

**CITY OF WHITE SALMON**  
**City Council Meeting – Wednesday, October 19, 2022**  
**In Person and Via Zoom Teleconference**

**Council and Administrative Personnel Present**

**Council Members:**

Ben Giant  
Patty Fink  
Jason Hartmann  
Jim Ransier  
David Lindley

**Staff Present:**

Russ Avery, Public Works Operations  
Jan Brending, Staff Assistant  
Jeff Cooper, Public Works Foreman  
Mike Hepner, Police Chief  
Bill Hunsaker, Fire Chief/Code Enforcement  
Paul Koch, Interim City Administrator  
Stephanie Porter, Clerk Treasurer  
Ken Woodrich, City Attorney

**I. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Mayor Marla Keethler called the meeting to order at 6:00p.m. There were approximately 12 members of the public in attendance in person and via teleconference.

**II. Changes to the Agenda**

Staff requested the addition of Resolution 2022-10-550 Update Authorized Individual for the Local Government Investment Pool financial account and Small Works Roster Contract for the Green Street Tree Planting with FLI Landscaping in the amount of \$3,000 not including taxes.

**Moved by David Lindley. Seconded by Jim Ransier.**

**Motion to approve changes to agenda as presented. CARRIED 5-0**

**III. Consent Agenda**

- A. Adoption of Resolution 2022-10-549 Amending Public Records Policy and Procedure
- B. August 2022 Budget Report
- C. September 2022 Budget Report
- D. Approval of Meeting Minutes - September 21, 2022
- E. Approval of Vouchers
- F. Resolution 2022-10-550 Updating Authorized Individual for the Local Government Investment Pool account
- G. Approval of Small Works Roster Contract for Green Street Tress Planting with FLI Landscaping in the amount of \$3000 not including taxes.

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 19<sup>th</sup> day of October 2022.

Type	Date	From	To	Amount
Claims	10/19/2022	38530	38569	212,263.78
			<b>Claims Total</b>	<b>212,263.78</b>
Payroll	10/20/2022	EFT	EFT	73,068.89
			<b>Payroll Total</b>	<b>73,068.89</b>
Manual Claims	10/15/2022	EFT	EFT	110.00
			<b>Manual Total</b>	<b>110.00</b>
			<b>Total All Vouchers</b>	<b>285,442.67</b>

**Moved by Jason Hartmann. Seconded by Ben Giant.  
 Motion to approve Consent Agenda as presented. CARRIED 5-0.**

**IV. Public Comment**

**Gabrielle Gilbert, Klickitat County Resident**

Gabrielle Gilbert is requesting the council meeting with state representatives in October regarding the need for childcare in Klickitat County and make the needs of the area known. Gabrielle Gilbert said there is an urgent need for a full court basketball court in White Salmon and she wants to see this, and a youth center prioritized for the children.

**Emeret, Minor Child**

Emeret requested replacement of the playground equipment in Rheingarten Park because she plays there a lot.

**V. Presentation**

**A. Fire Emergency Task Force Update - Bob Merritt**

Bob Merritt updated the city council of the progress made by the Emergency Fire Task Force set in place to learn about fire services within the city and Fire District 3 with the intention of providing a recommendation for future services up to and including consolidation.

Bob Merritt said that the Fire Task Force has been waiting for a few appointed members to come back into town and are working to schedule their first meeting. This meeting would produce a Mission Statement developed by the task force. They are planning a hybrid style meeting to allow members and citizens to attend in person or via zoom.

The Fire Task Force was scheduled to bring their final report and recommendation by the end of 2022. Due to the amount of time it has taken to fill the appointed Task

Force Seats and to schedule a meeting, Bob Merritt has requested an extension of this timeline to the end of January 2023. David Lindley, Council Member asked if the end of January would be enough time to complete the required 6 meetings.

Bob Merritt said yes. They will be meeting weekly.

***Moved by Jim Ransier. Seconded by Jason Hartmann.  
Motion to approve extension of the Fire Emergency Task Force final report  
deadline to January 31, 2023. CARRIED 5-0***

**VI. Business Items**

**A. Resolution 2022-10-548 Ratifying Proclamation 2022-004 Ending COVID-19  
Emergency Declaration**

Mayor Marla Keethler introduced this resolution noting that the approval would rescind Emergency Declaration 2020-01. Mayor Keethler noted that this would return all employee sick leave procedures back to normal procedures where sick leave would be used for any illness.

***Moved by Jason Hartmann. Seconded by Ben Giant.  
Motion to approve Resolution 2022-10-548 Ratifying Proclamation 2022-004  
Ending COVID- 19 Emergency Declaration.***

Mayor Marla Keethler noted that the ending of the Emergency Declaration does not mean the end of COVID-19. She reminded everyone to continue to follow all recommended guideline including staying home when you are sick and wearing a mask if you have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.

***CARRIED 5-0.***

**B. Approval to Create New City Staff Position - Lateral Police Officer**

Chief Mike Hepner presented his request for the addition of a 6<sup>th</sup> Police Officer position. Chief Hepner began by noting his number one priority is the safety of his officers and the community. There have been multiple incidents where an additional officer on duty was needed.

Chief Hepner said that at times he has officers working 10-20 days straight which is not ideal.

Chief Hepner said there are mandatory officer trainings that are required, Scheduling for these required trainings and effective community police presence is increasingly difficult.

Chief Hepner noted that the Police Department has been consistently responsible with their finances, which include a reserve fund for vehicles.

During Council discussion with Chief Hepner it was concluded that the City of Bingen is in supportive of the addition of 6<sup>th</sup> officer and understands the additional expenses that will be required. It was concluded that this decision was not postponed to the budget process because there is currently a lateral officer that is available, and timing is vital.

Mayor Marla Keethler added that this is a critical decision that will be helpful to know moving into the budget process. Mayor Keethler noted that this need has become even more apparent with the change in mental health services.

Jan Brending, Staff Assistant said that the Law Enforcement Agreement with the City of Bingen is proposing the full police budget be paid by a percentage split that will be reviewed annual based on actual calls. Council and staff discussed.

Mayor Marla Keethler noted that if the council is not comfortable with this decision that should be addressed. This proposal has been brought forward now to give staff direction on how to move forward with the budget as this addition would have a significant impact.

Jim Ransier, Council Member noted that this presentation of this option now makes sense with the current struggle to find good police officers.

***Moved by Ben Giant. Seconded by David Lindley.***

***Motion to approve the creation and hiring of an additional lateral police officer position.***

Patty Fink, Council Member said she feels uncomfortable making this decision outside of the budget process. She values the Police Officers and Chief Hepner. She is uncomfortable not seeing the entire budget.

***CARRIED 5-0.***

**C. September 2022 Budget Amendment #3**

Stephanie Porter, Clerk Treasurer presented the proposed budget amendment noting this amendment will adjust the budget for expenses approved by council and maintaining the required balances per the city financial policies.

Jan Brending, Staff Assistant noted that there will be one final budget amendment before the end of the year.

Ben Giant, Council Member asked if the city was financially ok.

Jan Brending, Staff Assistant said yes, all funds are above their required balances.

***Moved by Jim Ransier. Seconded by Ben Giant.***

***Motion to approve September 2022 Budget Amendment #3 as presented.***

***CARRIED 5-0***

**D. Sweet Gum Tree Engineer Report**

Paul Koch, Interim City Administrator presented the Sweet Gum Tree Report. It has been recommended by city staff to move the Sweet Gum Tree decision to the budget process.

David Lindley, Council Member pointed out the engineer option considering a bulb out that would allow for a replacement tree. It was noted that the bulb out would also aid in traffic calming.

David Lindley requested an opportunity for a few tree board members to have a public comment period before the council makes decision. Council Member and Mayor agreed.

Patty Fink, Council Member said she wanted to point out that the Tree Board did not have the costs of the options when they make their recommendations. She noted that the staff report did not clarify that.

Patty Fink said that she prefers the bulb out as it make more sense for the long-term planning of downtown and that it allows for replacement at the time the Sweet Gum is no longer viable.

Public Comment

**Virginia Hartnett, White Salmon Tree Board Member**

Virginia Hartnett said that the Tree Board did not have all the option available to them at the time of their meeting. She would like to see the process slow down to ensure that the decision and completion is all done right.

**Karen Black Jenkins, White Salmon Tree Board Member**

Karen Black Jenkins said the Tree Board is trying to do the right thing by preserving the tree and providing ADA sidewalks. She noted that this option doe require significant funds and therefore agrees with referring the decision to the budget process.

Stephanie Porter, Clerk Treasurer said it would be ideal to have real life estimate of the cost to maintain the tree to be prepared for future budgeting purposes. She noted that this would be a benefit information for all street trees as we move forward with the intention of being proactive with maintenance and preservation.

Patty Fink, Council Member said that street trees are helpful for climate issues and should be included in future planning.

Council Members and staff clarified that although there is not a known immediate threat to property or persons, large branches have fallen from the tree and could have caused damage.

**Moved by David Lindley. Seconded by Jason Hartmann.  
Motion to refer the decision for the Sweet Gum Tree to the 2023 Budget Process.  
CARRIED 5-0**

**VII. Reports and Communications**

**A. Line of Sight Issues Addressed - Bill Hunsaker, Code Enforcement Officer**

Bill Hunsaker noted that several line-of-sight issues have been identified. Staff is working to get them addressed.

Council and staff discussed the current line-of-sight process. Consensus was reached that current issues should be addressed and that the code should be reviewed to allow for more homeowner responsibility including a fee process for city to provide the work.

**B. Wildfire Mitigation Update – Bill Hunsaker, Fire Chief**

No update for mitigation. Chief Hunsaker updated on a few grants that have been applied for by other agencies.

**C. Department Heads**

**Mike Hepner, Police Chief provided a written update report.**

Council and staff discussed Agency Assist.

**Russ Avery, Public Works Operations Manager provided written update report.**

SCADA was identified as a priority project and it is currently in the works. GIS mapping was identified as a priority.

The bucket truck that was being considered for purchase has been removed from the market. Skamania County will be keeping it as they are unable to get a replacement at this time.

**Stephanie Porter, Clerk Treasurer provided a written update report.**

Jim Ransier, Council Member asked about the Glockenspiel Bells. Jeff Cooper from Public Works confirmed they have been received.

**B. Council Members**

**Jason Hartmann, Council Member** said City Operations committee discussed a resident concern at Pioneer Park and unleashed dogs. The committee determined as a first step the dog leashing signage would be moved to a more prominent location to notify dog owners of the expectation.

Jim Ransier, Council Member noted that he has seen 10 or more unleashed dogs in Rheingarten Park. He is in support of the leash law.

Ken Woodrich, City Attorney noted that there is liability to the city if a dog hurts another dog or person because leash laws are not being followed.

**Patty Fink, Council Member** said that there are potential discussions of a yard debris pick with Republic Services. There are hopes of increasing the relationship with Republic to increase services including glass pick up and yard debris pick up.

**Jim Ransier, Council Member** reminded of the Halloween Event in downtown White Salmon. The Masonic Lodge Haunted House, Grace Baptist Festival of Lights and the Business Partners costume parade will all be available to those looking for a place to celebrate.

Community Development Committee continued the discussion around the park ordinances including the noise codes and rental policies.

Jim Ransier noted that he would like to look into showing a wildfire documentary called "Elemental". It could be utilized as an outreach and engagement tool for the greater discussion of Wildfire.

CityLAB Board had a great conversation with the Klickitat PUD. The switch to Electric has challenges, but the conversation is active. The board is also looking at the Climate Action Plan Scope of work for possible revisions.

**C. Mayor**

Mayor Keethler gave an update on the bridge project and community engagement that is being provided.

Mid-Columbia Houseless Collaborative has a strategic plan that has been adopted. This plan will move forward the efforts of providing affordable housing in Klickitat County.

**VIII. Executive Session**

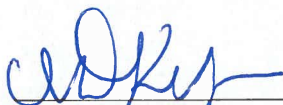
The City Council will go into Executive Session to discuss potential litigation pursuant to RCW 42.30.110 for 15 minutes at 8:01pm.

At 8:16pm Mayor Keethler extended the Executive Session 10 minutes.

City Council and Mayor returned to normal session at 8:26pm.

**IX. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:27p.m.



Marla Keethler, Mayor



Stephanie Porter, Clerk Treasurer