

Town of La Conner
Town Council Meeting
October 27, 2020 – 6:00 p.m.

The meeting of the La Conner Town Council was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Mayor Pro Tem Stokes.
Present: Councilmembers Brunisholz, Leaver 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 Councilmember Chamberlain. Motion seconded by Councilmember Wohleb. Motion carried 4/0.

Public Comments:

No Public Comments

Consent Agenda:

Approval of Agenda

Approval of the Minutes of October 13, 2020

Accounts Payable:	Checks 23553 - 23585	\$149,884.08
	Electronic Pmts. – 201654 Excise Tax	\$8,569.82
	Total Accounts Payable	\$158,453.90
Payroll of October 20, 2020	Checks 5284 - 5289	\$1,867.96
	Payroll Auto Tax Payment #201653	\$6,085.14
	Payroll Auto Deposit	\$17,652.22
	Total Payroll	\$25,605.32

Councilmember Wohleb moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Councilmember Leaver. Motion carried 4/0.

Administrator's Report:

Administrator Thomas stated the Town's utility collection box was broken into over the weekend. We now need to decide if it will be replaced and kept at the location by the Post Office, or do something different. Also, it is looking like the annual Boat Parade will be moving forward on December 12, 2020. There will need to be a safety plan in place to maintain the Governor's orders of social distancing and wearing masks.

People are starting to schedule events in the Town Facilities. Administrator Thomas has drafted a policy for use of the facilities to be in compliance of the Governor's restrictions. To rent the facilities they will be required to provide a plan to maintain social distance, the wearing of a mask and not to exceed the number of people allowed. They will also have to provide a list of names, addresses and phone numbers of all attendees. In addition to the regular cleaning charges, there will be a \$25 disinfectant fee for every use of the facilities. There were discussions of existing scheduled activities and charging the disinfectant fee. The Town will honor those for the days of the original agreement, but any additional dates will be charged the disinfectant fee.

Public Works Director Lease has winterized and closed the public restrooms for the winter. Also discussed was a mechanism that can be attached to the bottom of the restroom doors for a no touch option. The sinks and toilets are already motion sensor use.

Public Works is getting sand bags together and the two pumps going on the new Caledonia Pump Station. The armory project at the Waterfront Park is going well. The restoration will cover approximately 680 feet of shoreline that will run all the way to the boat ramp. Councilmember Stokes suggested this may be a good time to fill in the muddy area on Third Street with gravel. Public Works Director will look into it.

Councilmember Leaver shared the next “First on First” evening shopping in Town will be November 6, 2020.

Interlocal Agreement – Port of Skagit (Bridge Lighting):

Administrator Thomas stated the agreement was not completed in time for this meeting. It is for their 1/3 share of the costs of the bridge lighting.

There were discussions on when the bridge lights will be up and lit. Public Works Director Lease stated he is waiting for Skagit County to return the signed agreement. Once received, the contractor only needs a three day notice to begin.

PUBLIC HEARING – 2021 PRELIMINARY BUDGET:

6:26 p.m. Mayor Pro Tem Stokes opened the Public Hearing on the 2021 Preliminary Budget.

No Public Comments.

6:26 p.m. Mayor Pro Tem Stokes closed the Public Hearing.

2021 Budget Preliminary Budget:

Finance Director DeGoede discussed a few small changes since the last meeting, such as the addition of DE Agreements of \$3,500 in both the revenues and expenditures for Streets, Drainage, Water and Sewer.

Councilmember Wohleb requested a Utility Committee meeting to discuss the increase of utility rates for 2021. Administrator Thomas explained our ordinance has set an annual five percent plus CPI increase through 2022. This was intended to prepare for future utility projects. Because of the economic struggles from COVID-19, earlier Council discussions included the options of no increases, reduce the increase to just the CPI and to leave the annual increases as is, with the thought it is better to do it in small increments rather than all at once. Finance Director DeGoede would like to see at least a 3.25 percent increase, as that is the Public Works wage increase for 2021. She will have a Utility Committee meeting scheduled before the next Council meeting.

Also discussed was the \$4,000 budget for Code Enforcement. That should be sufficient for the purchase of the surplus car from the Skagit County Sheriff and fund what is needed for the possible citizen patrol.

Interlocal Agreement – Skagit 911:

Administrator Thomas explained this is primarily a pass through agreement for the Fire Department to provide data to Skagit 911.

Councilmember Brunisholz moved to approve the Mayor to sign the Interlocal Agreement with Skagit 911. Motion seconded by Councilmember Wohleb. Motion carried 4/0.

Mayor Roundtable:

Councilmember Wohleb discussed a letter that was sent to Town Hall regarding the recent code changes to the ADUs. She wanted to know the process for changes as the letter expressed the updates were not consistent. Administrator Thomas explained the code updates were passed by ordinance which has to also be approved by the State, published and sent to Code Publishing for codification. Any changes made now would have to go back to the Planning Commission and start the process all over again. Councilmember Brunisholz and Stokes feel the ADU Codes are unenforceable and unconstitutional.

Councilmember Wohleb also shared Hospice NW, a non-profit organization is selling and there is concern it will become a profit organization. The Town Council had supported the non-profit organization by declaration.

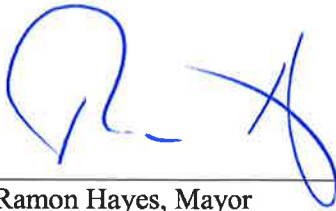
Councilmember Brunisholz questioned the 2021 Budget. He noticed there was no allocation to the Flood Fund. Finance Director DeGoede explained that was correct as well as in a previous meeting the Street Fund balance was of concern and to help it, we would amend the allocation for this year to the Flood Fund by using a portion of it for Streets if needed. Councilmember Brunisholz noted there was more than enough in the Flood Fund for the land acquisition and we would have to take out a bond for the funding of the dike anyway. Administrator Thomas is waiting for a response from the owners that should be in the next day or two.

Councilmember Leaver asked when we were going to do something about the old truck at Town Hall. Public Works Director Lease will surplus it.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:46 p.m.



Maria DeGoede, Finance Director



Ramon Hayes, Mayor