks.
* Loney reached out to Wildwood Playgrounds for a refreshed quote, which was not responsive at all. Loney asked David Spratt to put together a list of effort and expense that it would take to expand the footprint of the play area itself.
* The salary survey data for mayor and council salaries is being presented to fire board on 3/28/2023 and to council at the March 21 meeting.

**Mayor’s Update**

Mayor Kiewit stated that Bingen is going to apply for a grant from AARP for bus shelters. She spoke with Sharon at Mount Adams Transportation Services and Kathy at the Mid-Columbia Economic Development District.

Mayor Kiewit met with the Hood River Port Commission and Bi-State Working Group. The BSWG voiced concern about the need for the bridge toll increase. The BSWG made a recommendation the Port Commission to reduce their dependency on tolls to fund all of the non-bridge programs.

The formation of the Hood River-White Salmon entity for the bridge has been tabled. There are two Port of Hood River Commissioner spots open if council knows anyone who might be interested.

**Council Comments**

Councilor O’Sullivan thanked the BSWG for addressing the toll issue.

**Voucher Approval**

Payroll Checks (Dated 2/28/2023) and Payroll EFT (Dated 2/28/2023) totaling $32,058.76; General Fund - $12,262.49, Street Fund - $5,866.96, Water Fund - $3,429.53, Sewer Fund - $1,091.17, and Treatment Plant Fund - $9,408.61

Councilor O’Connor made a motion to approve the Payroll dated February 28, 2023. Councilor Spratt seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Claims Checks 23620-23645 (Dated 3/7/2023) totaling $80,335.56; General Fund - $41,291.44, Street Fund - $2,911.51, Water Fund - $14,662.83, Sewer Fund - $4,109.33, Treatment Plant Fund - $9,330.20, Water Capital Reserve Fund - $5,747.58, and Sewer Capital Reserve Fund - $2,282.67.

Councilor O’Sullivan made a motion to approve the Claims dated March 7, 2023. Councilor Jones provided the second and it passed unanimously.

**Adjournment**

Mayor Kiewit adjourned the meeting at 8:43 p.m.