

BINGEN CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

DRAFT – June 2, 2020

Meeting Via Teleconference

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Betty J Barnes at 7:00 p.m. Council members present: Catherine Kiewit, Phil Jones, Ryan O’Connor, Joseph O’Sullivan, Isolde Schroder. Staff present: Clerk-Treasurer Cheyenne Pantoja Wright, City Attorney Christopher R Lanz.

Mayor’s Essential Services Update

Mayor Barnes said the City was still providing essential services only.

Police Department Update

Chief Hepner said three cases of coronavirus had been confirmed in Bingen. He said a credible threat of rioters had called the entire department out all night. He said only small groups showed up from out of town and that everything remained peaceful.

Council member O’Sullivan stated that citizens with guns patrolling the streets of local towns was very unnerving, and said that while he understood the legal right to do so, he felt that was more threatening than the threat of protesters coming from out of town and announcing their arrival time, which he said did not seem very realistic. He said civilians armed with AR-15s and delusions of grandeur was alarming.

Hepner noted that a separate group of subjects from out of town had been loitering across from City hall, pretending to work on vehicles. He said the group was very worrying to local businesses and that they were contacted by officers several times.

Mayor Barnes said the City’s response to the threat was to notify business owners and let them decide what actions to take, and that the city suggested moving outdoor furnishings indoors.

Council member Kiewit thanked Chief Hepner and noted that the BWSPD has an awesome reputation and said people she talked to were very supportive and that she understood the challenging position they were facing.

Council member O’Sullivan echoed Kiewit’s statement, he added that he was very impressed with the officers and how they supported the small community.

Minutes of May 5, 2020 Regular Council Meeting

Council member Jones made a motion to table the minutes of the May 5, 2020 council meeting. Council member Kiewit seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Minutes of May 19, 2020 Regular Council Meeting

Council member O’Sullivan made a motion to table the minutes of the May 19, 2020 council meeting. Council member O’Connor seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Humboldt Street Project - Discussion

Mayor Barnes explained that the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) said the extra funds could not be repurposed after the bid came in under budget.

Barnes said she talked with the Society Hotel and Mike Meskimen with Gray & Osborne, and that a meeting would be set up to discuss the sidewalk that the Society Hotel was required to install. She said according to the engineers it would be wise to do as much as possible right now to get grandfathered status for the curbs and handicap features.

Mayor Barnes said the northeast corner would be the Society Hotel's responsibility, and the southwest corner would be the city's responsibility. She said the total for both corners would be about \$17,000 and suggested that the City cover the entire expense and sign an agreement with the Society Hotel for repayment of their half.

Clerk Pantoja Wright said she was not comfortable making that expense from the Street fund but said she would follow up with MRSC to see about using other funds available. She said that while Gray & Osborne seemed to think that the City covering the expense would be fine, she was not comfortable carrying that expense for the Society Hotel until confirming that it was not gifting of public funds. She noted that laws around gifting of public funds had been relaxed somewhat due to the coronavirus pandemic, but she said she still wanted to be sure.

Voucher Approval

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 May 19, 2020.

The council by unanimous vote does approve for payment the following list:

Payroll Checks 21541-21553 and Payroll EFT (Dated 5/29/2020) totaling \$32,351.05 General Fund - \$14,440.18, Street Fund - \$5,129.70, Water Fund - \$4,066.74, Sewer Fund - \$698.68, Treatment Plant Fund - \$8,015.75.

Motion: Kiewit

Second: Schroder

EFT (Dated 5/29/2020) totaling \$2,785.93. General Fund - \$262.40, Street Fund - \$5.23, Water Fund - \$1,858.04, Sewer Fund - \$258.84, Treatment Plant Fund - \$401.42

Motion: Jones

Second: Kiewit

Checks 21554-21572 (Dated 6/02/20) totaling \$16,253.15. General Fund - \$1,980.04, Street Fund - \$1,204.44, Water Fund - \$5,889.78, Sewer Fund - \$471.10, Treatment Plant Fund - \$5,168.07, Water Capital Reserve Fund - 1,539.72.

Motion: Jones

Second: Kiewit

Executive Session

Mayor Barnes announced at 7:40 p.m. that the City Council will go into Executive Session for 30 minutes to discuss potential litigation pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(i).

At 8:10 p.m. the Council resumed regular session.

The council adjourned at 8:10 pm.

City Clerk

Mayor