

Meeting Summary

La Conner Town Council Meeting 2.22.22



The five-member council met on Feb. 22. Here is a synopsis of the discussions held and actions taken.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MEETINGS: Because Gov. Jay Inslee has set the indoor masking mandates to end March 21, the council will return to combination Zoom-live meetings on March 22. Facial coverings will be optional.

NEW SHERIFF IN TOWN: Mayor Ramon Hayes announced that Skagit County Sheriff Detective Sgt. Jenny Sheahan Lee will return to town as the full-time commander of the La Conner station of the Skagit County Sheriff's Office. The current supervisor, Lt. Jeff Willard was promoted and will take his post at the department's main office in Mount Vernon. The La Conner station will become a fulltime office. Sheahan Lee was in charge of the La Conner detachment in 2013.

COMMISSION APPOINTMENT: By consensus, the council agreed to consider a resolution at its next meeting to formalize Mayor Ramon Hayes appointment of La Conner resident Mike Bucy to the town's Park Commission.

SIGN COMMITTEE: At the request of Town Planning Director Michael Davolio the town will appoint community members to a sign committee to produce a plan for regulating business signs.

FOURTH OF JULY: Town Administrator Scott Thomas announced that the Port of Skagit will partner with the town for an Independence Day celebration, including a concert at the port property. The town will pay for the fireworks.

ACTIONS

DILAPIDATED BUILDINGS: The council adopted a reworked version of a code adopted at the previous meeting concerning structures deemed dangerous, incorporating changes suggested by Councilman Ivan Carlson. The revision to the municipal code section 13.30.020 enables the town to take action with structures, such as the old warehouse on the south end of town that became a hazard due to falling debris.

MUNICIPAL CODE UPDATE: A mostly housekeeping item, the council approved revisions to many areas of the town's development regulations. Some of the updates involved safety issues, such as requiring fire sprinklers in multifamily buildings, such as apartments. Another defined the summer season camping allowed in Pioneer Park, which is limited to tent camping for 72 hours maximum with at least 7 days between stays.

PARKS PLAN: The council adopted a Parks Element plan as part of the Town's Comprehensive Plan. The town's Parks Commission produced a detailed document enumerating the town's 31 parks and open spaces spanning more than 38 total acres and listed the uses and goals for each area. The meticulously detailed 39-page document also listed recreational spaces owned and operated by the La Conner School District and by the Port of Skagit.

CODE ENFORCEMENT JOB: The council approved a job description for a full-time code enforcement officer to be hired in coming weeks. The town will begin advertising for the position next week.

PAY STATIONS: The council authorized Public Works Director Brian Lease to enter into an agreement for \$41,000 to purchase four credit card pay stations for the town docks and boat launch. The pay stations will be like the one in the town parking lot and will alleviate the problems the town has encountered with break-ins and thefts of money from the present envelope drop boxes at the docks and launch. Despite losses due to theft and damage at the drop boxes, the town managed to collect just over \$12,000 from moorage fees last year.

FIREWORKS: The council approved a contract with Western Display Fireworks for a Fourth of July show. The cost is \$12,000 this year. The cost has risen 20 percent over the \$10,000 the company charged the town in 2020. Because the 2020 show was canceled due to the pandemic, the money the town paid for the show that year was used for last year's 2021 fireworks display