

BINGEN CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

DRAFT – November 19, 2019

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Betty J Barnes at 7:03 p.m. Council members present: Catherine Kiewit, Phil Jones, Ryan O’Connor, Laura Mann. Council members absent: Isolde Schroder. Staff present: Clerk-Treasurer Cheyenne Pantoja Wright, City Attorney Chris Lanz. Audience present: Jacob Bertram.

Minutes of November 5, 2019 Regular Council Meeting

Corrected as follows:

Page 2, Paragraph 13

“Mayor Barnes said she would place a follow up call to the Federal Railroad Administration, because ~~at~~ she and Public Works Superintendent Spratt had found their crossing records to be lacking or inaccurate.”

Page 2, insert after paragraph 9

“Council member Kiewit asked if the funding earmarked for the quiet zone would still be available in 2-3 years, or if a change in representatives or committee assignments could change the money available to the City.”

Page 2, Paragraph 10

“~~Mayor Barnes~~ ~~She~~ **Mayor Barnes** said the funding had been set aside by legislature and was available in the current budget. She said the other consideration the City will be looking at is the maintenance for the crossings.”

Page 2, insert after paragraph 10

“Council member Kiewit cited her concern about the pace of large projects involving government agencies and BNSF, and suggested not waiting until the completion of the underpass project to begin the conversation. Kiewit said she would rather start now so that when the underpass is complete, the City would be ready for the traffic study.”

Mayor Barnes assured the Council that the situation was being worked on.”

Council member Jones made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 5, 2019 council meeting as corrected. Council member O’Connor seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Proposed Ordinance 2019-10-701 Amending BMC 13.04.120, Service Classifications and Charges Designated for Water Service

Council member Kiewit said following the budget committee meeting she recommended the 10% increase. Kiewit also noted that the recent big unplanned expenses had caused concern.

Council member Jones noted that the increase would revert to the standard 5% increase in 2021.

Mayor Barnes clarified that the increase was subject to an annual review.

Council member Jones made a motion to adopt Proposed Ordinance 2019-10-701 Amending BMC 13.04.120, Service Classifications and Charges Designated for Water Service as presented. Council member Kiewit seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Proposed Ordinance 2019-11-702 Amending BMC 13.24.030 Monthly Sewer Rates

Clerk Treasurer Pantoja Wright said the sewer fund was doing well but recommended an increase of 5% to keep up with potential costs related to planned projects and funding needs.

Council member Kiewit made a motion to adopt Proposed Ordinance 2019-11-702 Amending BMC 13.24.030 Monthly Sewer Rates as presented. Council member Jones seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Public Hearing – 2020 Preliminary Budget

Mayor Barnes opened the public hearing on the 2020 preliminary budget.

Council member Kiewit reminded the council that this was the first of two hearings. She said she and Council member Jones had discussed the budget in detail with Clerk Treasurer Pantoja Wright and that while there were several things to follow up on, they were both satisfied with the document before the council.

Council member Jones commended Pantoja Wright on her work.

Council member Kiewit asked if there would be a line item for phone system and computer upgrades.

Clerk Treasurer Pantoja Wright said yes, but that she had left in the previous year's costs as a placeholder until the new costs were established, since the original costs would carry forward until the systems were upgraded. She said once the upgrades took place the monthly and annual costs would go down, so she was comfortable with the preliminary upgrade one-time costs she had been reviewing.

Mayor Barnes closed the public hearing.

Resolution 2019-006 Cancelling Certain Warrants and Checks Written by the City

Clerk Treasurer Pantoja Wright explained that there was a previous resolution addressing the check made out to Izak Riley, but with the staff turnover it was not addressed after the council approved the resolution. She explained that the new resolution would make sure she was authorized to reissue both checks in the current year.

Council member Kiewit made a motion to approve Resolution 2019-006 Cancelling Certain Warrants and Checks Written by the City as presented. Council member Mann seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mayor and Council Comments

Mayor Barnes addressed the passage of I-976 and acknowledged that it would affect projects in the works at the State level. She said according to WSDOT and Senator King the current WSDOT projects may be put off but she was told it was fairly certain the delay would be no worse than what is anticipated in dealing with BNSF and the shoofly design. Barnes noted that the state funding already invested in the Bingen Point Access project meant that there would continue to be monthly meetings to

figure out what each entity will be doing moving forward. Barnes noted that the improvements to SR141 will be put off by a year, but that the delay may not be a bad thing because White Salmon planned to work on water lines in that area anyway.

Council member Kiewit asked if the passage of I-976 meant less money would be available.

Mayor Barnes said the governor wanted some time to see the results of the measure, and that it was currently being challenged in court so currently it's more of a buffer period to let things settle before moving forward with projects.

Council member Kiewit reminded Mayor Barnes to ask WSDOT about the property that's been purchased for right of way and the possibility of salvaging materials or trees.

Council member O'Connor asked if the quiet zone funding fell under the "wait and see" delay, or if that was funded through a different means.

Mayor Barnes said she believed it was a different source, but that she would need better clarification from Senator King to be sure.

Mayor Barnes noted that the annual fall brush clean-up started the next day.

Council member Kiewit volunteered to place a note in the post office to remind the community about the clean-up.

Public Works Superintendent Spratt said he planned to put up the downtown tree lights next week.

Mayor Barnes said someone had told her they loved how the light strands look wrapped one time around in the upper branches of the trees.

Council member O'Connor said the trees always look really nice.

Council member Kiewit agreed.

Public Works Superintendent Spratt said the fire department would like to get containers to use for storage and training, to be placed near the Public Works Shop.

Council member Kiewit would like to ask WSDOT about doing a walk through with city employees or council members to review changes and the status of any trees. Kiewit said many of the trees are over 100 years old and said she felt conscious preservation efforts were warranted.

Mayor Barnes said at this stage in the project planning it may be difficult to know for sure what the landscaping will end up being but agreed that the trees were important to consider.

Council member Kiewit noted that WSDOT had said they wanted to hear any concerns from the Bingen City Council or residents. She said she believed the trees were crucial for storm water management and erosion control, and she would like to make sure project planners think about big picture as the area continued to develop.

Council member Kiewit asked that old business bullet points be utilized for recalling unfinished council discussions on future agendas.

Mayor Barnes reminded Council member Kiewit to reach out to the City of Hood River regarding their level of input and influence on public art selection and placement through the Art of Community Foundation.

Council member Mann mentioned that she would like to ask The Society Hotel to come and talk with the Council about their first year in business and their exterior maintenance plan. She said she heard from the neighborhood that traffic has calmed from the initial opening of the hotel, but said the residential streets were still pretty busy compared to before.

Mayor Barnes said she had been on the radio for the last time with White Salmon's Mayor Poucher, and expressed how much she appreciated how the two cities had been able to move forward together. She said she was looking forward to working with Mayor-Elect Keethler in the same way.

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 November 19, 2019.

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

Payroll Checks 21107-21112 and Payroll EFT (Dated 11/15/2019) totaling \$18,774.78 General Fund - \$8,308.44, Street Fund - \$3,037.17, Water Fund - \$2,133.89, Sewer Fund - \$375.35, Treatment Plant Fund - \$4,919.93.

Checks 21113-21130 totaling \$82,860.43. General Fund - \$30,174.65, Street Fund - \$191.17, Water Fund - \$24,982.33, Sewer Fund - \$27,123.65, Treatment Plant Fund - \$388.63.

The council adjourned at 7:50 pm.

City Clerk

Mayor