

Town of La Conner
Town Council Meeting
October 25, 2011 – 7:02 p.m.

The meeting of the La Conner Town Council was called to order at 7:02 p.m.

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

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

Approval of Agenda:

Councilmember Hubbard moved to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Councilmember Tracey. Carried 5-0.

Approval of Minutes:

Councilmember Wright moved to approve the minutes of the October 11th, 2011 special meeting and regular town council meeting. Seconded by Councilmember Hubbard. Carried 5-0.

Approval of Accounts Payable:

Councilmember Tracey moved to approve checks 10941 through 11005, and 201073, dated October 25, 2011 in the amount of \$98,078.47 as presented. Seconded by Councilmember Hubbard. Carried 5-0.

Approval of Payroll:

Councilmember Wright moved to approve payroll warrants 2384 through 2389, 201075 and direct deposits for the payroll period October 1 through October 15, 2011 in the amount of \$22,892.49 as presented. Seconded by Councilmember Welch. Carried 5-0.

Community Comments:

Tom Hill, 705 S First Street, stated he would like the Hotel Motel taxes support the Chamber to promote the Town of La Conner.

Marna Hanneman, 607 S Third Street, thanked everyone for their work on the budget, and would like to see the council working together for the Town.

Administrator's Report: Administrator Doyle stated that he has been working on the Shoreline Management Program update. He said he will begin the public process soon, and solicit comments from the stakeholders and the public.

Mr. Doyle reported that he is working on the recertification for flood control for CRS, and because of an upgrade last year due to the Town's efforts, there is more reporting and activities to engage in.

Mr. Doyle reported he attended a workshop with Linda Talman on transportation and multi-modal transportation. He stated the information will be conveyed to the Town Engineer, Evan Henke, and PW Director Lease to make La Conner a more walkable and bikeable community.

Mr. Doyle stated that he had heard from DNR concerning the actual western boundary of the Town. He stated that maps of La Conner show differing boundaries and will require follow up with the appropriate committees to determine the accurate boundary. He stated that our shoreline jurisdiction does extend to the middle of the channel.

Mayor's Report: Mayor Hayes stated he will be having a meeting in November with all the concerned parties regarding the dredging of the channel. He reported that Patsy Martin from the Port of Skagit is coordinating a meeting with the Army Corps of Engineers regarding this issue, and the Mayor will be attending.

Council Committee Reports:

Councilmember Welch stated he attended a Facilities Committee meeting and met Laurie Lyon and reviewed the social media that is now up on the website. He requested that the council develop a policy for internet protocols. Mr. Welch will do some research on the subject and it will be discussed at the November 8th council meeting.

Councilmember Welch also attended a Streets Committee meeting and discussed the part time public works position. Mr. Welch requested an estimate of the Public Works overtime costs for cleaning the public restrooms on the weekends.

Councilmember Wright stated the Town will start a small pilot program for recycling bottles and cans around Town.

2012 Preliminary Budget - 2012 Hotel Motel Allocations:

Councilmember Wright stated that the Town received approximately \$60,000 more in Hotel Motel revenues than anticipated and the council unwisely spent it all, instead of putting some into reserves for future shortfalls.

Councilmember Welch stated he was pleased that the Finance Committee recommended paying a portion of the parking lot bond, but he would like to see some of the Hotel Motel taxes pay a little of the Maple Hall bond also.

Councilmember Tracey stated that the council should follow the recommendations of the LTAC committee and the Finance Committee regarding Hotel Motel allocations, and back fill the bond payments from the General Fund.

Councilmember Brunisholz stated he would like to reduce the allocation to the Chamber by \$20,000, cut the other recipients by half, and pay that toward the Maple Hall bond. He would like the Chamber to go back to 2010 levels of Hotel Motel funds.

Liz Theaker, La Conner Quilt Museum, stated the importance of bringing people to La Conner, because businesses are struggling. She stated at the last Chamber meeting they voted to create a La Conner Tourism Task Force to implement some of the Ken Saunderson study recommendations for improving tourism.

Councilmember Brunisholz stated that he has heard from constituents that Hotel Motel funds should be paying for the bond payments.

Councilmember Welch stated he would like to have a basic formula to support the bonds and the remainder allocated to the recipients. He suggested 20% of the total Hotel Motel taxes go toward paying the bonds.

Councilmember Hubbard suggested funding the Chamber at \$70,000 in 2012 and reducing all of the other recipients to \$1,000 each. This would put approximately \$5,500 towards the Maple Hall bond and be approximately 20% of the Hotel Motel taxes.

Councilmember Brunisholz recommended funding the Maple Hall with \$20,000 of the Hotel Motel taxes and reduce the other recipients accordingly.

The Finance Director was directed to provide the council with the effects on the budget of the various scenarios for Hotel Motel taxes.

Councilmember Welch suggested raising the sales tax in La Conner. The Finance Director will research the issue and report back to the council.

Mayor stated that the compost fund tax is providing \$90,000 to the General Fund and \$130,000 to the Sewer Fund to subsidize the sewer rates in 2011. He reviewed large costly projects that will need to be completed in the next six years.

Community Comments:

Dan O'Donnell, requested that page 7 of Ordinance No. 692 and Ordinance No. 890 be included in the council packets for the next meeting. He stated they relate to Hotel Motel taxes paying the bonds on Maple Hall and the parking lot. He stated the council should follow the ordinances or amend them.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Lorraine Taylor, Town Clerk

Ramon Hayes, Mayor