



CITY OF WHITE SALMON
City Council Regular Meeting – Wednesday, November 17, 2021
Via Zoom Teleconference

Council and Administrative Personnel Present

Council Members:

David Lindley
Ashley Post
Jim Ransier
Joe Turkiewicz

Staff Present:

Marla Keethler, Mayor
Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer
Pat Munyan, City Administrator
Russ Avery, Public Works Operations Mgr.
Brendan Conboy, Land Use Planner
Bill Hunsaker, Fire Chief
Ken Woodrich, City Attorney

I. Call to Order, Presentation of the Flag and Roll Call

Marla Keethler, Mayor called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

There were approximately 6 members of the public in attendance via teleconference.

***Moved by Joe Turkiewicz. Seconded by Ashley Post.
Motion to excuse Jason Hartmann. CARRIED 4-0.***

II. Changes to the Agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

III. Consent Agenda

- A. AWC Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Consortium Program, Participation Agreement and Enrollment Application
- B. Short-term Rental (STR) inventory, Registration, Compliance and Analytic Services
- C. Small Works Roster Bid, 2021 Tree Maintenance
- D. Approval of Meeting Minutes – November 3, 2021
- E. Approval of Vouchers

Vouchers audited and certified as required by RCW 42.24.080 and expense reimbursement claims as required by RCW 42.24.090 as of this 17th day of November, 2021.

Type	Date	From	To	Amount
Claims	11/17/2021	EFT	EFT	16,610.93
	11/17/2021	37563	37589	73,061.17
			Claims Total	89,672.10
Payroll	11/19/2021	EFT	EFT	69,635.89
			Payroll Total	69,635.89
Manual Claims	10/22/2021	EFT	EFT	16,476.00
	11/10/2021	EFT	EFT	7,920.00
	11/10/2021	37562	37562	6,547.72
			Manual Total	30,943.72
			Total All Vouchers	190,251.71

The council briefly discussed the Granicus proposal for short-term rental inventory, registration, and analytic services.

**Moved by Jim Ransier. Seconded by Joe Turkiewicz.
 Motion to approve Consent Agenda as presented. CARRIED 4-0.**

IV. Public Comment

Marla Keethler, Mayor noted that the city is not taking any general public comments on short-term rentals as a public hearing will be held in the near future.

Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer noted that there were no written comments and no registered in advance to submit public comments.

Tao Berman, White Salmon said he has broken ground on his 29-unit boutique hotel project with a street level retail located on Jewett. Berman provided an update to the city council of the status of the project.

Marla Keethler, Mayor said signs will be posted at the location to let the public know what is happening at the location.

V. Presentations

Native American Heritage Month - Elaine Harvey, Rock Creek Band Member of the Confederated Tribes of the Yakama Nation

Marla Keethler, Mayor introduced Elaine Harvey who is a Rock Creek Band Member of the Confederated Tribes of the Yakama Nation who will make a presentation in recognition of Native American Heritage Month.

Elaine Harvey made a presentation to the City Council regarding the “Yakama Nation’s connection to the land of White Salmon from headwaters “Pahto” to the confluence.”

Marla Keethler, Mayor, said that the city is interested in providing a land recognition/acknowledgement at the beginning of its city council meetings. She said it is important that it is done correctly and respectfully and honoring the way the land should be referred to where White Salmon exists. Keethler asked what is a respectful way to incorporate that into the city’s meetings.

Elaine Harvey said that she is aware that other organizations read a statement at the beginning of their meetings acknowledging the lands of the Yakama Nation.

Jim Ransier, Council Member thanked Elaine Harvey for her presentation. He asked if there is anything the City of White Salmon could be doing to be more welcoming and inclusive.

Elaine Harvey said some of the issues are the Hood River Bridge project, tribal housing, and impacts on tribal natural and cultural resources. She said it is important to keep the tribal nation in the loop.

Ashley Post, Council Member thanked Elaine Harvey and said she enjoyed the presentation. She said she is glad that tribal members are working to keep the heritage alive and pass on the traditions.

David Lindley, Council Member thanked Elaine Harvey. He noted that Harvey is very much in demand as a speaker and that she is an inspiration.

Kevin Greenwood, Port of Hood River provided an update on the Hood River Bridge Project. He noted that it is an honor to follow Elaine Harvey. Greenwood said the Port has been closed working with the Yakama Nation and the other three tribes with a presence in the Gorge.

VI. Business Items

A. Preliminary 2022 Budget

Marla Keethler, said tonight is the first of two public hearings on the proposed 2022 budget. She said the budget narrative provides a lot of explanation about the proposed budget. Keethler said the narrative highlights key priority areas identified at the city council’s retreat. She noted there is a big transition in Jan Brending retiring from her position. Keethler said there may be additional items to be funded in 2022 that are not currently in the budget.

Marla Keethler, Mayor opened the public hearing for the 2022 budget. There was no public comment provided. Keethler closed the public hearing.

Jim Ransier, Council Member asked what specific projects are included in the Street Fund.

Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer said the two major projects are the Garfield Street Reconstruction project that is funded mostly by Transportation Improvement Board funds and the Jewett Roundabout which is funded by the city. She said there are two carryover projects one that is funded out of the Street Fund which is the Cherry-Patton Asphalt Cap and the second that involves completing the asphalt restoration on Jewett related to the water main improvement project which will be funded out of the Water Fund.

Jim Ransier, Council Member said he really appreciates the introduction letter that covers the prior year, challenges and where the city is heading.

Marla Keethler, Mayor noted there is no action by the city council at tonight's meeting.

Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer said she wanted to point out that part of the adoption of the property taxes is a demonstration within the budget that the city needs the 1% increase in property taxes. She said that she feels it has been demonstrated in both the General Fund and Street Fund that the 1% increase in property taxes is needed.

B. Ordinance 2021-11-1088, Amending WSMC 13.16.025, Water Monthly Fees

Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer presented information regarding the proposed increase in the water base fees. She said the city's municipal code provides for an increase in the water fees for 2022 over 2021. Brending said staff and the Personnel and Finance Committee are recommending that the base fee for water be increased an additional 5% above what the city's code already provides for 2022. She noted that the 5% increase is included in the 2022 budget.

Marla Keethler, Mayor opened the public hearing regarding Ordinance 2021-11-1088, Amending WSMC 13.16.025, Water Monthly Fees. There was no public comment. Keethler closed the public hearing.

Keethler noted this is the first reading and the council has the option to move the ordinance to a second reading.

Jim Ransier, Council Member asked what does the increase cover.

Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer it helps pay for the loans that the city has covering improvements to the city's water system, pays for the operations and maintenance of the system and helps to set aside funds for future capital improvements. She noted that the budget includes water reserve requirements as established by USDA Rural Development which the 5% increase helps the city meet those requirements. Brending said funding is also provided for short-lived assets such as radio read meters. She said it is a goal to establish a base station at city hall for reading the meters and even though it is not currently budgeted for 2022 she hopes that after the closing of the 2021 year that it could be budgeted.

Ashley Post, Council Member asked for clarification about the 5% increase.

Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer said the city has a code that provides for a rate for 2022. She said the proposed ordinance increases that rate by 5%.

Ashley Post, Council Member asked because the chart for fees ends with 2022 would there be an increase in 2023.

Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer said the code provides for an automatic 3% increase after 2022 but noted that staff is working with the city's water engineer to bring forth a new rate table for the approximately 5 years in 2023 similar to the table included in the current code.

Ashley Post, Council Member said she is concerned that there is no one present to comment on the proposed rate increase.

Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer noted that the public hearing was noticed twice in the newspaper, on the city's website and information regarding the public hearing was provided in the utility billing newsletter.

Moved by Ashley Post. Seconded by Jim Ransier.

Motion to move Ordinance 2021-11-1088, Amending WSMC 13.16.025, Water Monthly Fees to a second reading with an additional public hearing. CARRIED 4-0.

C. Utility Billing Grievance – Susan J. Romes, 422 NW Lincoln

Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer provided information regarding a utility billing grievance files by Susan J. Romes for property located at 422 W. Lincoln Street. She noted this grievance is different than previous grievances heard by the city council in that the property was previously owned by Greg Chamberlain was being rented out to tenants. Brending said the property originally was serviced by a septic system and then converted to city sewer. She said that at the time the sewer utility billing should have taken place the tenants had a utility account that did not reference the property owner and the property owner was not receiving a copy of the utility billing. Brending said the initial utility billing for November 2018 was entered manually and due to a technical error and a significant staffing change at the time, the account was not billed again for sewer until the current property owner, Susan Romes brought it to the city's attention. She said Susan Romes purchased the property in April 2019 with the tenants in place. Brending said when Romes took physical possession of the home on July 1, 2022 she notified the city she was responsible for the utility billings and an account in her name was set up and the tenant's account closed. She said in August of 2021 Romes learned that she was not being billed for sewer and contacted the city. Brending said the city's records were reviewed and it was determined that a billing error beginning in December 2018 had occurred. She said that because Romes did not purchase the property until April 2019, the back billing for sewer was billed from the date of purchase forward to July 2022 in the amount of \$1,479.77. Brending noted that Romes did not receive copies of the utility billing that was being sent to the tenant from April 2019 through June 2020. She said Romes is asking that the utility billing be reduced for the months

associated with the tenant's occupancy which would be a reduction in the amount of \$780.77. Brending said the city has updated its codes to require that utility billing is in the property owner's name with a duplicate bill provided to the tenant upon request. She said all property owners receive a copy of the utility billing and the city has closed individual "tenant" account and moved tenants to the property owner's account. Brending said staff is in the process of reviewing all utility billing where there is either 1) no water billing, i.e. billing for sewer only and 2) no sewer billing, i.e. billing for water only. She said a database will be developed that provides an explanation as to why water or sewer utility billing is not occurring. Brending said this will ensure that all properties are being billed for the appropriate utilities and there are notations in the files as to why the property is not being billed either for water or sewer.

Susan Romes said Jan Brending and Stephanie Porter have been kind and informative about what is going on. She said the information presented by Brending is correct. Romes noted that she did pay the full amount due but would like to receive a reduction if possible. She noted she is a member of the city and was born and raised in White Salmon.

Ashley Post, Council Member asked a question about the utility billing included in the council packet.

Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer said the utility bill was the November 2018 utility bill that was the only bill that included sewer until the Romes notified the city that she was not being billed for sewer.

Jim Ransier, Council Member thanked Susan Romes for being honest and reporting the mistake when she found it. He said he is supportive of a reduction in the utility billing.

Moved by Jim Ransier. Seconded by David Lindley.

Motion to approve a reduction in utility billing for Susan Romes for sewer billing from 4/10/2019 through 6/29/2020 in the amount of \$780.77. CARRIED 4-0.

D. Ordinance 2021-11-1087, Determining the Amount to Be Raised by Ad Valorem Taxes to be Levied for the Year 2022

Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer said the ordinance provides for 1% increase in the city's property taxes. She noted the city is required to adopt both an ordinance and resolution regarding the increase in property taxes.

Moved by Ashley Post. Seconded by David Lindley.

Motion to adopt Ordinance 2021-11-1087, Determining the Amount to Be Raised by Ad Valorem Taxes to Be Levied for the Year 2022. CARRIED 4-0.

E. Resolution 2021-11-529, Adopting Property Tax Levy

Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer said the resolution provides for 1% increase in city's property taxes.

Moved by Jim Ransier. Seconded by Ashley Post.
Motion to adopt Resolution 2021-11-529, Adopting 2022 Property Tax Levy. CARRIED 4-0.

F. Resolution 2021-11-530, Recognizing Roger Holen

Marla Keethler, Mayor said that the city lost a dedicated and committee community member this last week. She read about Roger Holen's life. Keethler said that for staff and others who knew him it was a big loss.

Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer said she that she worked with Roger Holen. She said that when she worked for the City of Bingen Roger Holen, Brian Prigel, Mayor of Bingen and Ned Kindler who was the police chief of White Salmon at that time came up with the idea of creating the Bingen-White Salmon Police Department. Brending said that without Holen and Prigel's leadership that the endeavor would have happened. She said the project was recognized by Association of Washington with a municipal award.

Moved by Jim Ransier. Seconded by David Lindley.
Motion to adopt Resolution 2021-11-530, Recognizing Roger Holen. CARRIED 4-0.

VII. Reports and Communications

A. Department Heads

Russ Avery, Public Works Operations Manger said some Christmas decorations have been installed and the remainder will be put up after Thanksgiving. He said the vehicle lift at the Public Works shop has broken down and it does not appear to be rebuildable and will need to be replaced. Avery said the speed radar signs on Main street have been installed and noted that information from the radar signs can be downloaded.

Pat Munyan, City Administrator said the data from the speed radar signs can be used to determine the average speed which can be provided to the police department. He said that he met with Margaret Richmond on her property and conducted an inspection. Munyan said a structural inspection of the Walker House was been completed. He said that he also spoken with the Klickitat County Treasurer about the paperwork related to the purchase of property on Dock Grade.

Brendan Conboy, Land Use Planner said he is working on the short-term rental codes and will be bringing something to the city council at their December 1 council meeting. He said the Transportation Plan is moving along and that he is also working on a tree ordinance. Conboy said he is also meeting with the Klickitat County Planning Director regarding the urban exempt area.

Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer said the 2022 budget adoption will be on the city's December 1 agenda and that a 2021 budget amendment will be scheduled for the second meeting in December. She said the council will see a number of contract renewals or amendments at the next several meetings.

B. City Council Members

Marla Keethler, Mayor noted that this is Joe Turkiewicz' last meeting as a council member. She thanked Turkiewicz for his contributions. Keethler noted that Ben Giant will be sworn in before the December 1st city council meeting.

Joe Turkiewicz, Council Member said he has started reaching to community members for fundraising for the Walker House.

Jim Ransier, Council Member thanked Joe Turkiewicz for his service and said Turkiewicz had the ability to listen and to engage.

David Lindley, Council Member said the Tree Board met and finalized the tree maintenance scope of work. He said the Board continues to work with Brendan Conboy on the tree ordinance.

C. Mayor

Marla Keethler, Mayor noted that some barriers have been placed around the sweet gum tree on Jewett due to the issues with the sidewalk. She said the city is ordering greenery and bows to wrap the light poles on Jewett. Keethler said the ornaments and tree will be going up the Wednesday before Thanksgiving.

VIII. Executive Session

Marla Keethler, Mayor announced at 7:40 p.m. that the city council will meet for 15 minutes in Executive Session pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(b) regarding the acquisition or purchase of real estate.

The City Council resumed regular session at 7:55 p.m. and announced that no decisions were made and staff will continue as discussed.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.



Maria Keethler, Mayor



Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer