**BINGEN CITY COUNCIL MINUTES**

**September 20, 2022**

**Meeting Via Teleconference and In-Person**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Catherine Kiewit at 7:02 p.m.

Council members present: Phil Jones, Ryan O’Connor, and Izzy Schroder.

Staff present: City Administrator Krista Loney, City Attorney Christopher R Lanz, Wastewater Treatment Plant Manager Frank Sinclair

Audience Present: Dan Nickel, Jacob Bertram

**Public Comment**

None.

**Meet Frank Sinclair**

Frank Sinclair, new Wastewater Treatment Plant Manager, attended the meeting to meet the councilors. Frank comes to Bingen from Clatskanie and enjoys spending time with his grandchildren. He has great wastewater experience and the City is glad to have him on the team.

**Meeting Minutes – 9/6/22**

There were three corrections to the meeting minutes:

1. Page 1, Tree of Heaven Presentation section, add “on crops” to the sentence ending “…and the damage it inflicts.”
2. Page 2, Tree of Heaven Presentation section, change “overhang” to “have branches and roots that extend into” to the sentence beginning “Mayor Kiewit asked about trees that are on private land…”
3. Page 2, Tree of Heaven presentation section, change “status is” to “options are” to the sentence beginning “Mayor Kiewit asked about trees that are on private land…”

Councilor Schroder made a motion to approve the September 6, 2022 meeting minutes with the corrections presented. Councilor O’Connor provided the second and the motion carried.

**Shoreline Master Program Presentation from Dan Nickel, The Watershed Company**

Dan Nickel attended Council to present the work that has been done so far on Bingen’s Shoreline Master Program. Bingen’s last SMP was adopted in 2017. The SMP periodic update is being done in 2022 for approval by 2023 because of a directive and grant provided by the State. Next review will be in 2030.

Council was provided with the redlined SMP, as well as the SMP periodic review checklist, and Dan walked through it at a high level. The next step in the process is to contact the Department of Ecology to select the dates for a 30 day public comment period. Administrator Loney will work with Dan Nickel and Chelsea Benner at Ecology on this right away.

**Old Business – Oak Street Reservoir Interim Financing and Bond Counsel**

Administrator Loney requested rate sheets from North Cascades Bank, Cashmere Valley Bank, Umpqua Bank, Columbia State Bank, and Riverview Bank for interim financing for the second portion of the USDA Rural Development loan. Cashmere Valley Bank was selected as the best offer. Administrator Loney also reached out to several bond counsel firms and selected Pacifica as bond counsel.

Cashmere Valley Bank has stated that the preliminary underwriting should be done 9/21/22 and that loan approval should be a few days after that. Bond counsel is preparing the bond ordinance that must be passed by council. Mayor Kiewit’s understanding was that since council had already approved increasing the loan amount and moving forward there wouldn’t need to be an ordinance. Administrator Loney displayed her email exchange with Pacifica stating that a bond ordinance must be done. Administrator Loney explained the reasoning as it was explained to her: years ago towns were told that if they built a train station, the railroad would come through, and the towns took out a loan from the bank. When the railroad never came, there was no money to pay back the bank, so the bank took a loss. Bonds and bond notes were created in order to hold municipalities responsible for loans. Loney informed council that the bond counsel is aware that we are in a hurry and is working diligently to get the bond ordinance completed. Bingen may call a special meeting of council to approve the bond ordinance before the next regularly scheduled council meeting on October 4.

**Old Business – 141 Crossing at Jefferson Update**

Administrator Loney reminded council of the public comment made in the spring regarding adding a crossing at Jefferson and 141. Kelsi Stahl called City Hall to notify the City that WSDOT had been out to conduct the required traffic study over the summer and asked if any progress had been made. Loney made a follow up phone call to Dave Burkie at WSDOT and has not heard back.

**August 2022 Treasurer's Report**

Administrator Loney presented the August 2022 Treasurers Report and walked council through the numbers. Councilor Jones made a motion to accept the August 2022 Treasurer's Report, and Councilor O’Connor provided the second. The motion carried.

**Staff Reports**

Administrator Loney presented the following updates:

* The WSDOT Facility located on SR 14 inquired about connecting to Bingen’s sewer system. Currently they have septic tanks on their property. We are working with them to get their effluent tested. Loney is working closely with the WWTP team on this.
* The planned budget calendar for the 2023 budget is:
  + 11/1/2022 Preliminary public hearing
  + 11/15/2022 Public hearing on revenue
  + 12/6/2022 Adoption
* The water agreement meeting with White Salmon is scheduled for 9/23 at 9:30 immediately followed by the Everybody’s Brewing agreement meeting. The police agreement meeting has been delayed by White Salmon.
* Mayor Kiewit and Administrator Loney are working on an Operator in Training program for future staffing for the treatment plant. Two of three references have been checked for the Evergreen Rural Water apprenticeship program.

**Council Comments**

Councilor Jones informed the group that the pool at the Hood River Athletic Club is closing on November 9, 2022 and will be removed. This is one less pool to serve the area.

Councilor Schroder stated that Huckleberry Festival was awesome and she was glad the City had a booth. She was pleased with the turnout. Councilor Schroder inquired about fall yard debris pickup in November and whether or not that is going to happen. Mayor Kiewit indicated that she believes it is.

Councilor O’Connor asked if Jonathan from The Society Hotel had reached out to any of the other councilors. Jonathan has questions about the allowability of an idea he has to construct a multi unit building for employee housing and daycare services in a parcel zoned R1. Administrator Loney suggested that his questions should be directed to Alan Peters at Skamania County. Mayor Kiewit reiterated that Jonathan is invited to participate in the Comprehensive Plan workshop where discussions about zoning and density will happen. She cautioned the council members to be careful about representing their personal views prior to a quasi-judicial decision. She suggested that Jonathan could attend a council meeting or submit a public comment and stated that Jonathan is very welcome to contact herself or Administrator Loney with questions. Councilor O’Connor will respond to the inquiry via email and copy Mayor Kiewit.

**Mayor’s Update**

Mayor Kiewit presented the following updates:

* Huckleberry Festival was really good! She was sick and went home after her speech recognizing Mayor Barnes for her 18 years of service to the City.
* She will contact Council shortly via email regarding participation for the CPAT charette on October 28
* The Bi-State Working Group met on Monday. The sufficiency rating on the bridge dropped from 16 to 6 because more is known about the condition of the bridge. She stated that this lowered rating makes for a strong talking point with legislators and may be good for getting the bridge funded and completed sooner than the planned date of 2030.
* She will send a link to Council to review the website prior to go-live next week. She would like feedback on the navigation and any suggested changes.

**Voucher Approval**

Payroll Checks 23285-23287 (Dated 9/15/2022) and Payroll EFT (Dated 9/15/2022) totaling $22,431.72; General Fund - $10,947.66, Street Fund - $3,813.09, Water Fund - $2,617.86, Sewer Fund - $490.60, and Treatment Plant Fund - $4,562.51

Councilor Schroder made a motion to approve the Payroll Claims dated September 15, 2022. Councilor O’Connor seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Claims checks 23288-23307 (Dated 9/20/2022) totaling $19,988.86, General Fund - $5,381.70, Street Fund - $424.01, Water Fund - $1,331.92, Sewer Fund - $127.81, Treatment Plant Fund - $9,120.08, and

Water Capital Reserve Fund - $3,603.34.

Councilor Jones made a motion to approve the Claims dated September 20, 2022. Councilor O’Connor provided the second, and it passed unanimously.

**Adjournment**

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