

***Town of La Conner***  
Town Council Meeting  
August 23, 2011 – 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.

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 Hubbard moved to approve the minutes of the August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2011 regular town council meeting. Seconded by Councilmember Welch. Carried 5-0.**

**Approval of Accounts Payable:**

**Councilmember Tracey moved to approve checks 10677 through 10737, 201068, dated August 23, 2011 in the amount of \$115,863.24 as presented. Seconded by Councilmember Hubbard. Carried 5-0.**

**Approval of Payroll:**

**Councilmember Brunisholz moved to approve payroll warrants 2347 through 2352, 201069 and direct deposits for the payroll period August 1 through August 15, 2011 in the amount of \$22,693.20 as presented. Seconded by Councilmember Hubbard. Carried 5-0.**

**Community Comments:**

Terry Nelson, 701 Whatcom, requested the council take a position and work with Skagit County to oppose the coal trains and water plant in Anacortes. He felt the impacts would be significant on the county.

Councilmember Welch stated the railroads have the rights-of-way and if the loading station is not built in Bellingham, it will be built in Canada.

Mayor Hayes stated that the Skagit Council of Governments is reviewing the issue and will adopt a position on this issue and recommend mitigation measures.

**Administrator's Report:** Administrator Doyle stated that he is working on FEMA Grants for personal protection equipment and apparatus application for the Fire Department.

Mr. Doyle stated he and the Mayor met with Triton America to discuss the status of their development. Since the change in the economy, the scope has changed somewhat, but they are dedicated to execute their project. They are reviewing the lease contract and will come back to the Town with a development proposal and timelines. By February 2012, they are supposed to have occupancy of the marina, but that will not happen. He stated the original plan to build large yachts is problematic due to the channel not being dredged.

Mr. Doyle met with PSE regarding Baker Dam upper and lower storage. A meeting is planned with Burlington, Mount Vernon, the Dike Districts on August 24<sup>th</sup> regarding their licensing agreement and position.

Mr. Doyle stated that the deliverables for the draft plan and the inventory for the Shoreline Master Plan Update are due at the end of the month.

He stated that the Town is expecting two shoreline permits – 1) a pump out station for the Port facility, and 2) and the boardwalk.

**Mayor's Report:** Mayor Hayes thanked Dan O'Donnell for his report on the flood meeting to the council.

Mayor Hayes gave the council an update on the goals of the marketing position – 1) some of the “quick fixes” from the Saunderson Marketing Plan, such as building the databases in town have been implemented, 2) the Maple Hall website is 99% complete, 3) and seeking and attracting specific conferences to La Conner.

Mayor Hayes introduced Troy Allen, La Crema Coffee, and Mike Hanson, WA Sips of La Conner. They recommended to Mayor Hayes that the town sponsor a La Conner Music & Arts Festival and have secured Pioneer Park and have begun advertising the event. They propose bringing in bands on September 17<sup>th</sup> from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., but they need funding. The Town Attorney recommended funding a “one time event” up to \$2,300, using the Mayor's marketing funds in the Hotel Motel fund.

**Councilmember Wright moved to authorize funding the La Conner Music & Arts Festival, a one time town sponsored event not to exceed \$2,300, using the Mayor's marketing funds in the Hotel Motel fund. Seconded by Councilmember Hubbard. Carried 5-0.**

**Council Committee Reports:** There were no council committee reports.

**Flood Control:** Councilmember Welch inquired about the status of the portable flood wall. Administrator Doyle stated he has gotten additional information and will follow up on the issue and get costs for the 2012 budget.

Councilmember Brunisholz stated that if the flood control issue will help the salmon habitat, there would be funding available.

Councilmember Wright recommended getting EDASC involved in the dredging of the Swinomish Channel for boat building business. Mayor Hayes stated that several organizations are getting together to work on the issue.

**Resolution – Upper Skagit Rezone Decision:** Administrator Doyle stated the Town Attorney created the resolution that memorialized the council decision on the Upper Skagit Rezone denying the rezone of the property to industrial and changing the La Conner Comprehensive Plan Map.

Councilmember Brunisholz stated that he favors changing the zoning to industrial and getting the channel dredged. He stated that by allowing an industrial zone it would allow many more safeguards to the process than allowed under the conditional use in the commercial zone.

Administrator Doyle stated the conditional use process under the commercial zoning does not address all the concerns of the citizens adequately. He stated this resolution summarized the council's previous decision.

**Councilmember Welch moved to adopt the resolution regarding the Comprehensive Plan Amendment and Rezone application for the Upper Skagit Indian Tribe properties. Seconded by Councilmember Tracey. Motion failed 2-3 with Councilmembers Brunisholz, Hubbard, and Wright voting nay.**

Councilmember Tracy stated she was confused about what the council was voting on, she understood that they were voting to memorialize the decision document made at the June 14<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Councilmember Welch stated that the Upper Skagit Tribe did not come to the Planning Commission and the Council with a specific project for the industrial use. He stated the residents of the neighborhood let the council know their preference. Councilmember Tracey stated she agreed and the residents were very vocal about their concerns.

Administrator Doyle stated that there is not a lot of property available for fish processing along the water and close to their fishing grounds. The Upper Skagit did apply originally for the town's lease area under the bridge, but preferred ownership of land and purchased the Dorsey property. The Upper Skagit did give the Town the \$50,000 original deposit on the leased property when it was determined it would not meet their needs.

Mayor Hayes stated that if the council chose to reconsider the issue, a specific plan would have to be in place. He stated a Development Plan is also an option.

Councilmembers Welch and Tracey felt that the Planning Commission had gone through the planning process and recommended against the rezone and Comprehensive Plan. They felt that the door is still open to come back to the planning commission with another plan for a specific project.

Administrator Doyle stated that the council can remand the issue back to the Planning Commission.

Councilmember Brunisholz stated it is the Planning Commissions job to make recommendations to the council, but it is the council's job to make the decisions.

**Councilmember Tracey moved to hold a public hearing on the Comprehensive Plan amendment and Rezone on the Upper Skagit property. Seconded by Councilmember Welch. Carried 3-2 with Councilmembers Brunisholz and Wright voting nay.**

Mayor Hayes stated he will check with the Town Attorney on the correct process and requested the full council be present for the public hearing.

**Resolution – EMS Allotment:**

**Councilmember Wright moved to approve Resolution No. 469 approving the Agreement between the Skagit County EMS Commission and the Town of La Conner and authorizing the Mayor to sign. Seconded by Councilmember Welch. Carried 5-0.**

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:56 p.m.