**BINGEN CITY COUNCIL MINUTES**

**August 1, 2023**

**Meeting Via Teleconference and In-Person**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Catherine Kiewit at 7:04 p.m.

Council members present: Phil Jones, Ryan O’Connor, and Brittany Spratt. Staff present: City Administrator Krista Loney, City Attorney Christopher R Lanz., Fire Chief Carl Spratt

Audience Present: Reed Stager

**Public Comment**

None.

**Meeting Minutes – 7/18/2023**

Councilor Jones noted a correction under Staff Updates. The overlay is on Franklin, not Jefferson. Councilor O’Connor made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. Councilor Spratt provided the second and the motion carried.

**Bingen Fire Update**

The Bingen Fire Department responded to 49 calls in July: 6 in Bingen and 43 outside. The Major fires were the Tunnel Five Fire and the Newell Road Fire. Both of these were state mobilized which means that the responding fire fighters will get paid directly and the BFD will receive payment for the vehicles that responded to the fires.

Mayor Kiewit asked for an update on the transmission of Engine 37. Chief Spratt responded that they are waiting for the schedule to open up for the mechanic that will do the work. In the meantime, they are getting the new radio equipment quoted.

Mayor Kiewit asked Chief Spratt if he had ever been approached in the past regarding paying for Klickitat County Emergency Management dispatch services. Chief Spratt stated that there had never been mention of paying.

Mayor Kiewit asked if there was ever a case where BFD didn’t respond. Chief Spratt said yes, when nobody was available which is rare but does happen.

Mayor Kiewit asked what happens if the BFD gets called and are already responding to another fire. Chief Spratt stated that he keeps some staff and resources in reserve on the rare chance that two fires happen simultaneously.

**Bingen Police Update**

Chief Hepner was not able to attend.

**Continued Public Hearing – Ordinance 2023-04-737 Accessory Dwelling Units**

Mayor Kiewit opened the public hearing at 7:17 p.m. Administrator Loney provided a memo with the response from Councilor Schroder regarding her support of the ADU code. Peter Wright provided the following public comment via email:

*If I may add a public comment, please consider:*

*1. Creating a maximum size. Technically, I do not see anything in the draft ordinance that would prohibit someone to build an "ADU" to whatever size they wanted, which would be outside the intent of the ordinance. I think that 800 sq ft is a reasonable maximum size for a comfortable 2 bedroom.*

*2. Eliminating minimum size. This is restrictive of some very small and affordable homes that may be desirable. There is a 14'x14' (~200 sq ft) tiny studio in White Salmon that is pretty nice and very habitable for one person with few needs. See below.*

The public hearing was closed at 7:27 p.m. Councilor Jones made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2023-04-737 Accessory Dwelling Units. Councilor Spratt provided the second and the motion carried.

**Budget Committee**

Councilor Jones reviewed the memo regarding Bingen investments and salary increases for fire, the mayor and council. Budget committee met on July 21, 2023, to discuss these items. Some of Bingen’s investments have expired since the banks changed names. These CDs need to be reinvested. Councilor O’Connor made a motion to authorize Administrator Loney to move funds into 1-year CDs with a 1.5% rate and 2-year CDs with a 2% rate. Councilor Jones provided a second and the motion carried.

The Budget Committee has reviewed budget projections and recommends a raise for the Fire Chief from $200 per month to $600 per month, as well as a raise for Assistant Fire Chiefs from $100 per month to $200 per month. Resolution 2023-012 Establishing Compensation for Volunteer Firefighters is included in the council packet. Councilor O’Connor made a motion to adopt Resolution 2023-012 and Councilor Jones provided the second. There were two aye votes and Councilor Spratt had to abstain. Without a quorum, the vote could not continue. Councilor O’Connor made a motion to defer to the next meeting. Councilor Jones provided the second and the motion carried.

The budget committee recommends that Councilors receive an increase from $150 per month to $200 per month upon election/re-election and the mayor receive an increase from $600 per month to $1,000 per month. Council members haven’t received a raise since 2018 and 2020, depending on election year, and the mayor has not received a raise since 2018. The budget committee is hopeful that providing a raise for the mayor will encourage people who otherwise couldn’t afford to serve would be able to do so. These increases are done with an ordinance. The associated ordinance will be heard at the August 15 Council Meeting.

**Water Rights Discussion**

Administrator Loney provided a memo about Bingen Water Right No. G4-33106. Paperwork was submitted to finalize this water right on February 14, 2023. Ecology sent a letter acknowledging receipt of the paperwork on July 21, 2023. This paperwork demands that Bingen hire a Certified Water Rights Expert from a list provided by Ecology at a price of $4500 to verify that the paperwork that Bingen submitted was accurate. Dan Haller from Aspect Consulting worked on this water right in 2014-2015 and is familiar with it.

Councilor O’Connor made a motion to award the contract for certifying the water rights to Dan Haller at Aspect Consulting. Councilor Spratt provided the second and the motion carried.

**Vacation Rental Code Continuing Discussion**

At the last meeting the following changes were made:

1. “Owner” will be changed to “Licensee”
2. The paragraph submitted by Reed Stager limiting the number of vacation rentals will be added to 5.16.040.
3. Section 5.16.050.1 will be changed from “Owner” to “Licensee”
4. Section 5.16.050.2 will remove the requirement of the owner to live in the local area
5. Section 5.16.050.4 will change to Self-Inspection

Council reviewed the term of annual license section 5.16.060. As current written, the license period is 3 years. Administrator Loney was contacted by a woman who owns a rental in Hood River that she wants to sell and buy a home in Bingen to use as a vacation rental. She asked for a 10 year license period. Reed Stager suggested 7 years. Mayor Kiewit stated that she wanted feedback from Councilor O’Sullivan. Administrator Loney will work make all the adjustments from previous discussions to the paperwork and the discussion will be continued to the next Council meeting.

**Staff Updates**

Administrator Loney had the following updates for Council:

* The TAP grant kickoff meeting was July 24, and we are working through the paperwork.
* Administrator Loney will be presenting to the CERB board in Dayton, WA on September 21, 2023. Loney connected with Chris Zahas of Leland Consulting, from the CPAT team, to see if they are interested on working on the CERB project.
* TIB approved the overlay of the northernmost block of Cedar, Franklin between Cedar and Pine, and the chip seal and fog seal of Pine and Vine. The work will happen the third week of September.
* The renderings are back from GameTime and Council selected option 2. Administrator Loney will complete the order this week.
* There are 7-10 leaks on the 2” waterline along the south side of SR-14. Loney is working to get quotes on replacing the line and to secure funding.

1. Bingen’s 2021 and 2022 audit has been scheduled. We received the notice last week and I have two pages of documents to provide to SAO. I am 95% complete with document submission.

**Mayor’s Update and Council Comments**

Mayor Kiewit had the following updates for Council:

* Centennial Committee is going well.
* Bingen needs a Mayor Pro Tempore. Councilor O’Connor made a motion that Brittany Spratt be selected Mayor Pro Tempore. Councilor Jones provided the second and the motion carried.
* Mayor Kiewit will be on vacation August 4 through 14.

Councilor Spratt will Zoom in for the August 15 meeting and be absent for the September 5 meeting. Councilor O’Connor will be out for the August 15 meeting. Councilor Jones will have surgery on August 9.

Councilor O’Connor is meeting with Frank Sinclair at the Treatment Plant on August 11 at 8 a.m. Councilor Spratt will join him.

**Voucher Approval**

Payroll Checks (Dated 7/31/2023) and Payroll EFT (Dated 7/31/2023) totaling $40,504.70; General Fund - $12,653.23, Street Fund - $8,364.96, Water Fund - $4,754.23, Sewer Fund - $1,310.41 and Treatment Plant Fund - $13,421.87

Councilor O’Connor made a motion to approve the Payroll dated July 31, 2023. Councilor Spratt seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Claims Checks (Dated 8/1/2023) totaling $89,661.14; General Fund - $44,130.48, Street Fund - $2,353.18, Water Fund - $4,524.72, Sewer Fund - $3,526.53, Treatment Plant Fund - $32,553.88, and Water Capital Reserve Fund - $2,572.35

Councilor Jones made a motion to approve the Claims dated August 1, 2023. Councilor Spratt

seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

**Adjournment**

Mayor Kiewit adjourned the meeting at 8:43 p.m.