

**Town of La Conner**  
Town Council Meeting  
February 28, 2023 – 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 Hayes.

Present: Councilmembers Dole, Chamberlain and Wohleb.

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

**Also, present Planning Commissioners Bradburn, Hanneman, Hedlin and Leaver.**

**This was a hybrid meeting held in person and 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.**

**Councilmembers Carlson was unable to attend, and Councilmember Taylor will join the meeting later.**

**Public Comments:**

Resident Maggie Wilder discussed maintaining La Conner, density, flooding and the Jensen Property remaining undeveloped and ideal for a community garden.

Gary Nelson expressed his concern with the years of the Town building up the roads from paving. It has impacted properties in Town leaving his property twelve to fourteen inches below grade, causing a flooding issue. Because of this, he will be forced to raise his garage.

Resident Debbie Aldrich stated no one comes to the meetings and participates because no one listens to what they have to say. She advised getting people involved to keep La Conner and the importance of considering the environment for all large projects.

Resident Jim Matthews discussed parking issues and the possible change to the upper floor of the Lime Dock Building to residential and the Center Street Project contributing to the problem.

**The Planning Commission introduced themselves. Commissioner Theaker was unable to attend.**

**Consent Agenda:**

Approval of Agenda

Approval of the Minutes of the February 14, 2023, Council Meeting

Accounts Payable:	Checks 25808 - 25846	\$202,603.58
	Voided Checks- 25231 & 25798	
	Electronic Pmts. 2018083 Excises Tax	\$7,320.92
	201884 WA Fed Bank	\$78.37
	<b>Total Accounts Payable</b>	<b>\$210,002.87</b>
Payroll of February 20, 2023:	Checks 5669 - 5674	\$3,413.75
	Payroll Auto Tax Payment #2018082	\$7,398.08
	Payroll Auto Deposit	\$22,145.17
	<b>Total Payroll</b>	<b>\$32,957.00</b>

**Councilmember Chamberlain moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Councilmember Wohleb. Motion carried 3/0.**

**Administrator's Report:**

Administrator Thomas provided Council a list of facilitators for Council review for the upcoming retreat. Council requested the list be filtered by experience with jurisdictions and knowledge of small-town strategic planning. Also, the deadline for applications for the Emergency Management Commission was today. They will be forwarded to the Mayor for review and Council confirmation by resolution at the next meeting.

**Council Committees:**

Councilmember Dole shared about the trip to Olympia with the Mayor and Administrator Thomas. They met with State Legislatures on flooding issues and the extra police funding.

Councilmember Wohleb reported on the Skagit Clean Energy Cooperative presentation at the Skagit Council of Governments. The project will kick off March 1, 2023, offering incentives, such as waived sales tax, 30% tax credit and reduced cost from bulk purchase.

**Parks Commission:**

Councilmember Wohleb shared they are still waiting on what to do with the Salmon Slide and the Waterfront Park Pavilion is in the permit process.

**Cabaret License – Ravens Cup Coffee & Art Gallery:**

**Councilmember Wohleb moved to approve the Ravens Cup Coffee & Art Gallery's request for a Cabaret License. Motion seconded by Councilmember Dole. Motion carried 3/0**

**Resolution 619 – Identifying Potential Shelter Sites:**

Administrator Thomas stated this resolution identifies Town facilities and Government buildings, such as the school, as shelter sites. By identifying these sites, it increases eligibility for solar grants in the future. Other discussions included the lack of generators at these sites identifies a need for battery backup support for solar grants and the critical need of these shelter sites for La Conner's vulnerable population during the heat and smoky seasons. Public Works Director Lease stated Maple Hall and the Garden Club are wired for generators.

**Councilmember Chamberlain moved to approve Resolution 619 identifying Shelter Sites. Motion seconded by Councilmember Wohleb. Motion carried 3/0.**

**Council & Planning Commission Joint Meeting:**

Planner Davolio opened with the upcoming items the Planning Commission will be focused on, such as the Comprehensive Plan updates, land use, housing, parking issues and public participation. Also, Assistant Planner Eills has completed a Sea Level Rise Report that will be presented to the Planning Commission and Council in the next few weeks.

Heather Rogerson and Laura Shumaker of the Port of Skagit gave a history and update of the Port's upcoming plans. The development of the thirteen acres could be a long process of ten to twenty years. The Port will not be initiating any request for Comprehensive Plan updates this year.

**6:43 p.m. Councilmember Taylor joined the meeting by Zoom.**

Assistant Planner Eills gave results of the February 7, 2023 roundtable survey.

1. Members that showed up were in-town residents and residents within the school district. No one from the Swinomish Tribe participated.
2. 100% were interested in receiving email and text updates on the Comprehensive Plan. They were referred to the Town website to subscribe to Notify Me.
3. Topics of priority were housing, environmental, public involvement, land use, park appropriation and open public space.
4. In notes, they indicated the need to get the more vulnerable population involved in the planning process; specifically, the senior communities.

Finally, she feels it would be beneficial to provide the survey to a larger group of people, other than a public meeting, for a better comprehensive insight of what the community wants.

The Planning Commission is asking Council for a formal recommendation of three or four strategies that have been presented.

Council and Planning Commission discussions included outreach and how to get the survey out to other residents that were unable to attend the roundtable, such as door hangers, online notifications, Newspaper articles and mailing the survey in the utility bills. It was agreed the first phase was to familiarize people with the website, Notify Me and connect with the vulnerable population. It was noted the senior community is very adept with their computers; we just have to familiarize them with the Town website.

Mayor Hayes spoke on how beneficial the Tribe was in the past getting Federal help for the Channel dredging and funding for the library. He feels the outreach to them is very important as a part of our community.

Mayor Hayes expressed appreciation to the volunteers of the Council, Planning Commission, Fire Department and staff as well.

**There being no further business the meeting ended at 7:08 p.m.**



Maria DeGoede, Finance Director



Ramon Hayes, Mayor