

**MINUTES**  
**CITY OF STEVENSON COUNCIL MEETING**  
**March 21, 2024**  
**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.

**PRESENT**

Elected City Officials: Mayor Scott Anderson; Councilmembers Lucy Lauser, Kristy McCaskell, Pat Rice, Michael Johnson, Dave Cox.

City Staff: City Administrator Leana Kinley, Public Works Director Carolyn Sourek, Community Development Director Ben Shumaker, City Attorney Robert Muth.

Guests: Skamania County Undersheriff Tracy Wyckoff

Public Participants: Rick Jessel, Mary Repar, Kara Owen, Bob Wertheimer, Sarah Fuller, John Mobley and others unidentified.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

>Rick Jessel commented on the proposed sewer ordinance.

>Kara Owen, General Manager of Skamania Lodge, spoke on behalf of the lodge regarding the proposed changes to the sewer and water rates.

>Bob Wertheimer questioned what the requirements are now for hooking up to the sewer system.

>Mary Repar spoke about an appeal she filed against the recent permit approval for a shoreline development.

>Sarah Fuller wanted to know if the Park Plan is a done deal.

**3. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:**

**a) \*3/18 changes include:**

- Corrected name of new Planning Commission Member (item 4d)
- Added water leak adjustments (item 4i-j)
- Revised Zoning Amendment attachment to include exhibits (item 6a)

b) **\*\*3/20 changes** include:

- Added contract amounts for rate hearing (item 6c)
- Added updated sewer ordinance (item 7a)
- Added Fire Department report (item 10c)
- Added Homeless Housing Council Report (item 10d)
- Added voucher detail (item 12a)

c) **\*\*\*3/21 changes** include:

- Added contract and amounts for Grayling contract (item 9a)

**4. CONSENT AGENDA:**

- a) **Authorize Mayor Anderson to Sign Letters Against Bigger Trucks** - The Coalition Against Bigger Trucks (CABT) requested letters against increasing the size and weight limits on commercial trucks. More information can be found online at [cabt.org](http://cabt.org).
- b) **Approve Temporary Construction Agreement with Northwest Pipeline** - Public Works Director Carolyn Sourek presented the attached agreement for NW Pipeline to use a section of city property for their project (less than 2,000 sq ft) and cut down a group of trees (about 5 or 6 of varying sizes and conditions) in relation to the project for a total of \$1,500 as outlined in the agreement. A larger copy of the map was attached for easier viewing.
- c) **Approve Skamania County Incarceration Services Agreement** - City Administrator Leana Kinley presented the 2024-25 contract with Skamania County for Incarceration services for council approval. There is a \$5 increase to the inmate fee, or an 8% increase, which was last changed in 2018 (6 years ago).
- d) **\*Appoint Tony Lawson to Planning Commission** - The Planning Commission recommended City Council appoint Tony Lawson to fill position #2, vacated by the expiration of Davey Ray's term.
- e) **Liquor License Renewals** - Columbia Gorge Interpretive Center, Fraternal Order of Eagles, Stevenson Farmers' Market, Rock Creek Tavern and 54:40 Brewing Company.
- f) **Water Adjustment** - Wesley Gillian (meter No. 405000) requested a water adjustment of \$528.73 for a water leak which they have since repaired.
- g) **Water Adjustment** - Stevenson Dental Care (meter No. 202700) requested a water adjustment of \$342.37 for a water leak which they have since repaired.
- h) **Water Adjustment** - Penny Edlund (meter No. 801600) requested a water adjustment of \$595.10 for a water leak which they have since repaired.
- i) **\*Water Adjustment** - SCSD Admin Building (meter No. 405900) requested a water adjustment of \$73.31 for a water leak which they have since repaired.

- j) **\*Water Adjustment** - SCSD Grade School (meter No. 205950) requested a water adjustment of \$10.06 for a water leak which they have since repaired.
- k) **Minutes of February 15th, 2024** regular Council meeting, February 22nd, 2024 special Council meeting and March 2nd, 2024 Council retreat.

**MOTION** to approve consent agenda items a-k was made by Councilmember Cox, seconded by Councilmember Rice.

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

#### 5. SHERIFF'S OFFICE REPORT:

- a) **Sheriff's Report** - Skamania County Undersheriff Tracy Wyckoff presented the Sheriff's Office report for the prior month's activities within Stevenson city limits.

Questions were asked about a recently hired deputy's Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC) certification. Undersheriff Wyckoff stated the new deputy is not certified, but he will be attending the full academy as the application for him to attend an equivalency academy was not approved, and the deputy is not currently patrolling alone.

#### 6. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

**Public hearing opened at 6:13**

- a) **\*Zoning Text Amendment** - Community Development Director Ben Shumaker presented a staff memo and ordinance about street side setback amendments in the R2 and R3 districts for public comment and council discussion. He noted any fundamental changes brought about through Council discussion he would then send back to the Planning Commission for further discussion.

>No public comments were received.

**Public hearing closed at: 6:18**

As a first reading this will come again before Council at the April 2024 meeting.

**Public hearing opened at: 6:18**

- b) **Floodplain Management Program Reading** - Community Development Director Ben Shumaker presented a staff memo and ordinance about proposed amendments to the City's Floodplain Management Regulations based on updated FEMA guidance for public comment and council discussion. Several recommendations from the Planning Commission regarding amendments to SMC 15.24 were included. Adoption of the regulations will allow affected property owners to obtain federal flood insurance. Just three structures are now identified to be at risk.

>No public comments were received.

**Public hearing closed at: 6:23**

Council discussed possible changes. No direction was given to make changes at this time.

As a first reading this will come again before Council at the April 2024 meeting.

**The Public Hearing opened at 6:33**

- c) **Utility Rates and System Development Charges** - City Administrator Leana Kinley presented a staff memo and draft ordinance for council review and discussion. There will be a Public Hearing at the March 25th, 2024 Special Council Meeting where additional information on changes requested will be available.

>Kara Owen, General Manager of Skamania Lodge spoke in support of paying current costs while continuing to have conversations on other structural changes affecting lodging concerns.

>Mary Repar commented the rate increases affect those on fixed incomes. She suggested commercial entities need to pay an equitable amount depending on usage and additional revenue streams need to be found.

**The Public Hearing closed at 6:39**

Council discussion took place on rate schedules, WWTP project costs and savings, completion dates and usage rates for businesses. Clarification on questions concerning across the board increases vs rate structure changes, service rate increases for high/very high users, base rates, income guidelines, voluntary shut-offs and re-connections was provided. Potential changes to the Capital Improvement Plan and the effects on the rate schedule were also considered, as were upcoming water projects.

Council also discussed the potential of creating a Transportation Benefit District with its own voter approved .3% sales tax. This would allow current General Fund resources the City is currently allocating to streets to instead be allocated to the Water/Sewer Fund.

**MOTION** to approve ordinance adopting a 10% increase for sewer rates for 2024 was made by Councilmember Johnson, seconded by Councilmember Cox.

Voting aye: Councilmembers Cox, McCaskell, Johnson.

Voting nay: Councilmembers Rice, Lauser

## 7. SITUATION UPDATES:

- a) **Sewer Ordinance Discussion** - Community Development Director Ben Shumaker presented a final draft of an updated ordinance to SMC 13.08 Sewer and Pre-treatment as discussed for council review and direction. If the draft is deemed suitable for public engagement, the next step will be to establish a timeline for future workshops and hearings and create informational materials for public distribution on the updated changes.

It was agreed to move this discussion to the April 18, 2024 Council meeting.

## 8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- a) **Parks Plan Review** - Community Development Director Ben Shumaker presented the final draft of the Stevenson Parks Plan for council consideration.

**MOTION** to approve resolution 2024-427 adopting a parks, recreation and open space plan for the Stevenson community was made by Councilmember Cox, seconded by Councilmember McCaskell.

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

Voting nay: Councilmember Rice

## 9. COUNCIL BUSINESS:

- a) **Approve Agreement with Grayling Engineers** - Public Works Director Carolyn Sourek presented the contract with Grayling Engineers for design engineering services related to the Cascade Avenue Utility project in the amount of \$168,233.

**MOTION** to approve the contract with Grayling Engineers for Cascade Avenue Utility Improvements project design engineering services in the amount not to exceed \$168,233 was made by Councilmember Cox, seconded by Councilmember Johnson.

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

Abstaining: Councilmember Rice

- b) **Broadband Update** - Community Development Director Ben Shumaker provided an update on broadband. Undergrounding of utilities was noted as a question for the Council to decide on. Further steps include exploring options for service delivery.

- c) **Discuss Crosswalk Safety** - Councilmember Pat Rice brought up crosswalk safety at the last council meeting. Attached was an email related to the concerns for council discussion on what level of resources to allocate to this matter.

Council discussed potential methods to improve crosswalk safety, the need to coordinate with WSDOT for crosswalks along SR 14, and creating sub-committees to research these issues.

- d) **Discuss Creation of Council Agenda Committee** - Councilmember Rice has requested to help create the agenda for council meetings. In the council rules of procedure a committee may be established to create the agenda. The discussion will be over whether or not council would like to create a committee and who would be on the committee; or council may revise policies around the creation of the agenda for council approval. This can also include whether or not to add an opportunity for public comment at the end of the meeting as requested by Councilmember Dave Cox at the last meeting.

Council discussed options to allow additional public comment at the end of meetings, and the timing of when final documents are provided prior to meetings.

- e) **Discuss Office Space Needs for City Council** - Councilmember Rice requested office space within City Hall for meetings and work related to his position. While he has found another option outside of City Hall, there remains the question over what level of support does council need in order to effectively perform their role. Does the city need to provide laptops or network enabled tablet devices? More work is being done online making these types of devices almost a requirement of the position. Are there other needs that should be considered and what resources does the council want to put towards this effort?

It was determined to provide Councilmembers IT support when and if a request was made.

## 10. INFORMATION ITEMS:

- a) **Financial Report** - The Treasurer's Report and year-to-date revenues and expenses through the prior month were presented for council review.
- b) **Stevenson Planning Commission** meeting minutes for the prior month were attached.

## 11. CITY ADMINISTRATOR AND STAFF REPORTS:

- a) **Ben Shumaker, Community Development Director** provided the following updates:
- i) He thanked the Council for appointing Tony Lawson to fill the vacancy on the Planning Commission.
  - ii) The Planning Commission submitted the two recommendations to the Council (Zoning and Flood Plain Regulations); the parking plan will be finalized within a few months and then submitted.
  - iii) He is working on moving the sewer committee's work forward.

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

- i) She described how the Public Works Department strives to operate on a lower budget by reducing expenses, recouping costs with appropriate fees and fines, and attaining grants for needed projects.

**c) Leana Kinley, City Administrator**

- i) Through Council consensus it was agreed the voting member for the .09 Committee will be Councilmember Rice, and for the CAT Committee it will be Councilmember Cox.
- ii) There are a number of public records requests. She is working with staff to put information on a portal available through the laser fiche contract. She noted information requested by a Councilmember can be distributed to other Councilmembers that have expressed interest. She will put the information up on the website.

**12. VOUCHER APPROVAL:**

- a) \*\*February 2024 payroll and March 2024 AP checks have been audited and were presented for approval. February payroll check 17647 total \$128,128.41 included EFT payments. March 2024 AP checks 17646 and 17648 through 17718 total \$903,027.37 included EFT payments. The AP check register with fund transaction summary was attached for review.

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

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

**13. MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS:**

- a) None.

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

- a) Attached was a list of items staff is working on for future meetings.
- b) A further discussion on code violations was requested by Councilmember Rice.

**15. Additional public comments:**

>John Mobley supported the idea of the .3% sales tax possibility.

>Mary Repar commented on computers for new councilmembers, the Area Agency on Aging and Disabilities Board of Southwest Washington and climate change.

**16. EXECUTIVE SESSION** - City Council convened in Executive Session under:

- a) **RCW 42.30.110(1)(i)** to discuss with legal counsel representing the agency matters relating to agency enforcement actions, or to discuss with legal counsel representing the agency litigation or potential litigation to which the agency, the governing body, or a member acting in an official capacity is, or is likely to become, a party, when public knowledge regarding the discussion is likely to result in an adverse legal or financial consequence to the agency.

**At 8:45** Council entered executive session for 10 minutes.

**At 8:55** Council exited the executive session to extend it for another 10 minutes.

**At 9:05** Council exited the executive session, staff will move forward as discussed.

**17. ADJOURNMENT** – Mayor Anderson adjourned the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

---

Scott Anderson, Mayor

Date