**BINGEN CITY COUNCIL MINUTES**

**April 2, 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, Brittany Spratt, and Craig Trummel. Staff present: City Attorney Chris Lanz, City Administrator Krista Loney, Fire Chief Carl Spratt. Audience present: Zara Guzman, Tammara Tippel, Nan Noteboom.

**Public Comment**

Councilor Trummel inquired if Bingen has returned to mostly water from White Salmon. Mayor Kiewit stated that she had shared Councilor Trummel’s questions about water odor with Council during his absence at the March 19 meeting. The City’s immediate plans for combating the hydrogen sulfide odor is the Oak Street Reservoir project where the City will begin chlorination at the source (the wells). If the odor persists a taste and odor study will be conducted.

**Meeting Minutes – 3/19/2024**

Administrator Loney did not receive the slides from Ashley Emery in time to add his suggestions for the water and sewer rate study to the meeting minutes. Mayor Kiewit pointed out a typo in the meeting minutes section of “hospital is Dallesport” which should be “hospital in Dallesport.” Kiewit also pointed out a typo in the second paragraph of the January and February 2024 Treasurers Reports section of “he lines” which should have been “The lines.”

Councilor Jones made a motion to table approval of the 3/19/2024 minutes until corrections could be made. Councilor Trummel provided the second and the motion carried.

**Bingen Fire Department Update**

Fire Chief Carl Spratt shared the March 2024 Bingen Fire Department numbers of 5 calls in Bingen, 23 mutual aid calls, and 82 total calls for the year through March 31, 2024. Mayor Kiewit inquired how things are working so far with the White Salmon Fire Department and Fire District 3 merging into one fire district. Chief Spratt stated that the merger isn’t fully funded at this time so there have been no big changes yet. Mayor Kiewit asked if automatic mutual aid will be the same and Chief Spratt shared that it likely will be but may have a new agreement or a new name.

**Art of community Daubenspeck Placement Discussion**

Administrator Loney provided a memo stating that Art of Community would like Bingen Public Works to remove two city benches that are installed back-to-back on a pad between the basketball court and playground at Daubenspeck Park. Loney also provided two overhead views of Daubenspeck Park with potential placements for benches or art. Council came to consensus that Art of Community can use the existing pad if they will pour additional pads on the east side of Daubenspeck Park. Councilor Spratt will work with Public Works Superintendent David Spratt on identifying good placements.

**Oak Street Reservoir Project Estimate 5**

Zara Guzman from Gray & Osborne attended the meeting to walk Council through the progress estimate. Mayor Kiewit asked about lines that are over-budget and whether these cost over-runs come out of contingency. Zara explained that some lines run over and some lines run under.

Councilor Jones made a motion to authorize Mayor Kiewit to sign Progress Estimate number five for the Oak Street Reservoir. Councilor Spratt provided the second and the motion carried.

**Commerce DC Fast Charger Contract Discussion**

Administrator Loney informed Council that the contract from the Washington State Department of Commerce was not yet received. Councilor Jones made a motion to table the Commerce DC fast charger contract discussion to the next meeting. Councilor Spratt provided the second and the motion carried.

**Resolution 2024-005 Cancelling Checks and Certain Warrants**

Administrator Loney provided a memo and a copy of the resolution. There was one check issued to Krista Browning that was past its ability to be cashed. The check will not be reissued. Councilor Trummel asked if these funds should not be sent to Washington State unclaimed property. As these are not entitlement funds, they are not required to be sent in.

Councilor Trummel made a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-005. Councilor Spratt provided the second and the motion carried.

**Public Hearing – Ordinance 2024-06-755 Amending BMC Title 5 – Business Taxes, Licenses and Regulations**

Mayor Kiewit opened the public hearing at 6:45 p.m. Administrator Loney provided Council with the draft ordinance and a memo about business licenses for long-term landlords. Loney explained that Washington State and Klickitat County do not require owners of long-term rental properties to have business licenses. The City of White Salmon does require owners of long-term rental properties to have business licenses, and this is very clear and plain in their municipal code. Bingen’s municipal code, under section 5.04.020.A states that owners of long-term rental properties should have business licenses. Given how buried the requirement is, very few long-term rental owners have business licenses. Loney stated that the cost to get into compliance would be sizeable including registering with the Washington Secretary of State for a unique business identifier (UBI) number at a cost of more than $200 and then apply for a business license through the Department of Revenue at an additional cost of almost $100 for the first time. Loney stated that the amount of revenue generated from this requirement would not balance the amount of upset this would cause or the amount of tracking work that would need to be done. Mayor Kiewit countered that those who have a rental property as well as a home of their own could probably afford the cost of getting a business license. Council came to consensus that a business license is not necessary for owners of long-term rental properties but is necessary for short-term rental properties.

Mayor Kiewit closed the public hearing at 7:23 p.m. Councilor Trummel made a motion do adopt Ordinance 2024-06-755 Amending BMC Title 5 – Business Taxes, Licenses and Regulations. Councilor Jones provided the second and the motion carried.

**Public Hearing – Ordinance 2024-07-756 Amending BMC 15.04 Building Codes**

Mayor Kiewit opened the public hearing at 7:24 p.m. Administrator Loney provided the draft ordinance and a memo that this ordinance is updating building code from the 2018 code to the 2021 code. Mayor Kiewit asked if Skamania County Building had reviewed the draft code and was told that they had not. Mayor Kiewit closed the public hearing at 7:26 p.m. Councilor Spratt made a motion to table the ordinance until Skamania County Building can review it. Councilor Trummel provided the second and the motion carried.

**Staff Updates**

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

* Centennial:
  + Coordinating participants for 4/13. Making passports, making maps, purchasing supplies, handling food vendors, requesting donations. Ordered swag.
* 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 provided Council with a status update on the Klickitat County Jail. The County Commissioners voted on Friday, March 29, to close the jail and have prisoners housed at NORCOR in The Dalles, OR.

Amtrak is going to do a ribbon cutting for the new ADA-compliant on April 11 at 11 a.m.

Councilor Spratt inquired what was going on at the Bingen Theater on Friday, March 29 as they were loud into the early hours, left beer cans all over and on Councilor Spratt’s lawn, and using the bathroom outside. Administrator Loney will follow up with the owner of the Bingen Theater.

**Voucher Approval**

Payroll Checks (Dated 3/29/2024) and Payroll EFT (Dated 3/29/2024) totaling $41,741.80; General Fund - $13,007.83, Street Fund - $7,073.97, Water Fund - $4,092.27, Sewer Fund - $1,240.00, and Treatment Plant Fund - $16,327.73.

Councilor Trummel made a motion to approve the Payroll dated March 29, 2024. Councilor Jones seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Claims Checks (Dated 4/2/2024) totaling $440,039.99; General Fund - $53,067.97, Street Fund - $4,152.67, Community Development Fund - $100.28, Water Fund - $36,383.88, Sewer Fund - $9,011.49, Treatment Plant Fund - $8,719.30, Water Short-Lived Assets Reserve - $279.65, and Water Capital Reserve Fund - $328,324.75.

Councilor Jones made a motion to approve the Claims dated April 2, 2024. Councilor Spratt seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**Adjournment**

Mayor Kiewit adjourned the meeting at 8:08 p.m.