**BINGEN CITY COUNCIL MINUTES**

**November 1, 2022**

**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, Joe O’Sullivan, and Izzy Schroder.

Staff present: City Administrator Krista Loney, City Attorney Christopher R Lanz., Police Chief Mike Hepner

Audience Present: Jacob Bertram

**Executive Session**

Council went into executive session at 6 p.m. to discuss pending litigation and came out of executive session at 7 p.m.

**Public Comment**

None.

**Bingen Fire Update**

Chief Spratt was not able to attend tonight. There were 27 incidents in October 2022: 4 in Bingen city limits, 23 mutual aid.

**Police Update**

Chief Hepner stated that there were over 100 calls for police assistance in the month of October. He was in Goldendale today to conduct a background check on an officer that is doing a lateral transfer from the Goldendale police force to the Bingen-White Salmon police force. Mayor Kiewit asked Chief Hepner if he could explain why the number of incidents in Bingen remained the same and decreased in White Salmon. Chief Hepner stated that there are more telephone-based complaints in White Salmon and more actual incidents to respond to in Bingen.

Councilor Schroder inquired about Section 1.1 C of the 2023 Interlocal Agreement with White Salmon on Police Services. This section is about coverage and states that active duty is 20 hours per day, 7 days per week and that there are officers on-call the other 4 hours per day, 7 days per week. She asked about 24/7 coverage and if it is a realistic expectation with the added officer. Chief Hepner stated that this is not possible even with the new officer.

Mayor Kiewit asked Chief Hepner about extra fuel costs for officer commutes given that many officers can’t afford to live locally and whether he brings that topic up with White Salmon. Chief confirmed that he does bring these costs up with White Salmon.

Mayor Kiewit asked Administrator Loney to ensure that the monthly police incident report comes to council each month.

**Meeting Minutes – 10/18/22**

Councilor O’Connor made a motion to approve the October 18, 2022 meeting minutes as they stand. Councilor Schroder provided the second and the motion carried.

**2023 Interlocal Agreement with White Salmon on ERUS**

Administrator Loney provided a memo to council explaining that both Bingen and White Salmon pay ERUs into the treatment plant fund. The agreement increases the monthly ERU fee from $15.25 to $15.50 beginning January 1, 2023. Councilor Jones made a motion to approve the Interlocal Agreement with White Salmon on ERUs. Councilor O’Connor provided the second, and the motion carried.

**2023 Interlocal Agreement with White Salmon on Police Services**

Administrator Loney provided a memo to council explaining that the police agreement has been negotiated with White Salmon and thanked Mayor Kiewit, Councilor O’Sullivan, and Councilor Schroder for their participation in the negotiations. The cost increases by $51,473 to add another officer. Loney stated that this is 31% of the total police budget for 31% of the police response rate. Councilor O’Connor inquired whether Bingen’s percentage should be based on population and not on response rate. Councilor Schroder asked whether the agreement could be amended at some future point if necessary, and was informed that this is possible.

Councilor O’Sullivan made a motion to approve the Interlocal Agreement with White Salmon on Police Services. Councilor O’Connor provided the second and the motion carried.

**2023 Budget Public Hearing on the Preliminary Budget**

Mayor Kiewit opened the public hearing for the 2023 Preliminary Budget. Administrator Loney provided the council with a memo outlining the budget changes, as well as the 5-year budget comparison, the budget summary with history, Ordinance 2022-10-231 which will be heard and voted on at the November 15 meeting, and Ordinance 2022-11-732 which will be heard and voted on at the December 6 meeting. Loney explained that the budget was developed using known costs: 5% cost of living adjustments for the staff as of January 1, 2023; step increases for all staff who meet performance expectations on July 1, 2023; 4% increase for the medical portion of staff benefits; the ad valorem tax rates; and finally, budget requests for the Water, Sewer, Parks, Streets, Treatment Plant, and Animal Control departments.

Loney explained the following items that were added to the 2023 budget:

* $51,473 increase to the police budget to allow for hiring another officer
* $11,135 increase to the West District Court for a proportionate share of overhead
* $44,700 from ARPA funds to cover:
  + $1,200 set-aside for new computer for City Hall
  + $6,000 Half of the replacement City Hall Server
  + $12,500 for the Water portion of the new Public Works Truck
  + $12,500 for the Parks portion of the new Public Works Truck
  + $12,500 for the Streets portion of the new Public Works Truck
* $4,500 from General Fund into General Equipment Fund for set-asides for:
  + $2,000 for 2029 City Hall server replacement
  + $2,500 for Parks portion of the 2029 planned purchase of a Public Works truck
* $10,000 for Water SCADA server
* $2,500 set-asides from Water, Sewer, and Streets for their portions of the 2029 planned purchase of a Public Works truck

Council had no questions about the budget or development process. There were no public comments.

**Staff Reports**

Administrator Loney presented the following updates:

* Bingen plans to issue two limited public works projects:
  + Street lights at Maple&Steuben, Maple&Depot, and Maple on the south side of the train tracks
  + Tree Maintenance – there are 27 trees that are encroaching on businesses and need to be cut back.

The draft solicitations have been approved by David Spratt and are currently with Mayor Kiewit for her evaluation.

* The Winter 2023 Lodging Tax grant application opened November 1 and will be open through December 30. Council will review applications and award the grants in January of 2023. This process will be for the whole of 2023 and will award all the funding that Bingen has for this opportunity, approximately $35,000.
* The Shoreline Master Program public comment period closes 11/15. No feedback has been received at this time. Loney checked with The Watershed Group to ask if this is normal. Dan Nickel at The Watershed Group stated that this is normal given the minimal change in the SMP.
* The new City of Bingen street banners that council approved should be here next week and will get installed as quickly as possible given Public Works responsibilities and vacation.
* 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 is with Mayor Kiewit for edits.
* The draft agreement for the Bingen-White Salmon police was approved tonight.
* Mayor Keethler stated on October 17 that she would hand-deliver the Everybody’s Brewing agreement to Doug Ellenberger that week. Loney sent an email 10/31 asking if this has been done and they were prepared to move forward. Mayor Keethler had not responded at the time of council meeting.
* Loney presented the Oak Street Reservoir Status Report. Current status is pre-work. The pre-construction conference is scheduled of November 15, 2022 at 10 a.m.
* Loney will update the Wastewater Treatment Plant Status Report as there is warranty work going on at this time. There are problems with the Variable Frequency Drives and the contractor will be recalled to install them correctly.

**Mayor’s Update**

Mayor Kiewit presented the following updates:

* Thanks to everyone for their participation in the CPAT event on 10/28.
* Work continues on the new website.

**Council Comments**

Councilor O’Sullivan stated that the CPAT was a great time, that people want to be involved, and that most people heard about the event via word of mouth. He suggested that the City pursue more avenues to communicate about events like this.

Councilor Schroder concurred with Councilor O’Sullivan and stated that some of the comments made at the community event are out of the city’s control.

Councilor O’Connor concurred with Councilors O’Sullivan and Schroder and stated that attendance at the morning session was more heavily weighted toward developers.

**Voucher Approval**

Claims checks 23362-23386 (Dated 11/1/2022) and EFT (Dated 11/1/2022) totaling $34,358.81, General Fund - $10,117.93, Street Fund - $2,959.72, Community Development Fund - $197.02, Real Estate Excise Tax Fund - $4,875.76, Hotel/Motel Tax Fund - $500, Water Fund - $6,013.48, Sewer Fund - $4,006.57, and Treatment Plant Fund - $5,688.33.

Councilor Schroder made a motion to approve the Claims dated November 1, 2022. Councilor O

Connor provided the second, and it passed unanimously.

Payroll Checks 23358-23361 (Dated 10/31/2022) and Payroll EFT (Dated 10/31/2022) totaling $35,569.76; General Fund - $14,301.64, Street Fund - $5,776.92, Water Fund - $3,987.29, Sewer Fund - $739.12, and Treatment Plant Fund - $10,764.79

Councilor O’Connor made a motion to approve the Payroll Claims dated October 31, 2022. Councilor O’Sullivan seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

**Adjournment**

Mayor Kiewit closed the meeting at 8:34 p.m.