

BINGEN CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

November 20, 2007

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Prigel at 7:00 p.m. Council members present: Terry Trantow, Tim Hearn, Sandi Dickey, Betty Barnes and Laura Mann. City Clerk Treasurer Jan Brending and Attorney Tad Connors were present. Audience: Ruth Winner, Bruce Brending, David Spratt, Karla Spratt, Linda Schneider.

Public Comment

Ruth Winner, Gorge Heritage Museum

Ruth Winner said she is still working on information regarding the north door and will bring it to the council as soon as it is available. She said she wants to keep the council update on the work she and the museum are doing.

Approval of Minutes – November 6, 2007

The following corrections were made to the November 6, 2007 city council meeting minutes:

Page 1, 3rd paragraph header should read “Approval of Minutes – October 16, 2007.”

Page 1, 3rd paragraph should read “The following correction was made to the October 16, 2007 city council meeting minutes:”

Page 2, 4th paragraph should read “Betty Barnes said she wonders if this is the time to take action on the proposed agreement when a new White Salmon city council may be elected tonight.”

Betty Barnes moved to approve the minutes of the November 6, 2007 city council meeting as amended. Terry Trantow seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

Proposed Interlocal Agreement Regarding Fire Protection Mutual First Aid

David Spratt provided an overview of the proposed interlocal agreement for fire protection mutual first aid. He said agreement will provide that the two fire departments are automatically called when there alarms in either city. He said the agreement will allow the two fire departments to work closer together which will be helpful to both cities. Spratt explained the idea of “run cards” which allows the departments and county dispatch to know what equipment to use when responding.

Tim Hearn asked if Bingen usually runs a crew to the Port for their alarms. David Spratt said yes but that most of those are false alarms.

Laura Mann asked if the requirement of a 90-day notice for termination of the agreement is too long.

David Spratt said no.

Tad Connors said he has reviewed the agreement and it incorporates the changes he wanted.

Betty Barnes asked if the agreement would ever lead to the situation of White Salmon asking for funding.

Tad Connors said no, the agreement has some specific language that addresses that issue.

Laura Mann asked David Spratt to address the command responsibility language included in the agreement.

David Spratt said that there is one person in charge of the scene but the person bringing in a specific piece of equipment is in charge of that equipment.

Tim Hearn said he is concerned about where citizens would be relocated in there was a train accident involved a hazardous chemical.

Brian Prigel said that is a good question.

Tim Hearn said he thinks it is a good idea to inform the public ahead of time of where they should go if such a situation occurs.

Linda Schneider said Gorge Action Programs could accommodate a few people depending on the specific situation.

Brian Prigel said he recommends approval of the interlocal agreement.

Tim Hearn moved to approve the interlocal agreement regarding fire protection mutual first aid. Laura Mann seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Laura Mann thanked David Spratt for the good job he did in preparing his budget requests for the fire department and public works departments.

Public Hearing – Proposed 2008 Budget and Advalorem Property Tax

Jan Brending provided an overview of the proposed 2008 budget and advalorem property tax ordinance and resolution. She said that in working with the City of White Salmon on its property tax levy she learned Bingen had some banked capacity and could request a 1% increase over its “highest lawful levy amount.” Brending said she has prepared an optional ordinance and resolution that provides for the use of the highest lawful levy amount. She said the difference between the highest lawfully levy amount and the 2007 levy is \$13,986.45. Brending said it is up to the city to decide which amount it wants to use for 2008.

Jan Brending noted that the Washington Supreme Court recently found I-747 unconstitutional which technically allows cities and counties to raise its levy amount by more than 1%. She said however that the Governor has asked cities and counties to act as if I-747 still stands. Brending said the legislature will be acting on new legislation that will cap levy increases at 1%. She said those cities or counties that choose to ignore the Governor’s request might have to repay taxes if the next legislation is enacted and made retroactive.

Proposed Ordinance 07-04-539, Determining the Amount to Be Raised by Advalorem Property Taxes for the Year 2008

Laura Mann moved to adopt the optional ordinance 07-04-539 providing for the 2008 levy using the highest lawful levy amount. Betty Barnes seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

Proposed Resolution 2007-08, Regarding Property Tax Increase

Laura Mann moved to adopt the option resolution 2007-08 providing the property tax increase for 2008 using the highest lawful levy amount. Betty Barnes seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

Housing Needs Assessment Proposal

Jan Brending provided an overview of the proposal (see memorandum dated November 16, 2007 – Housing Needs Assessment). She said she is recommending the city provide some level of funding towards the “housing needs assessment toolkit.” Brending said the city’s community action plan addresses housing as a high objective. She said she thinks this is a good tool for the city that can be used into the future.

Linda Schneider said she thinks the housing needs assessment provides for a comprehensive look at housing in the county and specific areas of the county. She said the toolkit will allow information to be updated without having to conduct complete new study.

Laura Mann asked who will be gathering the statistics.

Linda Schneider said Gorge Action Programs has contracted with a consultant from Seattle. She said she has worked with him before. Schneider said the Gorge Action Programs has a grant of \$15,000 to conduct a basic assessment and that an additional \$8,000 will allow for the toolkit to be developed.

Brian Prigel said he thinks it would be a good idea for Bingen to write a letter of support to the county and the other two cities and encouraging them to also contribute towards the funding.

Tad Connors said an agreement with Gorge Action Programs will need to be developed showing what will be provided to Bingen and how the information can be accessed.

Betty Barnes moved to contribute \$2,000 towards the project and write a letter to Klickitat County, City of Goldendale, and City of White Salmon encouraging them to contribute towards the project. Sandi Dickey seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

Klickitat County EDA Grant Projects

Jan Brending said she has provided some information to the council regarding a skate park, law enforcement gun range, or animal control vehicle.

Jan Brending asked Bruce Brending what it would cost to send an officer to animal control training.

Bruce Brending said possibly \$500.

Bruce Brending said that he would support requesting funding for the skate park. He said it would be a better return for the collar.

Betty Barnes said she would like to request funding for the planning for the community center and park planning instead of seeking funding for the skate park at this time. She said the planning should take place before the skate park is built and is concerned that it couldn't be completed in the time frame required by the county.

Jan Brending said she can draft up a proposal for the community center and park planning and obtain a cost estimate from a couple of firms on the city's professional services roster. Finalizing the EDA grant request will be placed on the December 4 council agenda.

Treasurer's Report – October 2007

Jan Brending presented the treasurer's report for October 2007.

Laura Mann moved to approve the Treasurer's Report for October 2007. Sandi Dickey seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Animal Control

Bruce Brending said he has been in contact with the City of Goldendale regarding animal control. He said the police chief is interested in possibly entering into an agreement directly with Bingen to provide animal control services. Brending said Goldendale currently has an animal control vehicle and animal control officer. He said Goldendale could provide someone who would be in Bingen one day per week and available for call out. Brending said the initial estimate is approximately \$15,000 per year. He said that if the city is interested Goldendale will begin working on a proposal to bring before the city council.

Brian Prigel asked if the animals would be housed in the Goldendale shelter. Brending said yes. He said Goldendale tries to adopt the dogs out.

Bruce Brending said he thinks it would be good for the police department to have a couple of portable kennels in case they have to pick up a dog and lodge them somewhere until the animal control officer could pick up the dog.

Jan Brending noted that it does not appear that Hood River County has the room to address the needs of Bingen. She said it appears from newspaper articles that the facility is full most of the time. Brian Prigel agreed.

Betty Barnes asked if the fines would come directly into the city. Jan Brending said yes.

Tad Connors said at the present time he does not see any legal problems with the idea.

Brian Prigel said he thinks it could be a low cost way of starting to address animal control.

Betty Barnes asked if the cost would be \$15,000 plus the cost of housing the animals. Bruce Brending said he believes the \$15,000 would include housing.

There was a consensus of the city council to move forward with obtaining a proposal from the City of Goldendale to provide animal control services to the City of Bingen.

Bruce Brending said he does not know if the city of White Salmon will participate but he believes there will be pressure on White Salmon to do something similar if Bingen moves ahead and people see the animal control vehicle in the area.

Mayor's Update and City Council Member Comments

Construction

Jan Brending said construction on the bio solids wall and Depot Street sewer project is continuing and should be wrapped up in a couple of weeks. She said the Depot Street contract has had to do some blasting due to rock.

Joint Police Committee Meeting

Betty Barnes noted that there is currently a Joint Police Committee meeting scheduled for December 3. She said that in the light of changes in the White Salmon city council it might be appropriate to change the meeting to sometime in January.

Jan Brending said she will make contact with White Salmon about the meeting. She noted that it is likely that White Salmon will have a budget committee meeting scheduled for that night.

Letter Regarding Combining Two Cities

Laura Mann said she would like to hear council members' comments regarding the letter to the editor regarding the combining of the two cities. She said she is interested in what people think about the idea.

Brian Prigel said he thinks it would be a challenge for White Salmon residents to vote to become part of Bingen. He said he does think things have changed in Bingen and that people's opinion on the idea is more evenly split.

City council members discussed the concept of combining the two cities noting that there was not much of a benefit for the City of Bingen.

Police Report

Tim Hearn asked what the liquor violation was listed in the police statistics. Bruce Brending said it was a minor in possession.

Tim Hearn asked about the 2 "lost people." Bruce Brending said one was a runaway and the other was a kid who just didn't come home.

Tim Hearn asked what composes "criminal traffic." Bruce Brending said reckless driving, driving while suspended, etc.

Tim Hearn asked what the vandalism was. Bruce Brending said graffiti in the park restrooms.

Landscaping Assistance

Betty Barnes thanked Sandi Dickey for her assistance with the public works crew cleaning up the landscaping beds on Steuben.

Vouchers

Vouchers audited and certified as required by RCW 42.24.080 and expense reimbursement claims certified as required by RCW 42.24.090 as of this date November 20, 2007. The council by unanimous vote does approve for payment the following list: checks 9441 through 9464 totaling \$27,822.86 and payroll checks 9423 through 9440 totaling \$12,102.26 for a grand total of \$39,925.12. Current - \$6,646.66; Street - \$2,500.12; Community Development - \$554.00; Street Construction & Maintenance - \$15,915.60; Water - \$3,052.79; Sewer - \$1,009.68; Treatment Plant - \$4,839.87; Dallesport Treatment Plant - \$5,091.40; Treatment Plant Replacement - \$315.00.

The council adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

City Clerk

Mayor