

MINUTES
CITY OF STEVENSON COUNCIL MEETING
December 21, 2023
6:00 PM, City Hall and Remote

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

Elected Officials Attending: Mayor Scott Anderson; Councilmembers David Cox, Kristy McCaskell, Michael Johnson, Pat Rice.

Staff Attending: City Administrator Leana Kinley; Public Works Director Carolyn Sourek; Ben Shumaker, Community Development Director

Guests Attending: Tracy Wyckoff, Undersheriff, Skamania County Sheriff's Office; Seth Otto from Maul Foster Alongi; representatives from FCS Group

Public Attending: Dave Prosser, Laura Prosser, Stan Roth, Wesley Houston, Lucy Lauser.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

>Dave Prosser provided comments on road paving projects and requested the city revoke the sewer/septic moratorium, and further on plans for the courthouse lawn and the waterfront area. He had questions regarding the high-density zoning of his property.

>Laura Prosser commented on road projects, the sewer moratorium, the density zoning, and the cost of hooking up to the city's sewer system.

Mayor Anderson replied with information on the comprehensive plan's zoning history. He also noted there have been a series of workshops regarding the sewer issue with a committee made up of a cross section of stakeholders to develop recommendations.

City Administrator Leana Kinley shared there will be an informational flyer distributed and two public hearings scheduled to provide property owners an opportunity to be heard regarding sewer connections. She pointed out that notes and minutes from the sewer workshops are available on City's website for the public to review.

3. **CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:**

- a) *12/19 changes include:
-Added Wallis Engineering Contract Amendments (items 4j & 4k)
-Addition of vouchers (item 12a)
- b) **12/20 changes include:
-Added additional public comments received (item 2a)
-Added Documents for 2024 Budget Amendment (item 7c)
-Added Fire Mobilization Interagency Agreement (item 9b)

-Added Wellhead Grant Agreement (item 9c)

Councilmember Rice requested item 4e be removed from the consent agenda for further discussion. It was moved to item 9d.

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

- a) **Approve Resolution 2023-423 Updating New Post Office Box Custodians** – Former Utility Clerk Mary Corey retired in September. This resolution updates the custodian to Kaitlyn Conrath, the new Utility Clerk.
- b) **Water Adjustment** - Deborah Zabel (meter no. 705400) requested a water adjustment of \$68.70 for a water leak which they have since repaired.
- c) **Liquor License Renewals** - Big River Grill and Skamania Lodge
- d) **Liquor and Cannabis License Renewal** - High-5 Cannabis
- e) **Moved to agenda item 9d.**
- f) **Approve 2024 Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) Chipseal Contract in the amount of \$71,268** - **Public Works Director Carolyn Sourek** presented the attached contract for chipsealing multiple locations as outlined in the attached segment list. This project is included in the 2024 budget.
- g) **Approve Contract for Farmers' Market Support in the amount of \$10,000 – City Administrator Leana Kinley** presented the attached contract with the Stevenson Downtown Association to provide \$10,000 to support the Farmers' Market as allocated in the 2024 budget. The contract is the same as as previous years.
- h) **Approve 2024 Tourism Funding Award Contracts in the amount of \$466,760 – City Administrator Leana Kinley** presented the contracts for Tourism funding approved at the November 16th council meeting for council approval for a total amount of \$466,760 (the total awarded amount of \$799,012 less \$332,252 for the City of Stevenson Park Plaza project).
- i) **Minutes** of November 16, 2023 regular city council meeting.

MOTION to approve consent agenda items a-i, less item e was made by **Councilmember Johnson**, seconded by **Councilmember Cox**.

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Cox, Johnson, McCaskell, Rice.**

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. **Councilmember Cox** received information from Undersheriff Wyckoff regarding when new trainees would join the Sheriff's Office.

6. PRESENTATIONS:

- a) **Columbia Avenue Realignment Feasibility Study Report**- Seth Otto from Maul Foster Alongi presented a summary slide show of the Columbia Avenue Realignment Feasibility Study Report, paid for through an Integrated Planning Grant from the Department of Ecology. A copy of the full report was attached. He provided an overview of the study, noting the Downtown Plan for Success was a catalyst towards initiating the study as a component of revitalizing downtown Stevenson. Project design concepts, public input and response, potential funding sources, and the discovery of on-site soil and groundwater contamination were all discussed.

Councilmembers received information on additional items, including the need for an intermediary for any property acquisition; what traffic studies were considered, and alternative options, including leaving the site as is.

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

- a) **Utility Rates and System Development Charges** – The planned presentation with representatives from FCS Group on updated utility rates and system development charges for both the water and sewer departments was postponed to January 18th or January 25th, 2024.

Councilmember Rice clarified the January meetings will be for learning and asking questions. **City Administrator Kinley** advised that direction from council will be needed prior to developing an ordinance, and at least two public hearings will take place.

- b) **Proposed 2023 Budget Amendments-First Reading** – **Mayor Anderson** opened the public hearing at 6:47p.m.. **City Administrator Leana Kinley** presented proposed changes to the 2023 budget as outlined in attached documents for council consideration. The changes are time-sensitive and need to be approved by the end of the year. She provided information on where the increased costs and revenue were within the budget.

Public comments: None received

The public hearing closed at 6:49 p.m.

MOTION to approve ordinance 2023-1204 amending the 2023 budget as presented was made by **Councilmember Rice**, seconded by **Councilmember Johnson**.

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Cox, McCaskell, Rice, Johnson**.

- c) **Proposed 2024 Budget Amendments-First Reading** – **Mayor Anderson** opened the public hearing at 6:51 p.m.. **City Administrator Leana Kinley** presented and explained proposed changes to the 2024 budget as outlined in the attached documents for council consideration. The changes are time-sensitive and need to be approved in order to move forward with the First Street Overlook Project.

Public comments: None received

Public Hearing closed at 6:52 p.m.

During Council discussion it was explained the budget amendment is for the \$663K in federal funds designated for the First Street Overlook project. These funds have already been approved and the city has signed a contract to receive the funds. The estimate came in \$20k more than originally estimated and the total project cost needs to be obligated before the First Street Project could move forward.

Revised agenda item 9d Approve Fuel Tax Grant Agreement for First Street Overlook in the amount of \$221,186 is a separate issue, but related, as non-passage of the budget amendment would affect usage of the Transportation Improvement Board matching funds. **City Administrator Kinley** advised the Council the city would have to refund \$130K [corrected later in the meeting] to the federal government if the First Street project did not take place.

MOTION to approve ordinance 2023-1205 amending the 2024 budget as presented was made by **Councilmember Johnson**, seconded by **Councilmember McCaskell**.

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Cox, McCaskell, Johnson**.

Voting nay: **Councilmember Rice**.

8. SITUATION UPDATES:

- a) **Sewer Ordinance Update** – Staff presented an update on the status of the sewer ordinance committee and timeline for presenting a revised proposal for council consideration. Meeting documents from the committee have been uploaded to the website: <https://www.ci.stevenson.wa.us/publicworks/page/committee-proposedsewer-ordinance>. January 8th is tentatively planned for the next sewer committee meeting. Any further information from the committee will be provided to property owners.
- >Wesley Houston spoke as a member of the sewer/septic committee and the work performed.
 - >Stan Roth confirmed the current code in place regarding septic systems would remain following the moratorium being rescinded.
 - >Laura Prosser verified when the rescinding of the moratorium would take effect. City Administrator Kinley shared it would likely be January 2 due to the holiday and newspaper publication schedules. It was noted building permits are issued by the city, septic permits are issued by the county.
- b) **Approve Rescinding Private Sewer System (Septic) Moratorium Ordinance – City Administrator Leana Kinley** presented and explained ordinance 2023-1203 rescinding the moratorium on further new construction, expansion, or replacement of private sewage disposals systems in the urban reserve on the City of Stevenson comprehensive plan future land use map and on property lines within 300 feet of public sewer for council consideration.

MOTION to approve ordinance 2023-1203 rescinding ordinance 2023-1198 related to a moratorium on further new construction, expansion, or replacement of private sewage disposals systems in the urban reserve on the City of Stevenson comprehensive plan future land use map and on property lines within 300 feet of public sewer as presented was made by **Councilmember Johnson**, seconded by **Councilmember Cox**.

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Cox, McCaskell, Johnson, Rice**.

9. COUNCIL BUSINESS:

- a) **Set Date for Council Retreat** - As part of the budget process, council holds a retreat at the beginning of the year to review and establish future goals. Proposed dates for a four-hour session on a Saturday are: 1/27, 2/3, 2/10, 2/17 and 2/24. Councilmembers agreed the 17th or the 24th would work.

- b) ****Approve Fire Mobilization Interagency Agreement with Washington State Patrol - City Administrator Leana Kinley** presented the interagency agreement on behalf of **Fire Chief Rob Farris** for council consideration. This contract will allow the department to be reimbursed for state mobilized fires. A number of Stevenson fire personnel responded to the Tunnel 5 fire in July 2023 but were unable to be reimbursed for their time due to the absence of a contract.

MOTION to approve the fire mobilization interagency agreement between the State of Washington, Washington State Patrol, and the City of Stevenson Fire Department was made by **Councilmember Cox**, seconded by **Councilmember McCaskell**.

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Cox, McCaskell, Johnson, Rice**.

- c) ****Approve Wellhead 106 Grant - Public Works Director Carolyn Sourek** presented and explained the draft scope of work for the 2023 Wellhead 106 Grant Program through the Department of Health. This will pay for an analysis to determine if Hegewald Well is sufficient to act as the city's primary water source. This is in response to failures at the Rock Creek Intake and reduction of surface water sources, as well as further follow-up to the recommendation in the Water System Plan to evaluate the groundwater supply.

MOTION to Authorize the Mayor to sign the agreement between the Washington State Department of Health and the City of Stevenson for the 2023 Wellhead 106 Grant Program in the amount of \$27,500 with approval from the City Attorney was made by **Councilmember McCaskell**, seconded by **Councilmember Johnson**.

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Cox, McCaskell, Johnson, Rice**.

- d) **Approve Fuel Tax Grant Agreement for First Street Overlook in the amount of \$221,186 - Public Works Director Carolyn Sourek** presented the attached grant agreement with the Washington State Transportation Improvement Board in the amount of \$221,186 for matching funds on the First Street Overlook project. The federal funds for this project have been approved and this project is included in the 2024 budget.

Councilmember Rice stated objections with the project.

MOTION to approve the Fuel Tax Grant Agreement for First Street Overlook in the amount of \$221,186 was made by **Councilmember Cox**, seconded by **Councilmember Johnson**.

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Cox, McCaskell, Johnson**.

Voting nay: **Councilmember Rice**

10. INFORMATION ITEMS presented to the Council:

- a) **Planning Commission Minutes** from the November 2024 Planning Commission meeting.
- b) **Financial Report** - The Treasurer's Report and year-to-date revenues and expenses through the prior month were presented.
- c) **Housing Programs Report** for services provided by Washington Gorge Action Programs in Skamania County was enclosed.

11. CITY ADMINISTRATOR AND STAFF REPORTS:

a) **Ben Shumaker, Community Development Director:**

- i) The Planning Department is working on developing a master parks plan along with the Port, School District, County, and Pool District. The project is being funded from the state Department of Recreation and Conservation. Over 200 responses were received from the online requests asking for input on recreational preferences. A follow-up charette took place with the coalition members. **Councilmember Cox** commented on the positive nature of the meeting. A list of projects for the next six years is being prepared as part of the master plan. It will be useful to help with future budgeting.
- ii) **Shumaker** provided an update to the parking study. A December parking survey was conducted to show the difference in parking needs/availability from summer to winter. Data will be crunched and presented to the parking advisory committee.
- iii) Permitting applicants are seasonally low. The cloud-based permitting system is speeding up permit review. Applications can be reviewed simultaneously between departments.
- iv) The Planning Commission will hold a work planning session in January 2024. Some zoning changes will likely come before the City Council in 2024.

b) **Carolyn Sourek, Public Works Director:**

- i) The 2023 Wellhead 106 Grant Program funds were authorized to be accepted earlier in the meeting.
- ii) A recent sanitary survey of the water system was performed by the Department of Health. No deficiencies were noted, several recommendations were made.
- iii) Water facilities inventory was submitted to DOH.
- iv) The sewer project is continuing. A January 10th pre-construction meeting for Pump Station work is scheduled.
- v) Burlington-Northern Santa-Fe buried several manholes down on Railroad Avenue during the recent bridge work, as well as the city outfall to the Columbia. Public Works is working with them to uncover them and undo the damage. **Councilmember Cox** advised tracking staff time and expenses to submit to BNSF for reimbursement.
- vi) **Sourek** is working with Stevenson High School to attain an intern to work at the sewer plant.
- vii) Inspections of city restaurants showing some need fat/oil/grease traps installed.
- viii) Ditches are being cleared to assist with stormwater drainage.
- ix) Five separate DNR applications will be submitted for various tree projects.
- x) Public Works has reached out to Lakeview Road residents regarding planned paving projects.
- xi) Kanaka Creek/Rock Creek load ratings reduced, new crossing signs will be installed.
- xii) A recent Asbestos-Concrete pipe training took place. Seventeen trainees participated, with six from Stevenson. Over \$3k in travel was saved by doing in-house training.
- xiii) The new vac truck was deployed to clean storm drains in Stevenson during a recent storm.

Councilmember Rice commented he has reached out to visit the WWTP, and a date and time is being arranged. Wednesday's are the best days to arrange a visit.

c) **Leana Kinley, City Administrator:**

- i) Office Staff recently held a brief staff strategic planning session due to recent staff changes. Projects were ranked for priority and alignment with the Council's strategic plan. This session recognized digitization as a clear need.

12. VOUCHER APPROVAL:

- a) *November 2023 payroll, and December 2023 AP checks were audited and presented for approval. November payroll checks 17395 thru 17397 total \$127,482.35 included EFT payments. December 2023 AP checks 17394 and 17398 thru 17411 and 17433 thru 17493 total \$716,056.97 included EFT payments. The AP check register with fund transaction summary was attached for review.

MOTION to approve the vouchers as presented was made by **Councilmember McCaskell**, seconded by **Councilmember Cox**.

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Cox, McCaskell, Johnson, Rice**.

13. MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS: None.

14. ISSUES FOR THE NEXT MEETING:

- a) **Councilmember Cox** asked for a future review of the nuisance ordinance to clarify as to how better enforcement can be attained.
- b) **Councilmember Rice** would like to hold a discussion on the Friday closures of City Hall to walk-in traffic, and have the public included.

15. ADJOURNMENT - Mayor Anderson adjourned the meeting at 7:44 p.m.

Scott Anderson, Mayor

Date