

Town of La Conner
Town Council Meeting
September 8, 2009 – 7:00 p.m.

The meeting of the La Conner Town Council was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor Hayes, Councilmembers Brunisholz, Hubbard, O'Donnell, Johnson, and Wright.

Also present: Town Administrator Doyle, Finance Director Taylor, PW Director Lease, Fire Chief Taylor, Plant Operator Wynn, and Sergeant Wise.

Approval of Agenda:

Councilmember Johnson moved to approve the agenda as submitted. Seconded by Councilmember Wright. Carried 5-0.

Approval of Minutes:

Councilmember Johnson moved to approve the minutes of the August 25, 2009 regular town council meeting. Seconded by Councilmember O'Donnell. Carried 5-0.

Approval of Accounts Payable:

Councilmember Hubbard moved to approve vouchers 7768 through 7816 dated August 25, 2009 in the amount of \$59,176.34 as presented, but holding check #7788 to Katy Isaksen until the final report is received on the Water/Sewer Rate Study. Seconded by Councilmember Wright. Carried 4-1. Councilmember O'Donnell voted nay.

Approval of Payroll:

Councilmember Hubbard moved to approve payroll warrants 1672 through 1685 and direct deposits for the payroll period August 16 through August 31, 2009 in the amount of \$38,121.36 as presented. Seconded by Councilmember Brunisholz. Carried 5-0.

Community Comments: Time was given for members of the audience to address the council regarding issues that are not on the agenda. There were no comments.

Chamber Report: Marci Plank thanked PW Director Lease and his crew for putting up and taking down the flower baskets in Town. She stated that the Art's Alive is progressing and the postcards and programs will be out soon. The Chamber has ordered an additional 5,000 Art's Alive bookmarks, ordered 65,000 of the 2010 Destination Maps, and started on the coupon books for 2010.

Ms. Plank stated that State Attorney General Rob McKenna will be coming to La Conner on October 23, and the Chamber is looking for a meeting place.

Revenue/Expenditure Report: Ms. Taylor stated that Hotel Motel taxes continue to be below budget expectations with sales tax revenues coming in on target. She stated there will be a Lodging Tax Advisory Committee meeting on Monday, September 14th at 2:30 p.m. in the Garden Club.

Councilmember O'Donnell inquired about the appraisal reimbursement on the First Street vacation. He requested closing Funds 205 and 426 since the bonds are paid in full. Ms. Taylor stated the Finance

Committee will be reviewing the proposed budget amendment on September 14th and will have a recommendation for council at the next meeting.

Department Head Reports:

- Planning: Mr. Doyle stated that the Planning Commission will hold a public informational workshop on climate change on September 23rd (correction actual date is 9/24). They will also address planning on climate change through out the county regarding impacts and proposed changes. Mr. Doyle stated that the Planning Commission will also be holding public workshops on the updates to the Shoreline Program per the Department of Ecology.

Mr. Doyle stated that he has met with the Skagit County Planning staff in a pre-development meeting to discuss potential permitting issues that may arise with the dike installation. The proposed dike is not in their Shoreline Master Program but several permits are required. He stated he will contact Mike Stansbury and get an estimate of services and present contracts to Council on surveying and engineering.

Mr. Doyle reported that new legislation provides for a "Community Energy Project" which increases the incentives for La Conner's Solar Electric Project to reduce energy costs. The project is on schedule to be installed in October with local governments gaining the biggest benefits.

- Finance: Ms. Taylor stated that she and Maria DeGoede attended a BARS class in Lynnwood. The software conversion is now scheduled for mid-November, and the State Auditor's are scheduled for mid-October.
- Public Works: Director Lease reported that the Town had a major water leak in an 8" high pressure water main near Morris and Maple Avenue just one week after the Maple Avenue project was complete. The estimated cost of repairs is \$23,000 and can be paid within the 2009 budget.
- Water-Wastewater: Councilmember O'Donnell requested to visit the WWTP. Councilmember Wright asked if the dry summer contributed to the additional odor coming from the plant. Mr. Wynn stated he needs to be notified when residents notice the odor to identify the activity that is causing the problem. He stated that it may be due to the fish processing going on at this time.

Mr. Wynn stated that they will be doing smoke testing on the south end on September 22nd and 23rd. He also stated that he did not renew the contract with Sunland Topsoils and will exploring new markets for compost and amendments.

- Fire Department: Councilmember Johnson inquired if the fire department had enough candidates for the Explorer Program now. Chief Taylor stated that he needs one more candidate for the program. Britney Fink is not in the explorer program and is the acting training officer.

Council Committee Reports:

Councilmember Johnson: read an article from 1891 presented by Austin Swanson regarding cattle running at large, being a nuisance on the sidewalks, and having bad manners.

Flood Control: Administrator Doyle stated that he met with Surveyor Denny Legro and Sara Young from the Port on August 20th regarding a survey estimate for the proposed dike and access road. He stated Drainage District 15 is opposed to the proposed dike and access road and will block the project. They are not opposed to a dike on the south side of the drainage ditch.

Mr. Doyle presented the estimates from Mr. Legro for the phases of the dike sections:

- Phase I: Dike section between Chilberg and La Conner-Whitney Roads – approximately 1100 feet with a cost of \$7,640, which the Town is interested in starting immediately.

- Phase II-A: Dike section between 3rd Street and La Conner-Whitney Road south of the ditch – approximately 2700 feet at a cost of \$8,565.
- Phase II-B: Dike section between 3rd Street and La Conner-Whitney Road north of the ditch – approximately 2700 feet of roadway at 50-100' elevations at a cost of \$9,245.

Mr. Doyle stated that the council and administration need to revisit the issue of a road on the dike. The road does not relate to the flood protection project but is a separate issue.

Councilmember Brunisholz moved to direct the Administration to have Phase I and II-A surveyed by Legro & Associates. Seconded by Councilmember Hubbard. Carried 3-2. Councilmembers Johnson and Wright opposed.

Solid Waste Transfer Station Proposal:

Kevin Renz, Solid Waste District Manager, stated that Skagit County Solid Waste entered into an interlocal agreement in 2007 with all the cities and towns and established the Solid Waste Governance Board. The issue before the Board is whether or not they should authorize a design for the new transfer station facility for future years.

Mr. Renz stated there are four facilities in the Solid Waste District – 1) the main station on Overall Road, 2) the transfer and recycle station at Sauk, 3) the compactor site at Clearlake, and 4) the household hazardous waste facility located at the County transfer station.

Mr. Renz reported that the original Waste Energy Incinerator was opened in 1988, in 1990 Skagit County took over the operation, and in 1994 the Energy Incinerator was closed and transitioned to a transfer facility. The transfer station had two Italian rotary kiln furnaces fed by overhead cranes and burned the material. He stated the current facility is past its design life of twenty years.

Mr. Renz stated that the new facility needs to handle the tonnage through 2030, increase recycling, allow construction to occur without disturbing the current transfer station, allow for future expansion up to 35,000 square feet, and allow for top loading compactors. The conceptual design work is complete, and the original cost projections in 2007 for the facility were 7.2 million, but construction costs have come down. In order to proceed, the Governance Board needs to approve the design work at a cost of approximately \$500,000 before the project can go out for the bid process. They anticipate that there will not be an increase in tipping fees.

At 8:15 p.m. Mayor Hayes called a five minute break.

Volunteer Fire Fighter Membership: Fire Chief Taylor stated the training coordinator is an important part of the volunteer fire department. He stated that Britney Fink has filled the position since Zdenek Weig left the training officer position. He stated that Britney has started the Fire Academy and he would like to see her receive some compensation for the training coordinator position.

Councilmember Brunisholz moved to recognize Britney Fink as training coordinator and pay her 1/2 of the training officer compensation (\$174.88) retroactive from June to present, ¾ of the rate until graduation, and then full compensation in November. Seconded by Councilmember Hubbard. Carried 5-0.

Town Security Cameras: Administrator Doyle stated a workshop was held on August 6th to address any concerns about the cameras but there was not any public participation. Areas under consideration for placement of the cameras are – 1) the two entrances and exits to the Town, 2) a security camera in Pioneer Park, and 3) possibly at the future skate park. The residents and police would be able to log in and see what is occurring at the camera sites. Mr. Doyle stated the cameras would be purchased with a grant. Discussion followed on additional sites that reflect the uniqueness of La Conner.

Councilmember Wright recommended the council hold a public hearing on the cameras at the next council meeting.

Amending the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee: Mayor Hayes stated that he would like to re-appoint members without term limitations and allow for some flexibility.

Councilmember O'Donnell suggested that council eliminate the LTAC as it not required by law, eliminate the voting rights of the elected official on the board, appoint a person from the public, and make the meetings open to the public per the Open Meetings Act. Councilmember Wright stated that this is an advisory committee and the council makes the final decision.

Councilmember Wright moved to approve Ordinance No. 1033 amending the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee and adding that meetings will be open to the public. Seconded by Councilmember Hubbard. Carried 4-1. Councilmember O'Donnell voted nay.

Council Budget Retreat: Mayor Hayes recommended scheduling the retreat at the next council meeting.

Miscellaneous: Mayor Hayes stated that United Way of Skagit County is starting their annual campaign. He proclaimed that the months of September, October and November are United Way months in Town of La Conner.

Mayor/Council Roundtable:

- **Shelter Bay Water Agreement** – Councilmember Wright stated that the Utilities Committee was split on the agreement and recommended holding a public hearing at the next meeting.
- **Turkeys** – Councilmember Brunisholz stated that he does not hate the turkeys, and hopes the Town does not get sued by any actions of the turkeys.
- **I & I Study** – Councilmember O'Donnell requested that this item be placed on the agenda at the next meeting.
- **Sturdeweld Contract** – Councilmember O'Donnell inquired once more about the allocation of the Town and Tribe's reserves for the improvements at the sewer plant. Finance Director stated that the allocation was done in August 2008 out of Cumulative Reserve with the recommendation of the Town Engineer, Evan Henke. She stated the allocation for the belt press had been transferred back to Cumulative Reserve in July 2009, and this information was provided to the council at the last meeting. She stated this issue has been explained several times to the council.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p. m.

Lorraine Taylor, Town Clerk

Ramon Hayes, Mayor