

MINUTES
CITY OF STEVENSON SPECIAL JOINT COUNCIL MEETING
WITH SKAMANIA COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT NO. 2
January 21, 2020
6:00 PM, City Hall

1. CALL TO ORDER: Mayor to called the meeting to order at 6:06 pm.

PRESENT

Councilmembers Amy Weissfeld, Annie McHale, and Robert Muth.

City Staff in attendance: City Administrator Leana Kinley, Community Development Director Ben Shumaker

FD 2 members: Rob Farris, Chief (via telephone); Tom Delzio, Commissioner

2. FIRE HALL PROJECT:

a) **Direction on Path Forward:** A brief update on information gathered since the last meeting was provided by City Administrator Kinley. The cost to build using a Public-Private Partnership (P3) was determined to be too much for either agency to bear in addition to navigating the challenging political optics of a P3 arrangement in our community.

A discussion over a revised layout, alternative building sites and ideas on other types of lease-back models took place. The topic of other financing models arose and agreement was that a bond or voter-approved tax levy would be needed to successfully fund the construction of the new fire hall.

Initiating a public relations campaign to educate and inform local voters regarding the need to approve a bond to help pay for the new fire hall was discussed at length. Chief Farris stressed the importance of creating an easy to understand message that included the project costs, the work done to reduce costs, and the improved services to be provided. Having the public appreciate the fire department is a good steward of tax money is important in gaining their trust. The current levy for FD2 is .85/\$1,000. Raising an additional .55/\$1,000 was recognized as a significant challenge. Chief Farris pointed out the other projects voters will be asked to fund in the next few years, including a school bond and wastewater treatment facility.

Mayor Anderson shared information on a consultant he met at the recent IACC convention. The consultant, a former fire chief in rural Stevens County, successfully passed a bond measure and built two fire halls. Mayor Anderson noted the need for the fire department to be the primary agency in the bond campaign, and to make the main

