

**MINUTES**  
**CITY OF STEVENSON COUNCIL MEETING**  
**January 18, 2024**  
**6:00 PM, City Hall and Remote**

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**1. CALL TO ORDER/PRESENTATION TO THE FLAG:** Mayor Anderson called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm, lead the group in reciting the pledge of allegiance and conducted roll call.

PRESENT

Councilmembers Dave Cox, Kristy McCaskell, Michael D. Johnson, Pat Rice, and Lucy Lauser

City Attorney Robert Muth, Public Works Director Carolyn Sourek, Community Development Director Ben Shumaker, and City Administrator Leana Kinley were also present.

There were about 15 members of the public also present.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

- Mary Repar-Commented on the city tree program, heritage tree maintenance, courthouse plaza project, and undergrounding infrastructure.

**3. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:**

- a) \*1/18 changes include:
- Added minutes from 1/17/24 meeting (item 4c)
  - Added Parks Plan Presentation (item 6a)
  - Added Rate Study Presentation (item 7a)
  - Added sewer committee memo and documents (item 8a)
  - Updated proposed traffic ordinance with minor changes (item 9c)
  - Added Approval of Interlocal Agreement with Fire District 2 (item 9d)
  - Added Vouchers for approval (item 12a)

**4. CONSENT AGENDA:** The following items were presented for Council approval.

- a) **Water Adjustment** - Joanne Marquis (meter No. 900026) requested a water adjustment of \$24.82 for a water leak which they have since repaired.
- b) **Liquor License Renewal** - Backwoods Brewing Company
- c) **\*Minutes** of December 21, 2023 and January 17, 2024.

MOTION: To approve consent agenda items a-c.

Motion made by Councilmember Cox, Seconded by Councilmember Johnson.

Voting Yea: Councilmembers Cox, McCaskell, Johnson, Rice, and Lauser

## 5. SHERIFF'S OFFICE REPORT:

- a) **Sheriff's Report** - The Skamania County Sheriff's report for activity within Stevenson city limits for the prior month was presented for council review. The department was responding to public safety calls throughout the storm and prioritizing more urgent needs. He brought up the number of deputies in training to bring up staffing levels. Discussion on how many deputies there are currently, how many left in the last quarter, and reasons for leaving also took place.

## 6. PRESENTATIONS FROM OUTSIDE AGENCIES:

- a) **\*Park Plan Presentation** - Marina French from DCG Watershed presented the parks planning effort and initial findings. This is being paid for through a 100% grant from the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO). The final plan will be presented at the February council meeting for final approval to meet a deadline of March 1st for the 2024 RCO grant funding cycle. The council asked questions throughout the presentation. Mary Repar and Rick May also asked questions and provided comments on the plan.

## 7. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

- a) **\*Utility Rates and System Development Charges** - Brooke Tacia, FCS Group Project Manager, presented information on the utility rate study and restructuring for monthly rates and system development charges. This is the first of two scheduled public hearings on the topic and there will be a special council workshop on January 25th as well.

Mayor Anderson opened the public hearing at 7:18pm.

Brooke Tacia and Chase Bozett presented on the rate study and restructuring for the water and wastewater utilities and paused after each topic for questions and direction.

Water base rate comments:

- Rick May asked about rate structure not encouraging water conservation.
- Kent Nielson stated the more water we use we should pay for.
- Mary Repar would like to see an estimate for 300 ft<sup>3</sup>. Think about how you're impacting the population. How many water connections are we allowed? Snowbirds need to be paying the base rate regardless of where they are.

Sewer base rates comments:

- Mary Repar stated 10% is too much of an increase, it should stick to COLA. And no extension. Also commented on the sewer extensions and the difference between the commercial and residential customers.
- Kent Nielson stated there should be a benefit for those that have lived here and residents should be able to be off-grid situations.

- Rick May commented on the rate impact of the sewer extensions.
- Councilmember Lauser is strongly in favor of a plan that addresses the Cost-of-Service impacts as much as possible. Easing it in to not push the businesses out.

System Development Charges:

- There were questions from the council and public regarding System Development Charges and associated structure changes.

The Public Hearing was closed at 9:08pm.

## 8. SITUATION UPDATES:

- a) **\*Sewer Committee Update** - Staff presented a memo with an update on the results of the committee and a revised proposal for council discussion. Meeting documents from the committee are being uploaded to the website: <https://www.ci.stevenson.wa.us/publicworks/page/committee-proposed-sewer-ordinance> .

Wes Huston thanked the council for holding the committee and staff for their help with the process. He ran through the various triggers recommended by the committee and the assumptions. Some of the work here plays into where the rates may head with extensions. Due to the time, council discussion did not take place and the item will be moved to the February 15<sup>th</sup> agenda.

Mayor Anderson called a 5-minute recess at 9:32pm. The meeting was reconvened at 9:37pm.

## 9. COUNCIL BUSINESS:

- a) **Discuss City Hall Friday Closure** - City Hall began closing the office on Fridays in October 2022 as a tool to improve productivity. These tools were prioritized during the strategic planning process. Staff is in the office, meetings are held, and the phones ring to direct extensions. Prior to the closure, City Hall was open Monday-Friday from 7:30am-5pm (47.5 hours). It is now open Monday -Thursday 7:30am-5pm (38 hours). Pat Rice read an email he received from Joseph Robertson regarding wanting to open City Hall to the public on Fridays. Council discussed and an ordinance will be brought forward at the next council meeting regarding City Hall hours.

Council consensus to continue past 10pm.

- b) **Approve Committee Appointments** - Mayor Scott Anderson presented the 2024 draft committee and board appointments for council discussion and approval. Councilmember Lauser wanted to serve on the Homeless Housing Council. Councilmember Rice wanted to serve on the Community Action Team (CAT), City

Administrator Kinley will get clarification from the EDC on CAT appointment rules. The list will be brought back at the February meeting with changes.

MOTION: To reappoint Jeff Breckel and Anne Kassee to the Planning Commission.

Motion made by Councilmember Rice, Seconded by Councilmember Johnson.

Voting Yea: Councilmembers Cox, McCaskell, Johnson, Rice, and Lauser

- c) **Ordinance Amending Title 10-Vehicles and Traffic-First Reading** - Public Works Director Carolyn Sourek presents the attached ordinance amending Title 10-Vehicles and Traffic for council discussion and consideration.

MOTION: To approve ordinance 2024-1206 an ordinance amending Stevenson Municipal Code Title 10-Vehicles and Traffic; establishing a purpose, policy, and definitions; assigning duties; removing redundant clauses; and establishing procedures to modify speed limits; and repealing sections of ordinances 996 and 1080.

Motion made by Councilmember Johnson, Seconded by Councilmember Lauser.

Voting Yea: Councilmembers Cox, McCaskell, Johnson, Rice, and Lauser

- d) **\*Approve Interlocal Agreement with Skamania County Fire District 2** - There have been multiple joint meetings with Skamania County Fire District 2 to update the interlocal agreement last approved in 1989. The attached agreement represented changes discussed at the January 17th meeting and was presented for council consideration.

MOTION: To approve the fire protection services interlocal agreement with Skamania County Fire District 2 as presented.

Motion made by Councilmember Lauser, Seconded by Councilmember Cox.

Voting Yea: Councilmembers Cox, McCaskell, Johnson, Rice, and Lauser

## 10. INFORMATION ITEMS:

- a) **Financial Report** - The Treasurer's Report and year-to-date revenues and expenses for 2023 year end will be presented for council review in February.

## 11. CITY ADMINISTRATOR AND STAFF REPORTS:

- a) Ben Shumaker, Community Development Director
- Open planning commission seat open for applications.
  - There is a New FEMA Floodmap, which comes with the requirement to adopt their map and changes to our flood regulations to stay in compliance with their insurance by May 2024.
- b) Carolyn Sourek, Public Works Director
- Hegewald Well stress test starts next week.

- There's a new requirement to have a lead and copper service line inventory and the city was able to get technical assistance to complete the process.
- Trying to start phase 2 of the collection system project. They will likely switch to starting with the Fairgrounds lift station rather than Cascade.
- They will demobilize from Rock Creek Park Drive in March for the WWTP project.
- Crew has been doing a great job plowing.
- Nothing for equipment, parks, or staff.
- Graffiti on the BNSF bridge was brought up to their staff and they will address it. Also working on access to the manholes on BNSF property.
- Timeslots available for tours of the treatment plants.
- Ben mentioned we applied for grants recently to help pay for undergrounding utilities, maintaining trees within city rights of way, and within city parks.
- Requests for Qualifications will be going out for engineering consultants soon.

c) Leana Kinley, City Administrator

- Staff recently completed an audit from Department of Retirement Systems, with the exit interview scheduled.
- Closing out the year, closing out grant projects for the year, and wrapping up the annual financial report to get a single audit done by the deadline.

**12. VOUCHER APPROVAL:**

- a) \*December 2023 payroll, final December 2023 and January 2024 AP checks have been audited and are presented for approval. December payroll checks 17412 thru 17494 total \$146,901.80 which includes EFT payments. Final December 2023 AP checks 17495 thru 17557 total \$672,905.84, which includes EFT payments. January 2024 AP checks 17558 thru 17579 total \$248,773.32, which includes EFT payments. The AP check register with fund transaction summary is attached for review.

MOTION: To approve the vouchers as presented.

Motion made by Councilmember Cox, Seconded by Councilmember Johnson.

Voting Yea: Councilmembers Cox, McCaskell, Johnson, Rice, and Lauser

**13. MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS:**

- Councilmember Cox is concerned with number of law enforcement.
- Councilmember Rice is appreciative of the public works crew.

**14. ISSUES FOR THE NEXT MEETING:**

- a) **Code Enforcement Discussion** requested at the December 21, 2023 will take place at the February 15th council meeting.
- b) **Ordinance on City Hall Office Hours** will be presented at the next meeting.

**15. ADJOURNMENT** - Mayor Anderson adjourned the meeting at 10:23 pm.

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Scott Anderson, Mayor

Date