

**Town of La Conner**  
Town Council Meeting  
August 25, 2020 – 6:00 p.m.

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The meeting of the La Conner Town Council was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Mayor Pro Tem Councilmember Stokes.

Present: Councilmembers Brunisholz, Leaver, Chamberlain and Wohleb

Also present: Administrator Thomas and Finance Director DeGoede and Public Works Director Lease.

**This meeting was held electronically on Zoom. Information to join was posted at Town Hall, the published Agenda in the La Conner Weekly News and on the Town website.**

**Councilmember Brunisholz moved to excuse Mayor Hayes. Motioned seconded by Councilmember Chamberlain. Motion carried 5/0.**

**Public Comments:**

Resident and Planning Commissioner Marna Hanneman, has received complaints regarding how bad the porta potty in front of the Morris Street bathroom looks, and wanted to know if the restrooms could be reopened or at least move the porta potty. Public Works Director Lease explained the restrooms were closed due to theft of toilet paper, vandalism and to reduce expenditures. Since then, he has been asked by businesses to either reopen the restroom, or at least supply a porta potty due to customer complaints. It is only there through September.

Resident Leann Bushey is concerned on the response time of the Sheriff. She called due to an incident and the Sheriff arrived twenty minutes later with the explanation he was in Sedro Woolley.

Resident Rick Dole had the same experience with the response time of the Sheriff.

**Mayor Hayes joined the meeting.**

**Consent Agenda:**

Approval of Agenda

Approval of the Minutes of August 11, 2020

Accounts Payable:	Checks 23404 - 23438	\$229,698.57
	<b>Deleted Check 23339 in Vision, Now Referred to as Manual Ck 23339</b>	
	<u>Electronic Pmts. - 201639 Excise Tax</u>	<u>\$5,596.59</u>
	<b>Total Accounts Payable</b>	<b>\$235,295.16</b>
Payroll of August 20, 2020	Checks 5254 - 5259	\$1,748.38
	Payroll Auto Tax Payment #201638	\$6,189.23
	<u>Payroll Auto Deposit</u>	<u>\$17,964.59</u>
	<b>Total Payroll</b>	<b>\$25,902.20</b>

**Councilmember Stokes moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Councilmember Wohleb. Motion carried 5/0.**

**Administrator's Report:**

Administrator Thomas noted the speed study on North Third Street should be completed shortly and the Comprehensive Plan is moving forward. Also, the COVID-19 numbers have dropped from four times over what they should be to two times over.

**Council Committee Reports:**

Arts Commission: Councilmember Leaver reported The Sculpture Walk Brochures were updated and revised. There are 100 copies for the Labor Day weekend.

**Economic Development Committee:**

Councilmember Leaver stated on September 4, 2020, there will be 42 merchants staying open until 8:00 p.m. and some restaurants open until 10:00 p.m. If it is successful, they are looking at maybe doing a once a month Shop La Conner evening. It will be advertised in the La Conner Weekly News, and several websites. Councilmember Stokes suggested talking with the merchants regarding parking in the lot to keep the street parking for the customers.

**Parks Commission:**

Councilmember Wohleb shared the La Conner Rotary, Kiwanis and Soroptimist groups volunteered to clean the picnic tables and benches in the parks.

Mayor thanked Council for the enhancement of the restaurant seating outside. It has made a difference in accommodating the customers with the COVID-19 restrictions.

**Easement – PSE (Portion of Caledonia and Second Streets):**

Public Works Director Lease stated the old Caledonia Pump power was above ground. The new one has all the power underground so an easement is required. Administrator Thomas noted this is very standard.

**Councilmember Stokes moved to approve the Mayor to sign the PSE Easement for the portion of Caledonia and Second Street needed for the Caledonia Pump Station. Motion seconded by Councilmember Brunisholz. Motion carried 5/0.**

**Agreement – Skagit County Sheriff Policing Services:**

Administrator Thomas stated there were two items of concern. One was the enforcement of abandoned vehicles. The County Prosecuting Attorney confirmed that was State Law, so they could do that. The second issue is the response time, which he will mention to them. He found that history shows the policing services declined along with costs.

Councilmember Leaver read an article on the Sedro Woolley policing budget of \$557,000 for five positions that included three officers, a records keeper and school resource officer. We are paying \$331,000 for one and a half officers. He requested the agreement to be tabled for Council review at a special meeting, to discuss costs, details and how we are going to pay for it. He observed the Swinomish Police arriving before the Sheriff on calls and questioned why Conway and Bayview didn't pay anything for policing.

Councilmember Wohleb would like to see the original agreement and an alternative analysis, if any. She is concerned about the response time, but did not want to table the extended agreement with the Sheriffs. Councilmember Chamberlain was a part of the last negotiations with the Sheriff and La Conner's services were comparable to Concrete. She would like to see the scope of services Concrete has had historically and what they currently have. She was agreeable to table the agreement if that was what everyone wanted.

Councilmember Brunisholz stated the Swinomish Police are contracted with the Sheriff to aid in calls, and Sedro Woolley does not contract with the Sheriff's Department as they have their own police department. He is not interested in either option of a Town Marshal or an agreement with anyone else. Councilmember Stokes suggested getting a surplus car from the County Sheriff for code enforcement. The presence of a Town vehicle would be effective. He was in favor of moving forward with the amended agreement through 2021.

Mayor Hayes noted the article on the Sedro Woolley policing budget was unclear, and explained it was three officers, but they moved the records keeper from part time to full time and the school resource officer could be drawn from their existing resources. He does not agree we are paying the Sheriff too much, as there is a base fee that has to be met.

From the past meetings, Administrator Thomas thought Council was not interested in contracting with any other agency, but will follow up with the requests to include information from the last negotiations and looking into what Concrete is doing now. This amended agreement includes a 3% increase for the year of 2021.

**Councilmember Stokes moved to approve the Mayor to sign the amended agreement with the Skagit County Sheriff for policing services through 2021. Motion seconded by Councilmember Brunisholz. Motion carried 4/1 with Councilmember Leaver voting nay.**

**Agreement – ThyssenKrupp Elevator Maintenance Agreement:**

Public Works Director Lease reported the Maple Hall elevator is done, operational and inspections are complete. This is a five year maintenance agreement with an approximate annual cost of \$3,000 and a one year warranty. It includes both on-site and off-site monitoring because we are linked in with them and a once a month check.

**Councilmember Stokes moved to approve the Mayor to sign the ThyssenKrupp Elevator Maintenance Agreement. Motion seconded by Councilmember Wohleb. Motion carried 4/1 with Councilmember Brunisholz voting nay.**

**Ordinance 1190 – Amending 12.15.170 of the LMC:**

Administrator Thomas updated provisions to comply with the Governor’s orders of no fees, penalties or shutoffs during the COVID-19 pandemic. Also, it allows the Finance Director to approve payment plans for past due water accounts, as well as reduced rates for low income customers that met the criteria. The rest was minor changes and updates.

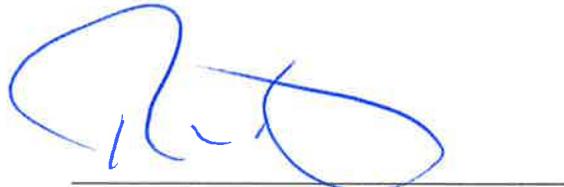
**Councilmember Stokes moved to approve Ordinance 1190 amending 12.15.170 of the La Conner Municipal Code. Motion seconded by Councilmember Wohleb. Motion carried 5/0.**

**Mayor/Council Roundtable:**

Councilmember Wohleb sent an email for consideration of density and bonus use options.

**There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:12 p.m.**

  
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Maria DeGoede, Finance Director

  
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Ramon Hayes, Mayor