

BINGEN CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

DRAFT – November 24, 2020

Special Meeting Via Teleconference

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Betty J Barnes at 7:05 pm. Council members present: Phil Jones, Ryan O'Connor, Catherine Kiewit, Joseph O'Sullivan. Council members absent: Isolde Schroder. Staff present: City Clerk Cheyenne Pantoja Wright, City Attorney Christopher R Lanz.

Public Hearing – Proposed Ordinance 2020-02-707 Amending BMC 13.24.030 Monthly Sewer Billing

Mayor Barnes opened the public hearing on Proposed Ordinance 2020-02-707 Amending BMC 13.24.030 Monthly Sewer Billing.

Mayor Barnes closed the public hearing.

Proposed Ordinance 2020-02-707 Amending BMC 13.24.030 Monthly Sewer Billing

City Attorney Lanz noted that the ordinance number in the document footer was incorrect.

Council member Jones made a motion to approve Proposed Ordinance 2020-02-707 Amending BMC 13.24.030 Monthly Sewer Billing as corrected. Council member O'Connor seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Public Hearing – Proposed Ordinance 2020-03-708 Amending BMC 13.04.120 Service Classifications and Charges Designated for Water Service

Mayor Barnes opened the public hearing on Proposed Ordinance 2020-03-708 Amending BMC 13.04.120 Service Classifications and Charges Designated for Water Service

Mayor Barnes closed the public hearing.

Proposed Ordinance 2020-03-708 Amending BMC 13.04.120 Service Classifications and Charges Designated for Water Service

City Attorney Lanz noted that the ordinance number in the document footer was incorrect.

Council member Kiewit asked why the rate was 5% and said she thought the budget committee had discussed raising the base rate and not the usage rate.

Clerk Pantoja Wright said that had been discussed but that the conversation had been about raising the base rate by 7% instead of 5%, and not raising the usage rate, or just doing 5% across the board. She said that absent any further feedback she opted for the standard 5% increase on both base and usage rates. She reminded council that utility revenues for 2021 would be very difficult to forecast due to the state mandated inability to charge late fees or disconnect utilities, as well as the financial hardship affecting many residents.

Council member Kiewit made a motion to approve Proposed Ordinance 2020-03-708 Amending BMC 13.04.120 Service Classifications and Charges Designated for Water Service as corrected. Council member Jones seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Public Hearing – Proposed Ordinance 2020-04-709 Advalorem Taxes

Mayor Barnes opened the public hearing on Proposed Ordinance 2020-04-709 Advalorem Taxes.

Council member O’Sullivan asked for a brief explanation on the ordinance.

Clerk Pantoja Wright said the Advalorem Tax was based on assessed property values and the standard yearly increase was 1%. She noted the increase in revenue was minimal, and that the assessed property values fluctuated year to year.

Mayor Barnes closed the public hearing.

Proposed Ordinance 2020-04-709 Advalorem Taxes

Council member Jones made a motion to approve Proposed Ordinance 2020-04-709 Advalorem Taxes as presented. Council member O’Connor seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Local Government Coronavirus Relief Funds Certification #1 Amended

There was discussion about the remaining CARES Act dollars, and how to best use them to assist the residents of Bingen during the financial difficulty caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

There was a consensus to issue payment to Bishop Sanitation for portable restrooms and wash stations through the end of November, 2020, and to grant the remaining funds to Washington Gorge Action Programs for a utility assistance program.

Council member Kiewit made a motion to update the date on the local government coronavirus relief fund certification and A-19 form, allow the mayor and staff to update expenditures through November 30, 2020, and issue a check to Washington Gorge Action Programs for the remainder of the CARES Act funding, with the money to be used for outstanding utility expenses for Bingen residents. Council member O’Connor seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The council adjourned at 7:58 pm.

City Clerk

Mayor