

BINGEN CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

August 2, 2011

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Betty Barnes at 7:00 p.m. Council members present: Laura Mann, Sandi Dickey, Catherine Kiewit. Council members absent: Clinton Bryan. City Administrator and City Attorney Tad Connors were present. Audience: Tony Domish, Tom Hons, Maria Perez, Jesse Burkhardt, Clare Burkhardt, Sverre Bakke

Certificate of Appreciation – Jesse Burkhardt

Betty Barnes presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Jesse Burkhardt for services to Bingen.

Jesse Burkhardt thanked the council.

Catherine Kiewit said she really appreciated the work that Jesse Burkhardt did in reporting the news in an accurate, fair and unbiased manner.

Certificate of Appreciation – Jan Brending

Betty Barnes presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Jan Brending for achieving Professional Finance Officer certification for the 5th year.

Jan Brending thanked the council.

Council Vacancy – Interviews and Appointment

Maria Perez introduced herself to the city council. She said she has lived in Bingen since 2000 and is a small business owner catering to the Hispanic community. Perez said she has been inspired by the city because of what has been done. She said she feels she would be a good candidate for the team.

Laura Mann said she thinks Perez has a good reputation with a part of the Bingen population that is not represented. She said she would like to hear from that part of the community.

Catherine Kiewit thanked Maria Perez for being interested in serving on the council.

Sandi Dickey said she is glad Perez applied for the position.

Catherine Kiewit moved to appoint Maria Perez to fill council position #1. Sandi Dickey seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

Approval of Minutes – July 19, 2011

Changes to the minutes of the July 19, 2011 regular council meeting were noted as follows:

Page 1, 9th paragraph, last sentence should read as follows: “She said staff from Evergreen Rural Water will be here on July 27.”

Page 2, 3rd paragraph, 2nd sentence should read as follows: “She said that she expects Maria Perez will apply for the position.”

Laura Mann moved to approve the minutes of the July 19, 2011 regular council meeting as corrected. Catherine Kiewit seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

Professional Services Contract Proposal – Gray & Osborne, Assessment and Recommendations for Upgrades to Oxidation Ditch and Aerobic Digesters

Jan Brending said the city needs to hire an engineer to evaluate certain components of the treatment plant in anticipation of the fish plant coming on line in 2012. She noted that a pilot study will be conducted this year in September. Brending said Gray & Osborne are familiar with the treatment plant and the fish plant. She said Gray & Osborne will provide the services for a cost of \$16,072 to come out of the Treatment Plant Replacement fund.

Tom Hons provided a review of the oxidation ditch and aerobic digester and explained why the evaluation is needed.

Catherine Kiewit asked if the second oxidation ditch acts as a backup ditch.

Tom Hons said yes but the capacity of the plant is based on both ditches. He said the ditch was used some last summer but does have some problems. Hons said the rotors have been in place since 1973 and one of them can't be used at all.

Catherine Kiewit asked what happens if the city no longer has a backup ditch.

Tom Hons said that is a good point and that there are benefits to not have the 2nd ditch used.

The council and staff discussed the fish plant and the amount of capacity that may take up in the treatment plant and capacity that may be added to a wastewater line that currently experiences problems.

Tad Connors said he will look at the agreements the city has with White Salmon. He said White Salmon may be committed to hooking up the fish plant but Bingen might not be.

Tom Hons said the city can require pretreatment. He said the Department of Ecology will back the city up. Hons said pretreatment will lower the strength of the waste however with a seasonal operation pretreatment could be problematic. He said the pilot test will provide the city with information for further analysis.

Jan Brending said Bingen did comment to the tribes that there is a concern about the amount of capacity the fish plant might be taking up and the lack of economic benefit to the surrounding community.

Laura Mann moved to authorize a contract with Gray & Osborne, Inc. to conduct an evaluation of the wastewater treatment plant oxidation ditch and aerobic digester for \$16,072 with funding coming from the Treatment Plant Replacement fund. Catherine Kiewit seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

Proposed White Salmon Budget Amendment

Betty Barnes reviewed the proposed White Salmon budget amendment. She said the proposed amendment is a 9% reduction from the original budget amendment submitted to the city. Barnes said the amendment without capital improvements is a 17.26% increase from the budget adopted by White Salmon in 2010.

The city council discussed the proposed budget amendment.

Laura Mann said the city needs to decide whether generally it can accept the proposed budget amendment. She said she does not think the city can pick the budget apart. Mann said she hopes that the 2012 budget will go differently with the city looking at overall policy recommendations.

Catherine Kiewit asked if it is the council's job to determine whether the budget amendment is okay or not.

Betty Barnes said that the only way White Salmon can move forward is if Bingen agrees with the amendment. She said that she is recommending that if White Salmon does not pass the amendment that the two cities' budget committees meet jointly until there is an agreement.

Catherine Kiewit asked why salaries and benefits were not budgeted appropriately.

Jan Brending said that due to union negotiations and other factors the salary and benefit information was not projected correctly. She said she was aware of the information in February and that the two cities began budget amendment discussions at that time.

Tony Domish said the city's union contract was horrible and White Salmon felt it was necessary to hire a professional union negotiator. He also noted that the city has to pay back overtime wages for Ben Harvey taking care of the dog because it was not paid properly in the past.

Catherine Kiewit said she is not comfortable paying more than what Bingen had committed to in 2010.

Betty Barnes said that to reduce the budget further would likely result in a cut to coverage. She said she would like to see efforts put into the 2012 budget.

Catherine Kiewit asked if the Bingen council shouldn't be good stewards and not deplete the city's reserves.

Betty Barnes said yes.

Catherine Kiewit said the situation was not self-imposed by Bingen and is not Bingen's fault. She said she believes it is a product of poor management and that Bingen shouldn't have to solve White Salmon's problems.

Laura Mann said she feels the same. She noted that Bingen is also working on its own problem – water. Mann said the city has to keep doing the best it can. She said that Betty Barnes and Jan Brending have worked hard to get the budget to where it is at. Mann said she thinks some things will come under and others will come in over but that Bingen will pay actual costs.

Sandi Dickey said she thinks Tony Domish did a good job in trying to cut costs. She said however that overtime has been an issue in the past.

Tony Domish provided an explanation of the schedule and how it will reduce overtime.

Sandi Dickey said she thought Bingen was told that the police clerk position was temporary.

Betty Barnes said she does not recall being told that.

Laura Mann said she does recall a discussion about the position but doesn't necessarily remember the use of the word temporary.

Betty Barnes asked if the proposed union contract with the police officers keeps managerial options.

Tony Domish said yes. He said the management can consider using an 8-hour, 10-hour or 12-hour shift if necessary.

Catherine Kiewit said she feels White Salmon should come up with the difference. She said they made the mistakes and they should have to take care of them.

Tad Connors said Bingen can call for mediation or possibly end up in litigation.

Catherine Kiewit said she is not ready to make a decision on the budget.

Laura Mann suggested drafting a letter to White Salmon requesting that work continue on the budget looking at ways to make additional cuts.

Catherine Kiewit moved to table action on the proposed White Salmon budget amendment to August 16. Sandi Dickey seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

There was a consensus of the council to write a letter to the City of White Salmon stating that the Bingen council was unable to come to a consensus with only three council members present and that the council would like to see continued effort to see if there is any additional betterment of the budget. The council agreed to note that if further meetings take place that one member from each cities budget committee also attend the meetings. Betty Barnes selected Catherine Kiewit to attend the meetings.

Treasurer's Report – June 2011

Sandi Dickey moved to table the Treasurer's Report for June 2011 to the August 16 council meeting. Catherine Kiewit seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

Old Business

Water Use – Continued Discussion

Continued discussion on the water use was moved to the August 16 council meeting.

Mayor's Update and Council Comments

Benches

Betty Barnes noted that Greg Colt has donated two benches that were removed from in front of the old laundry mat to the city. She said they will be installed near the skatepark.

Concert in the Park

Betty Barnes said the first concert in the park to be held in Bingen went well. She said both the police and fire departments showed up to participate in the activities.

Alan Brandt – Washington Youth Academy

Betty Barnes said Alan Brandt is attending the Washington Youth Academy. She said she thought it would be great if the city could send him a card to encourage him.

Walnut Street Railroad Crossing

Betty Barnes said that the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission has ruled that the Walnut Street railroad crossing is a public crossing. She said a request was made to move the gate to the north side of the railroad. Barnes said that after a conversation with Jason Spadero of SDS Lumber that to secure the future of the crossing it was in the best interest to remove the gate. She said the gate has been removed and there is no longer a safety issue due to the gate.

Barnes noted that the railroad has requested a copy of the easement for the Walnut crossing.

Insitu

Betty Barnes said that she spoke with a gentleman today who made statements that Insitu wasn't going to stay in Bingen because Bingen doesn't support Insitu. She said the gentleman suggested writing a letter of support. Barnes said she spoke with Steve Morrow who said that is not Insitu's position at all and not to worry about it. She noted that Morrow stated Insitu hopes to make a decision by the end of August regarding a new facility.

Solid Waste

Laura Mann provided a copy of an e-mail from a company name Dirt Hugger. She said the company provides composting at a facility in The Dalles. Mann said she would like the council to talk about how the city could possibly use their services in the future. She said that the issue be placed on a future agenda.

Committee and Staff Reports

State Archives Record Grant

Jan Brending reported the city has received a grant from the State Archives for digitizing its minutes, ordinances and resolutions through 2010. She requested authorization to have the mayor sign the agreements.

Laura Mann moved to authorize the mayor to sign the agreements for the State Archives Record Grant. Catherine Kiewit seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

Bank Account and VISA Card Implementation

Jan Brending said she is working with Riverview Community Bank to complete the transition from First Independent Bank. She said the city will also be scheduling implementation of the VISA card program.

Bingen-White Salmon Police Department

Tony Domish said the Bingen park is getting a lot of use. He said the department responded to 2 calls – one for assault and one for verbal language. Domish said he has some ideas about how to address the problems that he will present at the next council meeting.

Tony Domish reported that 3 juveniles were arrested in relation to White Salmon vandalism and car prowls.

White Salmon Pool

Betty Barnes announced that currently the White Salmon pool is closed but that it may reopen.

Vouchers

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 August 2, 2011. The council by unanimous vote does approve for payment the following list: checks 13305-13327 totaling \$20100.45. Current – \$4101.69; Street - \$2325.32; Fire Equipment Reserve - \$3,074.82; Water - \$8122.16 Sewer - \$241.50; Treatment Plant - \$2234.96.

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 August 2, 2011. The council by unanimous vote does approve for payment the following list: payroll checks (07/29/2011) EFT, 13302-13304, totaling \$20537.93. Current – \$8855.48; Street - \$2879.24; Water - \$2739.17; Sewer - \$415.06; Treatment Plant - \$5648.98.

Executive Session

At 9:00 p.m. Betty Barnes announced that pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) the city council will go into Executive Session for 15 minutes to discuss potential litigation regarding two separate items.

At 9:15 p.m. the city council resumed regular session. Betty Barnes said the council will continue the Executive Session for an additional 10 minutes.

At 9:25 p.m. the city council resumed regular session.

Catherine Kiewit moved to authorize Tad Connors to write a letter to the owner of Solstice regarding the sewer issue in consultation with the mayor. Sandi Dickey seconded the motion and it was unanimously passed.

At 9:26 p.m. the city council adjourned.

City Clerk

Mayor