

CITY OF STEVENSON COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
March 19, 2015
6:00PM

ROLL CALL

Frank Cox, Monica Masco, Robert Muth, Scott Anderson, Amy Weissfeld, Julie Mayfield

STAFF

Nick Hogan, Ken Woodrich, Eric Hansen

GUESTS

Mary Repar, Wayne Martin, Ben Sciacca, Robert Hopkins, Philip Watness, Greg Weibe, Donna Rush

6:00pm Meeting Called to Order by Cox

MINUTES

Weissfeld motioned to approve the February 19, 2015 Meeting Minutes as written with a 2nd by **Muth**. Unanimously approved

CONSENT AGENDA

- a) Water adjustment – Dan Read, Superintendent for Stevenson-Carson School District (meter No. 403480) requests a water adjustment of \$1,000.00 for a circulating system failure at the pool that resulted in the pool being pumped dry overnight. They have since repaired the system.
- b) Water adjustment – Property Management the Gorge (meter No. 106900) requests a water adjustment of \$281.71 for a toilet leak which has since been repaired.
- c) Special Occasion Liquor license – Stevenson Business Association / Scott Anderson, Skamania County Fairgrounds, April 4, 2015.
- d) Liquor license Renewals – Fraternal Order of Eagles; Skamania Lodge.
- e) Training Request - City Administrator Nick Hogan requests approval to attend a one day workshop, Public Funds Investing, in Lynnwood, Washington, April 2, 2015. Approximate cost to the City will be \$501.30.

Masco motioned to approve the consent agenda items *a – e* as written with a 2nd by **Mayfield**. Unanimously approved

PUBLIC COMMENT

Martin explained that a sewer line goes across his property and the city has a forty foot (40') easement. For years there has been a steep embankment between his property and the neighboring property. He only recently found out that this sewer line exists. He's asked since November to get an easement completed.

Hansen said he can proceed with the easement, but he needs to have a survey company review the triangle portion of the property, then speak with **Martin** and record the easement. **Woodrich** said it is very likely that the city has a prescriptive easement, and they will work with **Martin** on the triangle portion of the property at the bottom. **Martin** is most concerned about the unstable wall he has to maintain and wants the city to take responsibility for the way it was left. **Muth** asked if he maintained the slope, **Martin** said yes. **Woodrich** said this is where we might have a disagreement, it is evident from the apartment elevation that they excavated the land. **Woodrich** said there is a riser for the sewer, it is underground and there is no reason the bank couldn't be in a different position. They didn't engineer the

apartment and your property well. The city didn't have grading requirements. **Woodrich** thinks the liability is the neighboring building property owner's during excavation and it is well past the statute of limitations. We would have issues with the auditor if we corrected this. **Woodrich** asked about the boundary line adjustment he did. **Hansen** said the apartment building didn't sign an easement agreement. **Woodrich** doesn't have an issue getting an easement in place, but he is stumped as to how the city has liability for the bank. **Woodrich** and **Muth** said it seems maybe it can be a nuisance against the apartment property owner, as they created the problem. **Woodrich** said taking care of a bank is not usual in an easement. **Martin** believes that the bank is like that so the city can get to the sewer line, it was left for the city to access easily. **Woodrich** said what you are asking is going to cost 30K. **Martin** asked the apartment property owners to do this but no one will do anything. **Repar** said Mercy Housing owns the apartments. **Muth** said he will meet with **Woodrich, Hansen, Hogan** and **Martin** to figure something out. On March 30th at 4:00 pm they will meet at city hall to discuss this issue.

Donna Rush asked council to consider ACH water payments and **Hogan** said they are doing that (looking into it).

Repar is starting community resiliency programs for 2015. White Salmon Library will host a discussion on fire resistant and drought proof plants. There will also be a walk-about at Will's garden. Also another event on May 2nd at the Stevenson Library.

Repar said we need a plan to coordinate business, not just wait for businesses to open and close. She asked if it would be possible for government employees to work together and hire a financial person, like Peggy Bryan did when she worked at the EDC. The person would tell them what they can and can't do. Someone who can say you have these resources and this is how they can be used. **Repar** said the ships that visit Stevenson have people and no one to point them in the right direction. She said there is no greeting. These are older people, she suggested doing something with golf carts. She said the more business you have the more you will have, they build on each other. **Repar** would like to see more plastic bags on Main Street for animal waste. **Repar** went to the oil talk in Camas and it was a good presentation, she hopes you will give consideration of Steinekey's letter.

Phillip Watness, editor of the Pioneer, said building on what **Repar** said he's been thinking about the inventory of existing businesses, and county wide what sort of things can be done. He suggested the city perform a needs assessment. He said they have bicycles, hikers, kite boarders, etc. and asked if there were any one thing we offer them in this town that accommodates those businesses. If we focus on tourism we need to focus on those businesses. He said there are too few volunteers in town, and the SBA is trying to do build this. It's frustrating because we don't have the weight of population here. **Cox** said the EDC has a list of the commercial properties available. **Cox** said it is really tough for these businesses to make a go of it, it is hard to make rent especially in winter.

Scott Anderson said he noticed that a couple of government accounts have a staff of two that work on economic development. He wants to know where their money comes from and as a city how do we get someone on staff to do economic development. He has been told that the EDC does this. The missing part is what businesses could go into those vacancies. He asked how do we connect the dots and who pays for it. **Anderson** said through the SBA they did a 3-part webinar about revitalizing downtown. The discourse at the end was good. **Rush** said there were three parts and they were all different. **Anderson** said the most value he got out of it was the discussion at the end. Also, this Tuesday at Skamania Lodge there will be a presentation about how to get a team pulling in the right direction. He said it is time to start moving forward and fill these empty businesses.

OLD BUSINESS

Pedestrian Safety Concerns

The City was asked to hold a meeting in June and before that to put out a new survey. **Hogan** presented a draft of the new survey and **Hansen** will collect information from the radar feedback signs. **Hogan** explained that this survey is much shorter than the previous one. He went through the survey with city council. There were four questions and it is on the website starting tomorrow and also there are hard cop-

ies at City Hall. **Muth** suggested that they add a link to the hard copy. **Weissfeld** felt like last time people filled out the survey more than once.

Ben Sciacca thanked council for allowing him to speak. He said he felt a bit of a victory walking out of here last month with the six to eight month proposal last October, but he was disappointed about tacking on two additional months. He questioned the wisdom of waiting - wouldn't it be better to address the issue before the tourism season begins? He visited every business owner on 2nd street. He wrote up a petition and asked business owners about rerouting trucks onto 1st street. They were ecstatic to be able to sign something and very eager to discuss this. He said he had every business represented; all thirty one business owners. He said they are disturbed and they don't feel that City Council is concerned for their safety. We are going to have a fatality out there, we are going to have a busy tourist season, and of all the improvements this would be the easiest. He said that he's known **Monica Masco** a long time and he knows it's an uncomfortable spot for her to be in. **Sciacca** said the public feels that because **Masco** lives on 1st that is a reason for a conflict of interest. He said it is important that an appearance of a conflict of interest isn't there. **Cox** said he lives on 2nd street and no one has approached him or city council about any conflict of interest issues. **Mayfield** asked if **Sciacca** has plans to do a similar petition on 1st street. He said they all spoke at the public meeting. He feels city council should do the right thing and start sooner than later, and by June 1st we can have this done. **Weissfeld** said **Sciacca** was out of line for attacking **Monica Masco**. She feels it's personally offensive and she is proud of what they have done as a city council. They have listened openly to the public, held a town hall meeting, sent out a survey, and she has had a lot of discussions personally. She is proud of the process and looks forward to that continuing, including collecting information from the new survey and the new signs. **Cox** asked if there were any other comments. **Robert L. Hopkins Senior** said he wants to propose a deal on the 1st and 2nd street situation. He would like to propose making 1st street a bypass and 2nd street traffic flow west on it. He proposed roundabouts on the west and east ends of Stevenson. Coming from the west, make the rock creek bridge into one lane and make it sharp enough that the trucks have to slow down. He suggested lights that flash when someone wants to go across the crosswalks. **Simpkins** said he has been a citizen in the county since August 1964. They are concerned about the safety of the school buses and their going this route to Carson back and forth. **Weibe** with Columbia Hardware thought something more than a survey was coming out, and he has the same frustrations that **Sciacca** has. It's been a year and a half with another summer tourist season going by. He does like the radar signs. He wants the speed and traffic counts from the signs. He said they do work and slow people down. Not so sure about the crosswalk flags but a bunch of things can help. **Hogan** is scheduling a meeting in June to discuss the issue further as per Council's request. **Hansen** reported that the Fire Chief and EMS said there would be issues from removing the stop sign. **Weibe** said bottom line is enforcement. **Cox** said he has noticed traffic has slowed down. **Repar** wants to know if there is a comment field on the survey - **Hogan** responded Yes.

Wi-Fi Usage

Hogan presented a summary of Stevenson Wi-Fi systems recent usage. He explained there were a few months missing, so the information is helpful but not complete. For last year there were an average of 1100 unique users per month. **Weissfeld** said this number is unique users not number of visitors. She asked about the average number of times someone is viewing or accessing Wi-Fi. She said we are spending 10K using this service. **Anderson** said the next challenge is finding the sweet spot between the two. Looking at the numbers it seems like a good service we are providing, comparing that to bandwidth. **Weissfeld** thinks it's a little expensive. If your goal is to direct people once they are here that is a different

thing. **Anderson** monitors the system when **Joe Schlick** is out of town. Curious to see how many of those users each month are taking advantage of free Wi-Fi. **Anderson** said some of that infrastructure is used to run the web cams. If someone else puts that on their site they are getting the unique clicks.

Cost Allocation Plan

Hogan presented a proposed revision to the City's Cost Allocation Plan for council consideration. A new section was added for allocation of salary and benefits cost for Carla and Candace (city employees). The State Auditor had asked them to justify their cost allocations. **Muth** made a motion to approve the proposed revision of the cost allocation plan to take effect January 1, 2014, with a 2nd by **Anderson**. Unanimous approval

NEW BUSINESS

Local Improvement Districts

Hogan presented an overview of the Local Improvement District (LID) process for assisting property owners with financing needed capital improvements. He was approached by **Rick May** and asked about establishing a local improvement district for Del Ray improvements. MRSC has a manual for LIDs. He discussed the pros and cons of using LID's, and explained that the City has used LIDs in the past for limited purposes. The biggest challenge to the City is that the final assessment is not based on the full cost of the project, but on the "special benefit" of the improvements to each parcel, which is defined as the difference between the fair market value of the property before and after the local improvement project. There are different assessment methods that can be used for this purpose (such as square footage, front footage, per parcel assessments, certified appraisals, etc) but all of them are subject to appeal of the calculated "special benefit" by the individual property owner. The amount that any given parcel "benefits" from the stated improvement is subjective. Because the final property tax assessment is not based on the full cost of the project to the City, a portion of the City's cost is normally not recoverable through the LID process (meaning it gets paid by the other taxpayers in the City). **Woodrich** said the LID process is not normally used for new developments for that reason. There was discussion about using an LID for Del Ray Avenue improvements, with general consensus that it should not be used for new developments. **Anderson** said they need to consider the possibility as each new project comes in.

Sierra Club Request

The SW Washington Sierra Club requests City Council send a letter to Senator Murray asking her to apply pressure to the Army Corps of Engineers to require an Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Tesoro Savage oil terminal in Vancouver, Washington. **Weissfeld** thought it was a well worded letter. Weissfeld made a motion to send a letter to Senator Murray with a 2nd by **Anderson**. Unanimously approved.

Planning Commission Request

The Stevenson Planning Commission requests Council to authorize a design competition for exploring options for developing a more attractive display on the concrete retaining wall currently under construction as part of the Bridging Byways Communities Trail Project. The Planning Commission has offered to assist with organizing this effort. All of council were in agreement.

Contract approvals

City Administrator Nick Hogan requested Council approval of the following contracts:

Wallis Trail Agreement

Amendment #7 would extend the contract with Wallis Engineering through July 31, 2015 (a no cost extension). **Masco** moved to approve amendment #7 to extend the contact with Wallis Engineering through July 31, 2015 with a 2nd by **Mayfield**. Unanimous Approval

Berger ABAM, Cascade Avenue

Amendment #2 would increase the total contract payable to Berger ABAM for engineering and Construction Management services to \$198,104, an increase of \$63,000. Approximately half the increase is for the Cascade Ave Project directly. The other half is from the added improvements such as the Stevenson landing work, additional paving on West Cascade, bus parking, the Kanaka Creek Road water line project, and extra evaluations requested for storm water concerns. **Weissfeld** asked if there was any landscaping with this, **Hansen** said yes it is part of their contract. An element of the TIB grant for Cascade Avenue is landscaping. **Masco** moved to approve Amendment #2 to increase the total contract payable to Berger ABAM for engineering and Construction Management services to \$198,104 with a 2nd by **Anderson**. Unanimous approval

Columbia Gorge Interpretive Center

Mayfield motioned to approve the 2015 Tourism funding contract with the Columbia Gorge Interpretive Center to reimburse up to \$55,000 for advertising, promotions, special events, marketing, and administration with a 2nd by **Anderson**. Unanimous Approval

Bridge of the Gods Kiteboarding Festival

Masco moved to approved 2015 Tourism funding contract with Tony Bolstad to reimburse up to \$3,000 for the Bridge of the Gods Kiteboarding Festival with a 2nd by **Mayfield**. Unanimous Approval

Gorge Outrigger Races

Masco moved to approve the 2015 Tourism funding contract with JD Davies to reimburse up to \$5,000 for the Gorge Outrigger Races with a 2nd by **Mayfield**. Unanimous Approval

Columbia Gorge Fiddle Contest

Anderson moved to approve the 2015 Tourism funding contract with Sherrie McKenzie to reimburse up to \$7,500 for the Columbia Gorge Fiddle Contest with a 2nd by **Weissfeld**. Unanimous Approval

Discover Your Northwest

Muth motioned to approve the 2015 Tourism funding contract with Discover Your Northwest to reimburse up to \$15,000 for an information assistant to work at the Forest Service Visitors Center at Skamania Lodge 2nd by **Weissfeld**. Unanimous Approval

Stevenson Farmers' Market

Mayfield moved to approve the 2015 Tourism funding contract with Alice Meyers to reimburse up to \$1,765 for operation of the Stevenson Farmers' Market with a 2nd by **Muth**. Unanimous Approval

INFORMATION ITEMS

Cascade Avenue Project Update

Hansen provided an update on the Cascade Avenue Improvements project. **Pat Hood** will work with the consultants on the Stevenson Landing improvements project. The latest construction estimate is over the original estimate so they are value engineering now. **Hansen** said he can go up to 15% over the original estimate, and will approach TIB for an increase in grant funds after construction bids are received and we know the final cost. **Weissfeld** asked about costs of road strengths and about Kanaka Creek Underpass. **Hansen** is planning to use some of the asphalt grindings to fill in that underpass.

Contracts Status Summary Sheet

Hogan handed out a Contracts Summary Status Sheet for Council use.

Sheriff's report

A copy of the Skamania County Sheriff's report for February, 2015 was reviewed by council. **Weissfeld** is pleased with the sheriff's report changes and would like **Hogan** to share with **Sciacca**.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR AND STAFF REPORTS

Hansen said they finished advertising for a temporary public works employee and have offered the position to Devon. WSDOT plans to chip seal through town on 2nd street in August. Work will be done at night. Crosswalks will be updated with new thermal seal during the chip seal project. Other crosswalks will be done by the city before the start of school.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS

Weissfeld talked to **Darryl Yeager** aka the honey man and he was kicked out of his selling spot because the WA side of the Bridge of the Gods is competition to OR side vendors. Honey man was also kicked off of Hwy 14. **Hogan** will check with Port of Cascade Locks to confirm this information.

Bonnie Heymier approached **Weissfeld** and asked if there is a requirement for people to take their signs down when out of business. She should approach the Planning Commission with this question.

One Gorge has presented to several other organizations. Originally formed by the ports to be a unified voice regionally in the Gorge. **Anderson** said their mission is the one voice for the Gorge; lobbying.

Anderson thought maybe they can help with truck traffic. **Mayfield** said one of their goals is unified transportation in the gorge. **Anderson** is interested in learning more. Three council members are in favor, they will be invited by **Hogan**. **Anderson** asked about water in the planter areas, and asked if **Hansen** would come to the next SBA meeting. **Hansen** said he will attend. **Anderson** mentioned purchasing a PA system. **Woodrich** suggested that they not buy a cheap one.

VOUCHER APPROVAL

February 2015 Payroll checks have been audited and are presented for approval. February payroll checks 9237 thru 9256 total \$77,282.17 which includes two ACH payments and one EFTPS payment. Check 9257 was voided due to a printing error. Check 9241 was lost and voided. Reissued with check 9258. March Accounts Payable checks 9259 thru 9307 total \$205,839.66 which includes one ACH payment. The A/P Check Register and Fund Transaction Summary are attached for your review. Detailed claims vouchers were available for review at the Council meeting. No investment activity occurred in February 2015.

Masco motioned to approve vouchers with a 2nd by **Anderson**. Unanimously approved

ISSUES FOR THE NEXT MEETING

Weissfeld asked if everyone was happy with the 1K ceiling for water bill leaks. The majority of council are happy with it.

8:13 MEETING ADJOURNED

Frank Cox

Nick Hogan, City Administrator/Clerk

Minutes by Melissa Anderson