

CITY OF WHITE SALMON
City Council Regular Meeting – Wednesday, October 6, 2021
Via Zoom Teleconference

Council and Administrative Personnel Present

Council Members:

Ashley Post
Jim Ransier
Joe Turkiewicz

Staff Present:

Marla Keethler, Mayor
Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer
Ken Woodrich, City Attorney
Pat Munyan, City Administrator
Brendan Conboy, Land Use Planner
Mike Hepner, Police Chief

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

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

There were approximately 10 members of the public in attendance via teleconference.

Moved by Ashley Post. Seconded by Joe Turkiewicz.

Motion to excuse David Lindley and Jason Hartmann. CARRIED 3-0.

II. Changes to the Agenda

Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer asked that Approval of Meeting Minutes for September 15, 2021 be removed from the consent agenda.

Jim Ransier asked that Closing Highway 141 for Halloween be added as a Business Item.

Moved by Jim Ransier. Seconded by Joe Turkiewicz.

Motion to remove Approval of Meeting Minutes – September 15, 2021 from the Consent Agenda as they will be presented at the October 6 meeting and to add Closing Highway 141 for Halloween to the Business Items. CARRIED 3-0.

III. Consent Agenda

- A. Swimming Pool Demolition, Green Construction – Change Order No. 1 Increase of \$5,140.17
- B. Garfield Water Line Project – Change Order No. 3
- C. Garfield Water Line Improvement – Final Pay Estimate
- D. ~~Approval of Meeting Minutes – September 15, 2021 (Removed)~~
- D. 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 6th day of October, 2021.

Type	Date	From	To	Amount
Claims	10/6/2021	EFT	EFT	6,531.67
	10/6/2021	37443	37486	125,325.95
			Claims Total	131,857.62
Payroll	9/20/2021	EFT	EFT	68,681.54
	10/5/2021	37440	37442	946.81
	10/5/2021	EFT	EFT	107,243.91
			Payroll Total	176,872.26
Manual Claims	9/21/2021	37433	37437	54,701.99
	9/29/2021	37438	37439	10,596.97
			Manual Total	65,298.96
			Total All Vouchers	374,028.84

**Moved by Jim Ransier. Seconded by Joe Turkiewicz.
 Motion to approve Consent Agenda as amended. CARRIED 3-0.**

IV. Public Comment

Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer read the following comments into the record:

Written comment from David Johnson: Stated concerns that putting unnecessary restrictions on short-term rentals could have a negative effect on the City of White Salmon because they are important to the future of the city in supporting tourism and other businesses.

Written comment from Craig Ludwig: Requested the City Council to release his property from the moratorium on short-term rentals.

Alyssa Jones Ferguson, Blackbird & Ivory commented during the meeting that she supports short-term rentals as they support tourism and local businesses. She said short-term rentals increase the number of vacationers to the community and helps keep White Salmon a tourist community.

V. Presentations

Koobdooga

Mary Kapp made a presentation regarding Koobdooga which means “A Good Book” spelled backwards. She said the event happens in October with several events scheduled throughout the month. Kapp said that due to COVID-19 the events are being held online.

Hispanic Heritage Month

Jim Ransier, Council Member introduced Lorena Salazar who works with Washington Gorge Action Programs. Lorena Salazar provided information about growing up in Hood River and

working in the Gorge. She said that the Gorge is her home and that loves helping people especially Latinos.

Ransier asked Salazar how the city can be more supportive of the Latinx community.

Salazar said the city can be supportive by understanding the culture and being open-minded. She said the Latinx community is hardworking, loves American and have a dream for their children.

Ransier thanked Salazar for attending the city council meeting.

VI. Business Items

A. Highway 141 Acquisition

Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer said the city has been presented with the idea of acquiring Highway 141 from Highway 14 to the Alternate. She said staff has presented information to the City Operations Committee regarding the cost to maintain that portion of the Highway which would include striping, chip sealing, overlay, repairs and replacement of guard rails, snow plowing, rockfall removal, policing, etc. Brending said the agenda memo also includes information regarding the city's budget. She noted the city has over \$7 million of projects listed on its Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program. Brending said she has also provided information about how much funds a permanent levy lid lift might provide to the city using the current city levy rate. She said that Jason Hartmann emailed her prior to the meeting and has suggested that he would like the city council to remand this issue to the Planning Commission for their input.

Ken Woodrich, City Attorney suggested the city also needs to check with its insurance provider as there would likely be an increase in the city's premium for the increased mileage of city roadway.

There was a consensus of the city council to ask for comments from the Planning Commission on the topic.

B. Glockenspiel Bells and Clock Evaluation

Marla Keethler, Mayor said staff has been investigating how to get the bells and clock at city hall running again. She said the city has received a proposal from Verdin Bells & Clocks who are the original maker and installer of the bells at City Hall, for evaluating the bells and clocks in order to make recommendations on maintenance of the bells and clocks and updating the equipment and software needed to ring the bells. Keethler said the proposal provides that if the city purchase hardware and software from Verdin that half of the evaluation fee would go towards that purchase. She said the evaluation fee is \$13,831. Keethler noted that she was also approached by an individual who worked with prior Mayor Roger Holen in getting the bells to ring.

Pat Munyan, City Administrator said he met with the individual who looked at the current setup that is not working.

Council members and staff discussed the proposal and the idea of having volunteers find a way to get the bells ringing. The idea of providing a modern system that can be sustained into the future to ring the bells was supported.

Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer said the individual who came forward should be thanked for his desire to help the city in getting the bell ringing again.

Moved by Ashley Post. Seconded by Jim Ransier.

Motion to authorize the Mayor to sign agreement with Verdin Bells & Clocks for \$13,831 (not including taxes) for evaluation of the city hall clock and bells. CARRIED 3-0.

C. Ordinance 2021-10-1086, Repealing WSMC 8.50 Single-Use Carryout Bags

Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer said the proposed ordinance repeals White Salmon Municipal Code 8.50 Single-Use Carryout Bags. She said the Washington State statute has gone into effect on October 1. Brending said the state statute prevents local jurisdictions from enacting their own codes.

Moved by Jim Ransier. Seconded by Joe Turkiewicz.

Motion to adopt Ordinance 2021-10-1086, Repealing WSMC 8.50 Single-Use Carryout Bags upon the first reading. CARRIED 3-0.

D. Lodging Tax Grant Program

Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer said the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee has met to review proposed grant program guidelines. She said the proposed guidelines are designed to cover a broad period and will be updated each year with specific dates. Brending said the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee voted to recommend the guidelines. Brending noted that this year the application period will open next week with applications due on November 8 which will then be considered by the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee on November 18. She said the funding will be available in 2022.

Moved by Joe Turkiewicz. Seconded by Ashley Post.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2021-10-526, Adopting Lodging Tax Grant Program Guidelines. CARRIED 3-0.

E. Closing Highway 141 for Halloween

Jim Ransier, Council Member said that he wanted to bring forth the idea of closing Highway 141 (Jewett Blvd.) for a Halloween event for next year. He said he does not think there is enough time to do it for 2021 and that there are also issues related to COVID-19 to consider.

Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer said that the ideal closure would be between Main Street and Estes which would allow those two streets to remain open.

Mike Hepner, Police Chief said he would not be able to support the closure for this year as he would need to bring in at least two other officers for the closure and would need more time for scheduling.

Ransier said he wanted to raise the issue so that it could be calendared for next year in March or April for discussion with the Community Development Committee.

There was support from other council members for the idea for 2022.

VII. Executive Session (if needed)

No Executive Session was needed.

VIII. Reports and Communications

A. Department Heads

Mike Hepner, Police Chief said he is glad the gas line project is complete. He said during the time of the project there 7 to 8 collisions and a lot of phone calls regarding the speed of vehicles through neighborhoods. Hepner said there has been an increase in disorderly conduct and domestic assaults. Hepner noted that the police vehicle purchased in 2021 is a Ford hybrid.

Russ Avery, Public Works Operations Manager said the gas company has completed the project although there are some touch up things that need to be completed. He said the El Camino Real water project including the reservoir removal is completed. Avery said the pool demolition has started.

Jim Ransier, Council Member asked when the parklets will be removed.

Avery said November 1st.

Marla Keethler, Mayor noted that some of the pool demolition will occur on this weekend.

Keethler noted that during the water shutoff for the El Camino Real project that customers had questions about the quality of water including milkiness and/or brown coloration. She asked Avery if the milkiness was due to air in the water and that the brown coloration was due to rust that came from non-PVC pipes. She also asked if there were any water quality concerns.

Avery said Keethler was correct about the causes and the water was always safe for use.

Brendan Conboy, Land Use Planner said he continues to work with the Planning Commission on short-term rentals. He said he is also working on the critical areas ordinance update which is another priority in addition to working on land use decisions.

Jim Ransier, Council Member asked if short-term rentals are subject to lodging taxes.

Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer said yes. She said if sales taxes for a short-term rental are being collected the city is getting the associated lodging tax.

Pat Munyan, City Administrator said union negotiations continue and that he hopes to finish up tomorrow. He said staff will be meeting with Department of Natural Resources next week. Munyan said that David Lindley has been helping as someone who is involved in fisheries with the Yakama Nation. He said the illumination study for the roundabout is just about completed by Bell Design and that Pioneer Surveying should be getting comments back from Washington Department of Transportation on the roundabout as well. Munyan said the city experienced a telemetry communications failure last Wednesday and staff has been working to resolve the issues. He said the replacement of the telemetry system should go out to bid early next year which convert the communications component to cellular and radio frequencies.

Ken Woodrich, City Attorney said he is in the middle of attending the fall municipal attorney conference.

Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer reported the city's audit has been completed with no issues. She said she continues to work on the budget which is being held up by union negotiations. Brending reported that staff will be presenting a rate increase for the base water fee at a future council meeting.

B. City Council Members

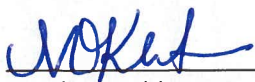
There were no updates from city council members.

C. Mayor

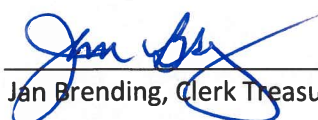
Marla Keethler, Mayor said staff is working on the short-term rental issue and understands the sense of urgency to get proposed codes completed. She said the goal is to have something adopted prior to the end of the moratorium. Keethler reported that Senator Merkley made an onsite visit regarding the bridge which was very constructive. She said a meeting regarding the bridge is scheduled next week with the Washington legislative representatives. Keethler said is working on the annual budget presentation and trying to tie up conversations on how the city is funded. She said she wanted to recognize Jan Brending and her efforts recognizing that there were no issues in the audit. Keethler said staff is pursuing a grant opportunity to increase accessibility for pedestrians and seeking other funding for ways to fund projects. She said the improvements at the gas line facility at the end of the bridge continue and are designed to reinforce the area.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.



Marla Keethler, Mayor



Jan Brending, Clerk Treasurer