

Town of La Conner
Town Council Meeting
September 8, 2020 – 6:00 p.m.

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

Present: Councilmembers Brunisholz, Leaver, Stokes, Chamberlain and Wohleb.

Also present: Administrator Thomas, Finance Director DeGoede, Public Works Director Lease, WWTP Operator Wynn and Sgt. Willard of the Sheriff's Department.

This meeting was held by a Zoom meeting. Information to join was provided on the published Agenda and the Town Website.

Public Comments:

Resident Kara Stamback shared her experience shopping at the Fairhaven area of Bellingham. Safety is taken seriously among the merchants who are utilizing safety precautions such as plexiglass at front counters. She feels La Conner merchants should be doing the same.

Resident Rick Dole discussed speeding cars coming and going at odd hours from the Skate Park area. Sgt. Willard advised to call 911 anytime something does not look right so they can check it out.

Presentations:

Administrator Thomas stated the Town allocation for the CARES Grant has been increased from \$28,800 to \$43,200. The first allocation will be applied to costs the Town occurred from COVID, anything remaining will be made available as grants for our local businesses. Most of the local cities have utilized EDASC in the grant application and selection process. EDASC is in the position to make this happen quickly as the Town is under a time restraint.

John Stern of EDASC explained they have a pool of who has received funds and who has not. This Grant has many restrictions, but EDASC helps develop the application and enters into an agreement with the Town for services of managing the applications, the selection processes and all publicity. They will also contact businesses who might have missed application deadline dates for other grants. Businesses must be within the Town limits and not have received any other funding. Council can set stipulations in the application, such as abiding by all the safety guidelines. After review, the Town will receive the recommendations for review and approval. Administrator Thomas noted Council would probably have the agreement before them in the next packet.

Councilmember Leaver requested additional information in the Minutes of August 25, 2020, regarding his input in the Skagit County Sheriff's agreement extension. Finance Director DeGoede stated she would revise the minutes and have them before Council for approval at the next meeting on September 22, 2020.

Consent Agenda:

Approval of Agenda

Approval of the Minutes of August 25, 2020

Accounts Payable:	Checks:	23439 - 23477	\$121,559.40
	Electronic Pmts:	201643 – Parking Mtr. Fees	\$138.93
		201644 – Util. Pmt. Fees	\$137.60
		Total Accounts Payable	\$121,835.93
Payroll of Sept. 5, 2020	Checks:	5260 - 5268	\$20,220.64
	Electronic Pmts:	201640 - Auto DCP	\$2,291.00
		201641 - Auto PERS	\$10,777.76
		201642 – Auto PR Taxes	\$6,397.11
		<u>Payroll Auto Deposit</u>	<u>\$19,154.40</u>
		Total Payroll	\$58,840.91

Councilmember Wohleb moved to approve the Consent Agenda excluding the Minutes of August 25, 2020, for revision. Motion seconded by Councilmember Leaver. Motion carried 4/1 with Councilmember Stokes voting nay.

Chamber Report:

Chamber Director Carter is working part-time and is trying to figure out the best hours of operation for winter. In August she had a people's choice nomination for businesses in La Conner that consisted of ten categories. She will post the businesses nominated on the Chamber website on September 14th. The Museums are scheduled for opening this month. MONA opened last Friday and their auction will begin on Thursday the 10th. The Quilt Museum also opened last Friday, but by appointment only and the Skagit County Historical Museum will open this Friday the 11th. Chamber's membership is at about 75% so she will continue to work on that.

The Mayor has been working on lighting of the bridge. There are new commercial grade magnetized lights at a reasonable cost. Public Works Director Lease has samples of the lights coming tomorrow to present to the County for approval.

Revenue and Expenditure Reports:

Mayor Hayes noted the Town finances are still stable.

Sheriff's Department:

Sgt. Willard stated there was a significant drop in calls for the month of August.

Administrator's Report:

Administrator Thomas shared we are now on the County list for a surplus vehicle that can be used for either our Code Enforcement or Citizen's Patrol car. They can't surplus the old cars until they receive the new ones, which are delayed to later this year due to COVID.

The Citizen's Patrol training has to be done in person, which has been canceled due to the COVID restrictions. Hopefully the classes will resume early next spring. However, the Mount Vernon Police Department has a twelve week Citizen Policing Academy that is taught by police officers once or twice a year. They do prioritize residents of Mount Vernon, but we could get one of our Councilmembers on a list for an open slot if anyone is interested. There is more information on the City of Mount Vernon's website.

Administrator Thomas has been working on the land acquisition needed for the dike. He has not had a response from the property owners.

Council Committee Reports:

WAB Meeting:

Councilmember Brunisholz reported on the WAB ZOOM Meeting held earlier today. The Swinomish Tribe is planning on 50 to 60 new housing units that will be tied to the Town's sewer plant.

Arts Commission:

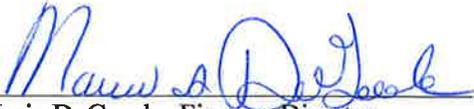
Councilmember Leaver questioned when the Bob Patterson Mural is going to be hung up in Maple Hall. He would like to take a picture to send to the family as Mr. Patterson's health is not well. Public Works Director Lease stated it is on his schedule for September 14th.

Councilmember Leaver also reported the September 4, 2020 late night shopping was well attended. Restaurants and stores had people waiting to get in. He is looking to do another in October.

Mayor/Council Roundtable:

Councilmember Brunisholz is concerned on the progress of the land acquisition for the dike and offered to call the owners himself to speed up the process. This is a safety issue and he wants it on the front burner. Administrator Thomas has received the appraisal of \$13,000 to \$14,000 for the property, but still has some questions for the appraiser. Mayor Hayes stated he would be willing to call the property owners as well.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:56 p.m.



Maria DeGoede, Finance Director



Ramon Hayes, Mayor