**BINGEN CITY COUNCIL MINUTES**

**April 16, 2024**

**Meeting Via Teleconference and In-Person**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Catherine Kiewit at 6:01 p.m.

Council members present: Phil Jones, Ryan O’Connor, Michael Stahl and Craig Trummel. Staff present: City Attorney Chris Lanz, City Administrator Krista Loney. Audience present: Erika Almskaar, Stoner Bell, Keaton Curtice, Chelsea Jones, and Madeline McNaughton.

**Public Comment**

Erika Almskaar shared her concerns that Bingen is a childcare desert and that there need to be more affordable or free opportunities for kids to be kids. She would like an arts center in Bingen to host workshops that are more reasonably priced. She also would like to see more activity at the youth center besides ping pong and computers.

Mayor Kiewit shared that Bingen supports the youth center up in White Salmon that WAGAP runs, although the distance is a barrier to Bingen families. Kiewit also shared that the city has a long-term plan to build a community center that also houses the city offices.

Councilor O’Connor suggested that Erika look into the White Salmon Maker Space and that Jack Perron, the gentleman who runs the Maker space, would be a good person to brainstorm ideas with.

**Meeting Minutes – 3/19/2024**

The March 19 meeting minutes were not ready for approval on April 2, 2024 because some information was missing from the section about the rate study. Councilor Jones had a correction to the staff updates section to complete the line about public works board funding to read “Public Works Board for Sections 2 and 3 of the East Steuben Waterline.” Councilor Jones had another correction for the snow load under the cover for the basketball court to be corrected to a 30 pound load.

Councilor Jones made a motion to adopt the March 19, 2024 minutes as corrected. Councilor O’Connor provided the second and the motion carried.

**Meeting Minutes – 4/2/2024**

Councilor Trummel made a motion to adopt the April 2, 2024 meeting minutes as presented. Councilor Jones provided the second.

**Police Update**

Police Chief Mike Hepner sent a memo and the March 2023 and March 2024 crime statistics. Mayor Kiewit shared that Bingen and White Salmon had jointly sent a letter to the Klickitat County Commissioners outlining the expectations of the cities for housing of prisoners as decisions are made related to the Klickitat County Jail.

**Economic Development Study Work Session with Leland Consulting**

Chris Zahas and Ellen Bini from Leland Consulting attended Council to present the findings-to-date for the economic development study that they are doing for the City of Bingen. There are a few more interviews to be completed and Leland will return to Council on June 4, 2024 for a final presentation.

In the draft version of the report, the key takeaways from stakeholder interviews were:

Access to housing – both availability and price are limiting factors

Entrepreneurialism is a local strength

Employment is stable

Local infrastructure investments represent potential economic opportunities

Developable land is highly limited

Housing affordability is a significant economic limitation. The median household income for Klickitat County of $89,000 can purchase 75% of the median home price in Bingen. A resident would need to make $111,000 per year to afford the average $450,000 Bingen home.

Draft Goals from the preliminary report include:

1. Support housing attainability
2. Support entrepreneurship
3. Continue supporting existing industries
4. Modernize infrastructure
5. Work towards a complete community

Leland Consulting will be developing an action plan throughout May.

**West Steuben Waterline Alternatives Discussion**

Stoner Bell from Bell Design Company and both Keaton Curtice and Chelsea Jones from the Klickitat County Public Economic Development Authority (KCPEDA) attended to discuss the alternatives for the West Steuben waterline project.

Alternative 1: a study in 2018, Backwoods represented about 37% of BOD, 5-10% of TSS, and 4% of flow. They've installed some pretreatment measures to reduce their BOD and we haven't repeated the study since then.

Alternative 2: involves building approximately 750 feet of 6-inch diameter line along SR 14

(Steuben Street) to the proposed SR 14 entrance to Bingen Development and then along the 60

foot wide proposed entrance to Bingen Development’s proposed 8-inch diameter waterlines.

Additionally, 150 feet of 6-inch pipeline would be built from Bingen Development’s most

northern proposed 8-inch waterline northeastward to the City’s existing 8-inch steel waterline.

This project would allow the Bingen Development to create a loop both northward to the 8-inch

diameter steel waterline and southward to the proposed SR 14 waterline extension. This

alternative would also benefit Bingen Haus by providing better water service and fire flow

protection along the eastern portion of the property.

Alternative 3: consists of constructing approximately 915 feet of 6-inch diameter waterline

along SR 14 to the private Poplar Drive and then constructing an additional 540 feet of 6-inch

waterline northward along Poplar Drive to the City’s existing 8-inch diameter steel waterline.

Alternative 4: consists of constructing approximately 1,700 feet of 6-inch diameter waterline

along SR 14 to a location near Charters Ave. and connecting the new pipe to the City’s existing 8-

inch diameter steel waterline at the location where it enters WSDOT right-of-way from the

north.

Option A is a six-inch waterline, Option B is an eight-inch waterline.

Council was walked through the alternatives to install a waterline and selected Alternative 4B. Bell Design Company will begin design work on that alternative.

**Commerce DC Fast Charger Contract Discussion and Authorization**

The Washington State Department of Commerce sent a contract to Bingen for signature for the grant that is funding the DC fast charger. Mayor Kiewit requested that Energy Northwest, Bingen’s partner agency, ensures that there are multiple connector types for the charger.

Councilor O’Connor made a motion to authorize Mayor Kiewit to sign the contract with Commerce. Councilor Trummel provided the second and the motion carried.

**Award Small Works Roster – Wastewater Treatment Plant Valves Contract**

The City of Bingen issued a small works roster to repair or replace six valves at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. The only responsive bid was from Stateline.

Councilor Trummel made a motion to award the Wastewater Treatment Plant Valve contract to Stateline. Councilor O’Connor provided the second and the motion carried.

**March 2024 Treasurers Report**

Administrator Loney presented the March 2024 Treasurers Report which balances.

Councilor O’Connor made a motion to approve the March 2024 Treasurers Report. Councilor Jones 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:

* Grant/contract billings:
  + WSDOT billed $16,882.24 for Bingen point access
  + Commerce billed $17,500 for Middle Housing public engagement plan
  + Need access to a system to bill PWB for Section 1
* Upcoming grant opportunities:
  + WSDOT Regional Mobility Grant NOFO available 4/9/2024
  + Public Works Board for Sections 2 and 3 of the East Steuben waterline
* ARPA report for final expenditures has been submitted on time.
* JLARC report for lodging tax funds for 2023 has been submitted on time.
* Bingen issued a Small Works Roster for valve service and replacement at the treatment plant, contract awarded tonight
* Budget committee met yesterday to begin review of SAO annual report. Next meeting 4/22. Report due 5/29.
* Streets/Parks mtg 5/14/24 for Transportation Improvement Program
* Centennial next event is Bingen Olympics 7/27/2024.
* Community Clean Up is Friday, April 26 and 27.

**Mayor’s Update and Council Comments**

Mayor Kiewit gave thanks to everyone who volunteered, contributed to, or attended the Bingen Birthday Bash and stated that she saw many complete passports. There was a ribbon cutting for the Oh Joy of Joys statue on the date of the Birthday Bash. There is also a kinetic fish that has been installed at Margie’s Outdoor Store.

The McKenzie River subdivision is being worked on and the single-family homes on the back side of the property are the first to be done.

Mayor Kiewit attended a ribbon cutting on the Amtrak platform.

Mayor Kiewit had a good meeting with the City of White Salmon about the waterleak at the SR-14 intertie.

There is a Hood River-White Salmon Bridge Aesthetics Committee open house at Henkle Middle School on April 17 from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. and there is an online option.

Councilor Stahl echoed Mayor Kiewit’s statements about the Birthday Bash.

**Voucher Approval**

Payroll Checks (Dated 4/15/2024) and Payroll EFT (Dated 4/15/2024) totaling $34,391.52; General Fund - $11,528.52, Street Fund - $5,486.17, Water Fund - $3,231.92, Sewer Fund - $972.01, and Treatment Plant Fund - $13,172.90.

Councilor Jones made a motion to approve the Payroll dated April 14, 2024. Councilor O’Connor seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Claims Checks (Dated 4/16/2024) and Claims EFT (Dated 4/16/2024) totaling $53,866.22; General Fund - $22,586, Street Fund - $9,486.40, Lodging Tax Fund - $2,009.25, Water Fund - $16,475.07, Sewer Fund - $328.77, Treatment Plant Fund - $700.85, Water Short-Lived Assets Reserve - $196.84, and Court Remittance Agency Fund - $2,083.04.

Councilor O’Connor made a motion to approve the Claims dated April 16, 2024. Councilor Jones seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**Adjournment**

Mayor Kiewit adjourned the meeting at 9:01 p.m.