

Town of La Conner
Town Council Meeting
January 26, 2010 – 6:00 p.m.

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

Present: Mayor Hayes, Councilmembers Brunisholz, Hubbard, Welch, and Wright.

Also present: Administrator Doyle, Finance Director Taylor, and PW Director Lease.

Councilmember Wright moved to excuse the absence of Councilmember Tracey. Seconded by Councilmember Welch. Carried. 4-0.

Approval of Agenda:

Councilmember Wright moved to approve the agenda by adding Community Comments under Miscellaneous. Seconded by Councilmember Welch. Carried 4-0.

Approval of Minutes:

Councilmember Hubbard moved to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2010 regular town council meeting. Seconded by Councilmember Wright. Carried 4-0.

Approval of Accounts Payable:

Councilmember Hubbard moved to approve checks 8270 through 8282 in the amount of \$40,689.19 for 2009 expenditures. Seconded by Councilmember Wright. Carried 4-0.

Approval of Accounts Payable:

Councilmember Wright moved to approve checks 8506 through 8539 in the amount of \$47,318.98 for 2010 expenditures. Seconded by Councilmember Hubbard. Carried 4-0.

Approval of Payroll:

Councilmember Brunisholz moved to approve payroll warrants 2000 through 2003, 2005 and direct deposits for the payroll period January 1 through January 15, 2010 in the amount of \$22,034.12 as presented. Seconded by Councilmember Wright. Carried 4-0.

Community Comments:

Nancy Jankelson, Tulip Festival, thanked the council for their support and passed out new brochures. She stated the World Tulip Summit will be held in the Skagit Valley this year, and they will meet one day in Maple Hall featuring Ciscoe Morris during the summit. Administrator Doyle reported that the DeGoede family planted tulips at Town Hall and the Roozen family planted tulips at the round-about for the summit.

Administrator Report:

- **New Stimulus Funds Available:** Mr. Doyle stated that \$250,000 of stimulus funds are available for Maple Avenue improvements. Discussion followed on placing a bicycle path or sidewalks on the east side of Maple Avenue. Mayor Hayes stated staff will look at the options available but the town does have a placeholder for funding sidewalks.
- **Security Cameras:** Mr. Doyle stated the town had received a CTED grant for \$10,000 but it will only provide cameras at one location. For an additional \$5,000 - \$10,000, the town will be able to get two cameras at the access to Town. Councilmember Welch recommended contacting the City of Medina regarding maintenance costs on security cameras. Mayor Hayes stated that police services costs are 52% of the general fund, comparable cities range from 28% to 35% for police services. He felt cameras would help with security and be a deterrent.
- **Storm Drainage:** Mr. Doyle reported that the Upper Skagit Tribe have completed the connection for the roof drains to the drainage system.
- **High Tides:** Mr. Doyle stated that the Town has been experiencing high tides recently and with possible storm events it can create storm surges beyond our capacity to handle from the channel. The highest tides are coming this weekend and next month. He reported that Public Works is stockpiling sandbags to protect the lowest areas in the event of a storm and high tide. He stated the problem areas are the Washington Street End, Sherman Avenue, and the parking lot at the Fruit & Produce Market. Mr. Doyle stated that La Conner is working with the Swinomish Tribe on a risk analysis plan regarding sea levels in the channel.

Councilmember Welch recommended setting up a meeting with the Dike Commissioner's regarding the ring dike.

2010 Sculpture Show Contracts: Administrator Doyle stated that Tracy Powell and Lori Clumpner had solicited sculptures for the 2010 Sculpture Show and received 40 submissions. Three jurors selected nine pieces for the show and photos were distributed to the council. Mr. Powell invited everyone to the dedication on March 1, 2010.

Councilmember Wright moved to approve and authorize the Mayor to sign the 2010 Sculpture Show Contracts. Seconded by Councilmember Brunisholz. Carried. 4-0.

Mayor's Report:

- Mayor Hayes reported that he had taken a tour of the sewer plant and recommended that the council take a tour in the future. He stated they are looking for additional agricultural property to lease for placing compost on, and he is looking to expand the composting operation this year.
- Mayor Hayes outlined that that he will be bringing to the council a proposition to tax the gross revenues on compost in 2010. He envisions being able to use some of the funds for the ring dike project.
- Mayor Hayes reported that he has been elected Chair of the SCOG, RTPO, and NPO Boards. He stated how important attendance at these meetings is due to the information disseminated.

Council Committee Reports:

- **Flood Control:** Councilmember Brunisholz reported he attended a Flood Control Zone District Advisory Committee meeting on January 19th. He stated that a FEMA representative was at the meeting answering questions. Mr. Doyle stated that Ryan Ike is head of the FEMA Flood preparedness group in the Region 10 office. He stated that the FEMA maps will be out in March, public information workshops will be held for 30 days (possibly 60 days) on the maps, and a 90-day appeal period follows. He stated the greater concern is the biological opinion expressed by the National Marine Fisheries Department in the model ordinance that puts severe mitigation measures on development and building permits in La Conner.

- Arts Commission: Councilmember Hubbard stated that the commission approved the nine sculpture pieces for the Sculpture Show. She stated that Kelly Wynn is working on a grant with Lori Clumpner, and the dedication of Gilkey Square has been postponed until possibly summer.
- AWC Newly Elected Officials Class: Councilmember Welch reported he attended the AWC class and found the information very beneficial and highly recommended it.
- Utilities Committee: Councilmember Wright stated the Utilities committee needed to schedule a meeting.

Mayor Hayes called a five minute break at 7:20 p.m.

2009 Finance Report: Finance Director Taylor reported on the 2009 year end revenues and expenditures.

- Revenues received were higher than anticipated, and expenditures were lower than budgeted.
- Sales tax receipts were \$10,000 over budget.
- Hotel Motel Taxes were only 74% of budgeted amounts.
- Investment Interest was 84% of budgeted amounts.
- Property tax and the bond levy were in the 95% range.
- REET taxes were three times higher than anticipated.

Facility Rental Policy: Finance Director Taylor reviewed a spreadsheet detailing expenses and revenue for each facility from January through August 2009. Maple Hall is operating at a loss of \$22,933; Garden Club a loss of \$9,741; and Pioneer Park a loss of \$8,000.

Discussion followed on garbage and phone costs, annual cleaning costs for the Senior Center and weekly/monthly groups, and the need to encourage more use of the Garden Club.

Councilmember Welch recommended the council develop a policy for marketing the facilities and use of them as a community resource before determining rental fees. It was the consensus of the council that groups should pay full rental rates for Maple Hall/Center on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from May through September, and allow reduced rates during the week.

The council decided that the Rotary Club needed to pay full price for the Harvest Hope Auction on August 27 and 28, 2010.

Staff will provide council with a comparison of facilities rates between La Conner and other cities, and bring forward a policy for council.

Councilmember Welch moved to table the issue of rates until a policy is developed. Seconded by Councilmember Hubbard. Carried 4-0.

2010 Tribe Sewer Rate: Administrator Doyle stated that the WAB committee met and approved the 2010 tribe sewer rate of .4952 cents per gallon. Discussion followed on the definition of pipe, plant and other and how they are reflected in calculating the rate, the tribe contract, and the compost operation.

Councilmember Wright moved to approve the 2010 Tribe Sewer Rate. Seconded by Councilmember Hubbard. Carried 4-0.

Miscellaneous:

- Mayor Hayes stated that March is Colon Cancer Awareness Month, and Cynthia Hassell is requesting the rental fee be waived for Maple Hall on March 4, 2010. This would be an informational public service presentation and free to the public. Councilmember Welch stated that the cleaning fees be paid by Ms. Hassell.

Councilmember Wright moved to approve waiving the fee for Maple Hall for a presentation on Colon Cancer on March 4th with the cleaning fees being paid by Ms. Hassell. Seconded by Councilmember Hubbard. Carried 4-0.

- Mayor Hayes stated that Skagit Bay Search and Rescue has requested waiving the fee for Maple Hall for a comedy show on April 23rd. It was the consensus of the council that the Mayor would contact the organization regarding changing the date or location of this event.

Mayor/Council Roundtable – Councilmember Welch stated he would like the ability of the town website to accept public comments and council receive emails from residents. Administrator Doyle stated that the council email addresses are linked to their home email addresses.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Lorraine Taylor, Town Clerk

Ramon Hayes, Mayor