

BINGEN CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

November 2, 2010

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Betty Barnes at 7:00 p.m. Council members present: Catherine Kiewit, Sandi Dickey, Laura Mann, Clinton Bryan. Council members absent: Guillermo Fisch. City Administrator Jan Brending and City Attorney Anthony Connors were present. Audience: Jim Andring.

Approval of Minutes – October 19, 2010

Changes to the minutes of the October 19, 2010 regular city council meeting were noted as follows:

Page 3, add the following paragraph after the 3rd paragraph: ‘Laura Mann said she likes the idea of welcome signs but said she doesn’t really like the label “pearl of the Gorge” because the “pearl” is somewhat similar to the anchor issue in White Salmon in that they are more related to the coast.’

Page 3, 4th paragraph, 1st sentence should read: “Catherine Kiewit said she feels that council members are not equipped for marketing and the city should hire someone to help develop the idea.”

Page 4, 4th paragraph should read: “Laura Mann said she thinks it is important to see what the police chief would want and she feels she does not have enough knowledge to make a determination as to the appropriate number of officers.”

Laura Mann moved to approve the minutes of the October 19, 2010 regular city council meeting as amended. Clinton Bryan seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

Betty Berry, Request for Reduction in Water Utility Billing Due to Water Leak

Jan Brending said Betty Berry is requesting a reduction in the water utility billing for the month of August. Brending said it is apparent there is a leak in the irrigation system. She said Betty Berry has discontinued using the system and is using hoses to irrigate her property. Brending said if the council chooses to authorize a reduction she is recommending using 33,600 gallons for recalculating the bill.

Catherine Kiewit said she would like to receive information on how many gallons the city has forgiven customers in 2010 and the costs associated with the reductions in billing.

Council members agreed and said they would like to develop a specific policy for utility billing reductions in the future. Council members noted that the city is still incurring costs associated with producing the water that was used.

Laura Mann moved to authorize a reduction in Betty Berry’s water utility billing for the month of August using 33,600 gallons to recalculate the bill. Sandi Dickey seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

Public Hearing – Preliminary 2011 Budget

Jan Brending said this is the initial public hearing for the 2011 budget. She said two additional hearing dates will be held with the budget and that she anticipates the council adopting the budget at the first meeting in December. Brending said the budget does include a 1% increase in property taxes as allowed by law. She noted that the water and sewer revenue is based on the 5% increase in utility rates as provided for in the city’s ordinances. Brending said staffing for administrative staff is cut from full time to three-quarter time in order to address the current expense fund.

Jan Brending said Dena Riggleman has suggested that instead of providing \$6,000 directly to White Salmon that maybe Bingen could buy “pool bucks” and provide them directly to Bingen residents so they can go to the pool for free. She said that based on last year’s prices for “pool bucks” Bingen would be able to purchase approximately 8,555 pool bucks which would allow approximately 35 residents to use the pool every day that it is open.

Betty Barnes said she does not believe that using the \$6000 to purchase “pool bucks” instead of providing it directly to White Salmon would affect White Salmon’s bottom line for the pool.

Clinton Bryan said he feels the city needs to go back to providing \$3000 instead of \$6000 due to the budget crunch in current expense.

Laura Mann said she made the recommendation last year to move from \$3000 to \$6000. She said she still supports the \$6000.

Catherine Kiewit said she believes this year is a different scenario then last year and that because the budget includes cuts to staffing levels the city should be more conservative in other areas also.

Clinton Bryan moved to budget \$3000 for the purchase of “pool bucks” and if they are used up then the council can consider purchasing more at that time. Catherine Kiewit seconded the motion. The motion passed 3 to 1 with the following vote: Bryan – Aye, Dickey – Aye, Fisch – Absent, Kiewit – Aye, Mann – Nay.

Laura Mann asked council members if they are in agreement with the proposal to cut administrative staff to three-quarter time.

Catherine Kiewit said she can support it if staff supports it and then the council can reconsider the staffing level in the spring.

Clinton Bryan said he does not like the proposal at all.

Council members discussed the staffing levels for administrative staff.

Laura Mann moved to include administrative staff at three-quarter time in the budget with a review of staffing levels to take place after the first quarter of 2011. Sandi Dickey seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

Jan Brending noted that there are several items related to the sewer system and treatment plant that will be proposed in early 2011 including a wastewater system plan. She said Bingen has the funds to cover their share of the project. Brending said it will be important to get White Salmon’s support for the project as they will need to cover their share of the specific infiltration and inflow (I&I) part of the plan in addition to authorizing the use of treatment plant funds for that portion of the plan that covers the treatment plant.

Proposed Resolution 2010-09, Regarding Property Tax Increase

Catherine Kiewit moved to adopt Resolution 2010-09, Regarding Property Tax Increase. Laura Mann seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

Proposed Ordinance 2010-10-584, Determining the Amount to Be Raised by Advalorem Taxes for the Year 2011

Laura Mann moved to adopt Ordinance 2010-10-584, Determining the Amount to Be Raised by Advalorem Taxes for the Year 2011. Catherine Kiewit seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

Proposed Resolution 2010-10, Establishing Separate Water Equipment Fund and Sewer Equipment Fund and Closing the Water/Sewer Equipment Fund

Jan Brending said she has prepared three resolutions which separate existing funds into separate funds: the joint Water/Sewer Equipment Fund, the 1973/1995 Bond Redemption Fund, and the 1973/1995 Bond Reserve Fund. She said due to new reporting requirements by the state it is necessary for these funds to be separated.

Laura Mann moved to adopt Resolution 2010-10, Establishing Separate Water Equipment Fund and Sewer Equipment Fund and Closing the Water/Sewer Equipment Fund. Clinton Bryan seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

Proposed Resolution 2010-11, Establishing Separate Debt Reserve Funds for the 1973 Debt and 1995 Debt and Closing the Combined 1973/95 Bond Reserve Fund

Laura Mann moved to adopt Resolution 2010-11, Establishing Separate Debt Reserve Funds for the 1973 Debt and 1995 Debt and Closing the Combined 1973/95 Bond Reserve Fund. Catherine Kiewit seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

Proposed Resolution 2010-12, Establishing Separate Debt Redemption Funds for the 1973 Debt and 1995 Debt and Closing the Combined 1973/95 Bond Redemption Fund

Laura Mann moved to adopt Resolution 2010-12, Establishing Separate Debt Redemption Funds for the 1973 Debt and 1995 Debt and Closing the Combined 1973/95 Bond Redemption Fund. Sandi Dickey seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

Old Business

Interlocal Agreement for Law Enforcement

Tad Connors said that he and Ken Woodrich discussed the proposed amendments to the interlocal agreement for law enforcement services. He said he did not receive much feedback from Woodrich because Woodrich did not have much of a chance to look at the proposed amendments. Connors said there are still a couple of issues: the idea of renewing the amendments every year and the issue of knowing what the budget will be for 2011 in addition to concerns regarding mayoral supervision in Bingen.

Betty Barnes said that she believes the language can be worked out between the two attorneys. She said that the language would ultimately have to be approved by the two city councils.

Catherine Kiewit said that although the language proposed in the amendments related to budgets really does affect the 2012 budget the current interlocal agreement also has language about the budget. She said she feels that White Salmon needs to provide a budget to Bingen now.

Betty Barnes said she does know that the White Salmon city council doesn't like having to revisit the interlocal agreement every year. She said that there does seem to be agreement for making the first year a trial basis and then making it permanent through 2014.

Catherine Kiewit said she does not feel like Bingen needs to discuss that at this time. She said the process has not been going well and there is no reason to believe Bingen will extend the amendments at the end of 2011.

Sandi Dickey asked if Bingen is going to look at developing its own police department.

Clinton Bryan said he feels that is what White Salmon wants.

Catherine Kiewit said she feels that this is just a band aid to White Salmon's current financial emergency and she has no idea where White Salmon will be financially next year.

Clinton Bryan said he feels that White Salmon has no longer term solution for their financial troubles.

Skatepark Update

Jan Brending said she has spoken to the city's insurance representative who feels that signage related to the skatepark should be installed. She provided several examples of signage. Brending said one issue that she would like to discuss with the council is allowing BMX bicycles in the park.

There was a consensus of the council to not ban BMX bicycles at this time.

The council discussed the proposed ribbon cutting for November 21st. Betty Barnes noted that Solstice will be providing a percentage of their proceeds from the dinner service on November 21st to go towards Phase 2 of the park.

The council discussed holding a silent auction at Solstice during their dinner service. Betty Barnes agreed to put together the silent auction.

A press release about the opening of the skatepark will be issued noting that the city is still accepting contributions and that individuals and businesses may qualify for a tax deduction.

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 2, 2010. The council by unanimous vote does approve for payment the following list: checks 12680-12702 totaling \$30321.07. Current – \$4883.24; Street - \$2171.72; Water - \$10554.41; Sewer - \$514.83; Treatment Plant - \$12196.87.

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 2, 2010. The council by unanimous vote does approve for payment the following list: payroll checks EFT, 12673, 12675-12677, totaling \$19526.87. Current – \$8313.75; Street - \$2446.34; Water - \$2799.27; Sewer - \$421.93; Treatment Plant - \$5545.58.

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 2, 2010. The council by unanimous vote does approve for payment the following list: checks 12678-12679 totaling 935.48. Current – \$935.48.

At 8:50 p.m. the city council adjourned.

City Clerk

Mayor