

City of Cle Elum
Regular City Council Meeting
November 23, 2020

Call to Order – Roll Call of Membership

The Regular meeting of the City Council was held "virtually", in compliance with the Covid-19 Social Distancing Mandate issued by Governor Jay Inslee. The meeting was called to order by Mayor McGowan at 6:01 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. The Roll was called. Members present were Mayor McGowan, Matthew Lundh, John Glondo, Steven Harper, Mickey Holz, Beth Williams and Ken Ratliff. Ruston Weaver was absent. Other members present were City Administrator Robert Omans, City Planner Lucy Temple, Public Works Director Mike Engelhart, Police Chief Kirk Bland and City Clerk Kathi Swanson. *A motion was made by Matthew Lundh and seconded by John Glondo to excuse the absence of Ruston Weaver. The motion carried unanimously.*

Approval of the Meeting Agenda

A motion was made by Mickey Holz and seconded by Beth Williams to approve the meeting agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda

A motion was made by John Glondo and seconded by Steven Harper to accept the consent agenda as presented. The consent agenda included the minutes to the 11/09/2020 Regular City Council meeting; 11/16/2020 Payroll EFTs and Checks #42876 - 42822 in the amount of \$84,932.96; and 11/23/2020 EFTs and Checks #42883 - 442916 for Claim Vouchers in the amount of \$422,585.75. The motion carried unanimously.

Officer Reports

City Administrator/Building Official/Network Administrator – Robert Omans – Reported:

- Legislative Day, with Tom Dent, Judy Warnick and Alex Ybarra, will be held 12/10/2020 via Zoom.
- Met with HLA to review the 100% drawings of the Downtown Revitalization Project.
- Working with the Teamsters Union to finalize a new Police Contract.
- Working with the IT consultant to get the network architecture and connectivity in place.

City Planner - Lucy Temple – Reported:

- Will send the 2019-2020 Legislative Agenda that was developed through HLA to Rob.
- Will issue an Optional DNS Process for a wine storage facility at Swiftwater Business Park.
- Permits to date: 6 Boundary Line Adjustments, 2 Conditional Use, 3 Floodplain Permits, 2 Grading Permits, 7 Pre-Application Reviews, 11 Sign Permits, 5 Site Design Reviews, 7 SEPA processes, 1 Sub-Division Application, 1 Right-of-Way Vacation, 1 Variance.
- Gravity Coffee will be submitting permit applications for a new business in the vacated Burger King building.
- Anticipating an application package and final draft lease for the Vertical Bridge wireless communication facility.
- City Holiday Lighting, funded by a Lodging Tax Grant, is being installed at the Police Department, Fire Department, City Hall, Library, Flagpole Park, the 4 lamp posts at the Peoh Avenue intersection, the 4 lamp posts at the Billings Avenue intersection, the new trees at the Billings Avenue project and the new City Park gazebo.

Public Works Director – Mike Engelhart – Reported:

- Has been working with HLA on the First Street 100% drawings.

- The First Street lighting project between Billings and Oakes Avenues is nearly complete; the 6-foot arms will be replaced with 2½-foot arms.
- The street lighting project on Second Street and Stafford Avenue is complete.
- The public works crew is re-grading the alleys and repairing potholes.
- Working with HLA on FEMA grants and the Railroad Street to Oakes Avenue project.
- Winter parking enforcement is in place.
- Advised citizens to leave cabinet doors open during the cold weather to avoid freezing pipes.

Police Chief – Kirk Bland – Reported:

- October calls for service: 272 for Cle Elum, 70 for Roslyn, 34 for So. Cle Elum.
- Officers have been undergoing training.
- Utilized the Ellensburg Police Department Firearms Range to get half of the Department qualified. The other half will have qualifications completed by the end of the month.
- 170 Concealed Pistol Licenses have been issued year to date.
- Due to the increased number of Concealed Pistol Licenses, the Department is working on a federal grant for an electronic finger printing machine.

Citizen Comments on Non-Agenda Items

Stacy Hammond: Reported she attended the virtual COG meeting on 11/18/2020 which discussed a letter being sent to Governor Inslee and was told by the County there is no recording of the meeting available. Ms. Hammond has concerns and asked Cle Elum, South Cle Elum and Roslyn to provide a copy of the recording of the meeting.

Public Appearances - 15 Minute Limit

Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce – Amy McGuffin and Emily Masseth:

- Provided a Power Point presentation of the annual review, membership and the new Business Development Center.

Chamber of Commerce – Madison Ford - Reported:

- Provided a Power Point presentation of the Tourism projects and Discover Cle Elum user information for October 2020.
- Christmas in Cle Elum will be on 12/05/2020 and features a reverse parade on Railroad Street with fireworks afterward.

Downtown Association Report – Debbie Bogart – Reported:

- Provided information regarding Christmas in Cle Elum events.
- The Downtown Association is distributing a donation they received to the 7 individuals who attended the Digital Marketing Leadership seminar.
- Re-elected Marc Kirkpatrick as the Chairman; added Deanna Haverfield as secretary. Adam Crawford with PSE has also been added to the board.
- The Boo-Elum event went well.
- Five of the local restaurants are reporting they have laid off at least half of their staff.

Septic System Request – Jim Shuman, Citizen: Mr. Shuman asked council to approve an upgrade to his septic system, which would allow him to sell his property at 309 Cottage Avenue. Mayor McGowen opened the meeting for council discussion. Council member Ratliff reported the utility committee met to discuss the request and noted the City has long been hoping to connect the east end of town to the sewer system and installed a pump station near Airport Road and First Street 16 years ago. He recommended reviewing the report from Huibregtse Louman Associates which proposed an LID for the area and to take no action at this time. Council and the Public Works Director agreed to research the issue before a decision is made on this request. Council member Holz recommended that discussions commence to resolve the issue in January

and to provide proposed resolutions to Mr. Shuman by the end of January. Mayor McGowan commented the policy must be reviewed to determine how it affects the town.

Business Requiring a Public Hearing

a. **2021 Budget:** Mayor McGowan read his budget message into the record. City Treasurer, Robin Newcomb, reported the draft budget is on the website, no changes have been made and no comments have been received since the 1st public hearing and recommended approval. Mayor McGowan gave an overview of the Expenditures/Revenue and the total Budget Fund and stated it is the employees of this town that keep the City going. The Mayor opened the meeting for public comments at 7:17 pm. Stacy Hammond asked if there had been any consideration of business shut-downs and funding towards that issue; and would there be any CARES Act or COVID-19 funding in the budget. Robin Newcomb responded there would not be. Hearing no further comments from the public, Mayor McGowan closed the meeting to public comments at 7:19 and turned the meeting over to the Council for discussion. Council member Harper stated the Budget Committee carefully studied what they believe, and can project, what revenues will be, while considering the pandemic. Council member Holz commended the staff and crew on their hard work and efforts to save money.

Unfinished Business

a. **Continued Discussion of Emergency Declaration Resolution 2020-010:** Council member Lundh noted information provided to council was labeled “Confidential and Privileged” and questioned if it can be discussed. Mayor McGowan will speak with the legal department regarding the process to bring it back to council for the next meeting.

New Business

a. **Task Order No. 2020-04 - Railroad Street, Oakes Avenue to Columbia Avenue:** Mike Engelhart reported this Task Order, funded by a QUADCO grant, authorizes HLA to start work studying Railroad Street to obtain right-of-way for future expansion. *A motion was made by Ken Ratliff and seconded by Matthew Lundh to authorize the Mayor to sign Task Order No. 2020-04 for the Railroad Street Project from Oakes Avenue to Columbia Avenue. The motion carried unanimously.*

b. **Resolution 2020-024 – Adopting the 2021 Water Rates Fee Schedule:** Robert Omans presented the Resolution which increases water rates by 3%, to keep up with the cost of living, as established by CEMC Chapter 13.12.100. *A motion was made by Beth Williams and seconded by Mickey Holz to approve Resolution 2020-024 adopting the 2021 Water Rates Fee Schedule. Questions on the motion: Council member Lundh commented raising the rates during this economic time may not be the best course of action. Council member Harper commented it may not be a good time but stands in support because it keeps the City from having to implement dramatic increases in the future. Mayor McGowan stated an Ordinance was passed in the past to prevent the City from getting into trouble by not raising rates. The vote was called. Council members Glondo, Harper, Holz, Williams and Ratliff voted aye. Council member Lundh voted nay. The motion passed by a vote of 5 to 1.*

c. **Resolution 2020-025 – Adopting the 2021 Sewer Rates Fee Schedule:** Robert Omans presented the Resolution to increase sewer rates by 3%, to keep up with the cost of living, with a recommendation to approve. Council member Ratliff commented the sewer charges includes the sewer reserve fund which is becoming increasingly important due to the old pipes that are in the ground. *A motion was made by Mickey Holz and seconded by Beth Williams to approve Resolution 2020-025 adopting the 2021 Sewer Rates Fee Schedule. Questions on the motion: Council member Lundh commented this is not the appropriate time to raise rates on the citizens and businesses. The vote was called. Council members Glondo, Harper, Holz, Williams and Ratliff voted aye. Council member Lundh voted nay. The motion passed by a vote of 5 to 1.*

d. Ordinance No. 1594 – 2020 Budget Amendment: Robin Newcomb presented the Ordinance which compensates for payments that must be made by the end of the year. *A motion was made by Steven Harper and seconded by Mickey Holz to approve Ordinance No. 1594 - 2020 Budget Amendment. The motion carried unanimously.*

e. Ordinance No. 1595 – 2021 Salary Ordinance: Robert Omans reported the Ordinance increases salaries by 3% (COLA) throughout the City, except for the Police Department, which will increase by 8.2%. The corporal's salary will increase by 6%. All 2021 salaries are included in the 2021 proposed budget. Council member Lundh commented that, while the staff does a good job, he questions giving raises when others in our community are experiencing hardships during this economy. Council member Harper reported the Budget Committee worked through this and approved this raise. Council member Williams commented small raises will allow people to shop the local businesses. *A motion was made by Mickey Holz and seconded by Ken Ratliff to adopt the 2021 Salary Ordinance No. 1595. The vote was called. Council members Glondo, Harper, Holz, Williams and Ratliff voted aye. Council member Lundh voted nay. The motion passed by a vote of 5 to 1.*

f. Ordinance No. 1596 – 2021 Budget: Robin Newcomb presented the draft budget to council with the following comments:

- Projected numbers are predicted at a lower rate.
- The CARES Act Grant money has been given out to businesses and not kept by the City; other cities have kept their CARES act grant money without distributing to local businesses.
- Encouraged the council to come in and watch what staff does and ask questions.
- Suggested the council discuss the next budget and the budget process at the beginning of each year to better understand it.
- Council should put faith in their committees.

Council Discussion:

Council Member Lundh:

- Appreciates the work the Budget Committee, Mayor and Treasurer put into the process, and does not question their abilities; but would like to have a more robust process with the council as a group.
- A better overview should have been provided to council before the first Public Hearing. Priorities are set by the Budget Committee and staff; council member priorities are not sought.
- Commented the Budget process was not explained well and asked to table the item until the next regular meeting and schedule a study session for 11/30/20 to be more transparent and to allow the public to hear the discussion.
- Questioned the funding for Planning services (specifically Gregg Dohrn) and why we pay another planner when a planner is already on staff.

Council Member Harper:

- Commented the Budget Committee puts a lot of work into the budget. Ultimately, the draft is brought to Council in public hearings where there can be a more robust discussion.
- There is no pressure to pass the budget at this meeting if the council is not comfortable, but it must be passed in a timely manner and before year-end.
- Reported the City is contracting Gregg Dohrn for planning tasks that are over and above the ability of the City Planner to complete due to the special workload of proposed developments.

Council member Holz:

- Commented the Council has had 2 preliminary budgets in their packets to study and ask questions at the scheduled Public Hearings.
- Reported the City starts on the Budget in the summer by asking Department Heads what they need and then the process goes to the Budget Committee.
- Commented the City is fortunate that their employees work hard to save money and balance the budget.

Council member Ratliff:

- Objected to the notion there is a lack of transparency as the proposed budget has been provided to council and there has been opportunity to provide input from any member of council.
- Noted the Mayor and Treasurer are experienced in putting together budgets.
- Stated the City has an excellent staff, and it is a good policy to give them a raise and fund the items needed by the City.
- Stated this is a conservative budget and he supports it.

Council member Williams:

- Commented she would also like to have a study session before passing this budget.

Council member John Glondo:

- Commented he has all the faith in the Treasurer and the Budget Committee.

A motion was made by Mickey Holz and seconded by John Glondo to approve Ordinance No. 1596 adopting the budget for the fiscal year ending 12/31/2021. Questions on the motion: Council member Lundh strenuously requested to have another meeting to discuss the budget and provide more transparency as requested by him and Council member Williams. The vote was called. Council members Glondo, Harper, Holz and Ratliff voted aye. Council members Lundh and Williams voted nay. The motion passed by a vote of 4 to 2.

g. Council Support for Kittitas County BOCC Letter to the Governor Concerning the State-wide COVID-19 Restrictions: Mayor McGowan read a draft letter from the City of Ellensburg regarding Kittitas County's request to Governor Inslee to give the County more control, based on their handling of the COVID-19 pandemic. The City of Ellensburg adopted the letter on 11/23/2020. The meeting was opened for discussion.

Council member John Glondo:

- Noted the letter does not ask for an exemption to the current State control, but to be recognized for the great steps made during the pandemic and to give control back to the County to make determinations of what needs to occur during the pandemic.

Council member Matthew Lundh:

- Commented his issue is the County added language regarding .09 and Lodging tax money after COG drafted the original letter. Ellensburg objected and created the version read by Mayor McGowan. He is hesitant to include language regarding lodging tax.

Mayor McGowan:

- COG drafted the original letter, Kittitas County changed the original letter, Ellensburg modified the County's version. Commissioner Wachsmith agreed to take Ellensburg's version to the commissioners on 11/25/2020. Roslyn and Kittitas will be reviewing the same revision.

Council member Ken Ratliff:

- Commented both versions are very respectable and supports either one of them.

Council member Steven Harper:

- Commented he would have liked to see the language in the letter go farther with the demands made to the governor's office. As a member of the Lodging Tax Committee, he believes the County should be the first to aggressively contribute lodging tax money toward businesses or relief efforts, as they are the major collector.

Council member Beth Williams:

- Noted there are no representatives of the Hospital District on COG.
- Stated many COVID patients are transported out of the County. The statement in the letter that there is enough space for COVID patients is not accurate.

A motion was made by John Glondo and seconded by Ken Ratliff to authorize the Mayor to sign the Ellensburg version of the letter. The motion carried unanimously.

Committee Reports:

a. **Matthew Lundh** reported the Fireworks Committee is working with the attorney to draft language for the amended Fireworks Ordinance and will bring it to council at the next meeting. Council member Beth Williams commented she is against the discharge of fireworks due to the distress it causes to people with PTSD. Mayor McGowan and Council Member Lundh explained this draft addresses only the sale of fireworks.


b. **Ken Ratliff** reported the Utilities Committee met to discuss relief of excess charges on a water bill due to a leak in an irrigation system. The committee recommended a one-time credit of \$500.00, the maximum allowed by City ordinance. *A motion was made by Matthew Lundh and seconded by Steven Harper to apply the one-time credit to the rate payer. The motion carried unanimously.* Mayor McGowan commented the City should look at how credit for a water leak is handled in the future.

Motion to Adjourn

A motion was made by Matthew Lundh and seconded by John Glondo to adjourn 8:44 p.m. The next regular scheduled meeting is Monday December 14, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. and will be held virtually, with Zoom access by phone and/or computer.



Mayor



Attest