

Town of Lake Santeetlah

Council Meeting Minutes

November 15, 2016

Acting Mayor Jim Hager called the meeting to order at 10:00AM. Council Members Bob Wehr, John Garland, Connie Gross and Karen Anderson were present for the meeting. Town Administrator Kim Matheson, Clerk Emily Hooper and Public Works Technician Eric Hayes were also present.

The first order of business was the approval of the agenda. There were no additions or changes therefore Councilwoman Karen Anderson made a motion of approval. Councilwoman Connie Gross seconded. All others approved, the motion carried.

After review of the October 13, 2016 Interview Session Minutes there were no changes necessary. Councilman Bob Wehr made a motion to approve. Councilwoman Connie Gross seconded. All others approved, the motion carried.

After review of the October 26, 2016 Special Meeting Minutes Councilman John Garland pointed out that the time of meeting adjournment was incorrect. Other than this error there were no further additions or changes necessary. Councilman John Garland made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Councilman Bob Wehr seconded. All others approved, the motion carried.

Financial Report: Town Administrator Kim Matheson reviewed the balance sheet through October 31, 2016. The balance in the General Operating Checking is \$65,046.97, Water operating \$19,729.80. Per request of the State Treasury's Department there was only one obligation of budget this month to report. Scott Kamps contract for leaf removal will be paid in the amount of \$2,400.00. Mr. Kamps will perform this duty two more times according to the contract. The next scheduled pick up is early next week and with the unusual temperatures and lack of rain there are still many leaves that have not fallen. After discussion all agreed that the next pick should be postponed to a later date. Public Works Technician Eric Hayes will notify Mr. Kamps to wait until notified for the next leaf pick up. The water meter purchase would be listed on the obligation of budget; however this amount is not being paid until the loan is received. The loan has been approved from United Community Bank and is waiting on the bank attorney to review the documents. Town Administrator Kim Matheson will contact UCB to ask for an expected completion date.

Request for Public Comment:

Roger Carlton congratulated Bob Wehr and Jim Hager on their efforts moving forward with the road transition in Lakeside. Carlton requested that as progress is made that all Lakeside home/lot owners be notified of updates and be presented with the final proposal so that feedback may be received. Councilman John Garland included that it would be best to include all Lake Santeetlah owners not solely Lakeside. Carlton agreed but asked that the Council do more than simply place the plan on the website, but also send to each individual, and allow a few days for response. Then proceed accordingly.

Aura Griffith stated that she had an email from several Lakeside owners who would like to thank the Town for their efforts to maintain safety during the recent fires.

Jack Gross asked if public comment was allowed concerning the road turnover in Lakeside. It was his understanding that the Council, staff and attorney would be handling this process and no comment would be granted. Councilman Bob Wehr explained that Attorney Davis is working on the necessary documents to complete to road turnover and upon completion the documents will be posted on the website for comments and suggestions. Once approved an affidavit must be approved to move forward. The process will likely not be completed until February. Gross stated that opening the issue back up for Public Comment could cause the whole

process to start over again. Councilman Wehr stated that he felt allowing the public to comment should not be an issue. Acting Mayor Hager agreed that residents had a right to know what was going on. Jack Gross stressed his concern that it could cause the road transition to drag out for another year. Wehr confirmed that the project is “in gear” and should continue to move forward. Gross clarified that all comments or suggestions received from Lakeside updates would be submitted to Town Hall. Acting Mayor Jim Hager confirmed that each response would be sent to Town Hall. Gross asked if the emails would be public record and Hager confirmed that yes, all emails would be available to the public.

Old Business

#1 Water Meter Purchase Follow-up: Councilman Bob Wehr informed that 100 meters had been purchased, approximately 50-60 have been installed. When the loan is complete the read and billing software will be purchased. There are two, 1 ½ -2in meters needed at the well houses that have not been purchased. HD Supply quoted a price for a 1 ½ in. meter which is double the amount of a standard one inch meter. Councilman John Garland suggested we receive a quote for a 2in. meter as often an odd size such as 1 ½ may be more expensive. Councilman Bob Wehr explained the blow out that occurred yesterday due to a stuck valve at the well head. Lamar Williams, contract water operator, Eric Hayes and Justin Odom spent approximately five hours repairing the leak. Wehr suggested that we contact HD Supply and ask if there was a way to put a pop off on the well pumps, in the case that a well head does close to save from the same occurrence. This would allow the pressure to release without busting pipes three feet underground. Lamar Williams recommended that valves not be handled by a compressor so that the valves that are controlled by air could be open and shut electronically. Some valves are manually operated which would avoid the risk of malfunction. Councilman John Garland stated that this had been discussed in the past and as we are all aware electronics can fail. When valves are operated manually you know when they are opened and closed avoiding issues such as the leak yesterday. Garland shared now that Lake Santeetlah has a full time maintenance technician it might be a good idea to revert back to manual. Wehr agreed that there are defaults, the electronic boards go out and compressors break which causes issues that could be avoided if operated manually. Bob Wehr explained that Lamar Williams, Eric Hayes, Jim Hager, and himself are working to create a manual in the case of Lamar’s absence. At this point Williams’ is the only one who is fully capable of operating the water system. Williams has agreed to show the others and create a written guide in the case of an emergency. Councilwoman Connie Gross asked if you were able to detect when the pressure was about to exceed its max and blow off? Acting Mayor Jim Hager explained what happened causing the incident. Lamar Williams was going to demonstrate how to backflush the system. The pneumatic valves are run from a compressor. Williams was opening and closing the valves as some had to be opened and others closed during the backflush. The compressor seized up. While trying to get the compressor to work Williams disconnected the end line to the air flow and air was being released from the compressor. During this process there was enough pressure entered that it closed a valve that was supposed to be open which caused the pipes to explode in three places. Hager explained that there could have easily been an injury during the explosion. Hager feels that going to manual valves will be a reasonable solution.

Jack Gross shared some history regarding the valves currently run from a compressor. Gross stated that the valves had been discussed for many years and the solution to problems had always been to have someone present to assure that everything is performed manually. There was never a decision made to spend the money to change the valves to manual which is what Gross feels should be done. Hager agreed that the valves should be operated manually but does not feel the valves need replaced. Eric Hayes has been asked to research some type of pop off valve that could be placed above ground that would detect pressure and release avoiding the underground burst. The question to be determined is at what pressure the explosion is caused. It is not the pressure from pumps inside the pump house, it is the wellhead pressure. The five horsepower pumps inside the wells retain a large amount of pressure to blow the pipes up. Gross stated that he felt there would be some sort of pop off valve that could be placed on the main system where all the wells come together.

Roger Carlton asked if the leak that occurred would have any effect on the Town having adequate water pressure for fire suppression and in what case should a resident call if water is spotted in the road and around the well house. The water that was in the area over the weekend was from the fire trucks filling up but in other cases the Town should be notified. Councilman Bob Wehr acknowledged a discussion that has been presented with no resolution at this time. In the case of the current situation, multiple fire trucks have filled up over the past week and the question becomes, do we charge for the usage? In a state of emergency the project often becomes a multi-million dollar operation. We are being charged for wells, is it appropriate to charge the federal government for water used. The finance department at the US Forest Service has been contacted concerning the usage and should contact Town Hall. The issue becomes, we have no official way to determine exactly how much water has been used. Ideally we can place automatic read meters on the hydrants which would clearly identify the amount of usage. Roger Carlton personally stated that he did not feel that the Town should charge the firefighters for water usage. Wehr explained that we would not be charging the firefighters but the Federal government. Councilman John Garland stated that there would be many re-imbursements on the project, but we would need accurate records of water used which would be difficult to determine at this time. Roger Carlton mentioned an end of year water report that annually reports the amount of water usage. If there is a way to determine the approximate usage of the firefighters this would allow the report to note that this amount of water was not "lost" but used in the wildfires. Despite if the Town decides to charge or donate for the water this would simply supply record of the amount used.

#2 Petition for Audio Meetings on Town Website: This item has been discussed at length over the past two months. According to the response received from the majority of Town residents there are more opposed to the audio meetings on the website than those in favor. Councilwoman Connie Gross stated that she felt that we should post the meetings and it would be available for those interested. According to Gross this would allow anyone who could not attend the meetings to remain involved and educated with what was going on. Councilwoman Karen Anderson shared that she did not feel the meetings should be posted, it was not the Town's responsibility to "spoon feed" the people. The minutes are posted on the website which seems sufficient. Councilwoman Karen Anderson made a motion to deny the request to post the audio meetings on the Town website. Councilman Bob Wehr seconded. Councilwoman Connie Gross opposed. The motion passed three to one.

#3 Contract Requirements for Security Officer/Update: Acting Mayor Jim Hager thanked Andy Owens for his presentation at the Planning meeting on November 10, 2016. Owens was part of a committee along with Stephanie Danforth and Connie Gross, assigned to work together to update the contract for the Town Security Officer. The contract expires April 2017. Mr. Owens offered several suggestions as did other residents who were present. Some suggestions included: extra security signage throughout the Town, cameras placed at the front entrance that would allow video surveillance of all those entering the Town. In this case, if any vandalism occurred we would have record of who entered during that time frame. It was also recommended that a time clock be placed at the guard house for the security officer to clock in and out. Additional suggestions offered by the Contract Renewal Committee was the possibility of using an off duty officer as the Town Security Officer. Mrs. Danforth visited the Graham County Sheriff's office to request the possibility of an officer driving through the Town at random times simply while on duty. It has been stated numerous times that the tax payers fund the salary for officers therefore as tax payers the Town should receive adequate service. It was agreed that Eric Hayes would be a good communicator in further requesting this service as he knows most of the officers and sheriff on a personal level. It was proposed by the committee that Public Works Technician, Eric Hayes oversee the Security Officer and confirm that his/her duties are being met. Councilwoman Connie Gross acknowledged that if Hayes does assume such duties the Town should increase his pay.

An evacuation plan for the Town was started however remains incomplete. Acting Mayor Jim Hager suggested that Councilwoman Connie Gross work to form a committee that could develop a fire evacuation plan, and educate the Town of the plan once it is complete. Jack Gross suggested a warning siren be placed at the top of the mountain to warn all residents of an emergency. It would be difficult to call or send emails in some cases and the siren could be

an alert to notify quickly. Andy Owens stated that a siren could certainly be used or possibly a horn that had different sounds alerting different emergencies. It should also be determined if a pontoon boat would be necessary that would remain in the water at all times during fire season. Hager explained that once the cost is determined the full amount could be budgeted in the next fiscal year. Acting Mayor Jim Hager made a motion to appoint Councilwoman Connie Gross to work with a committee to move forward with the suggested ideas regarding an evacuation plan. Councilman John Garland seconded. All others approved. The motion carried.

The contract mowing contract expires in April as well and although the committee solely focused on security this contract will need updated as well. The contracts were distributed to the Council for review. The current contract for mowing is vague and does not clarify how often the Town should be mowed or which streets are included. The updated contract will need to be specific in what should be included in each mow and state that mowing should occur on an as needed basis not to exceed a certain amount specified. Councilwoman Karen Anderson suggested that future contracts should be less than five years. Two years would justify those interested in bidding the opportunity to purchase equipment if needed and still make money. Others agreed that two years would be more appropriate than five.

#4 Zoning Regulations/Timeline to Proceed: A meeting was held with Attorney Ellen Davis, Town Administrator Kim Matheson and Town Clerk Emily Hooper to review the Zoning Regulations. All changes that were suggested during the three workshops held were presented to Attorney Davis. The proceeding plan is to have the revised copy by the end of the month. The updated regulations will be posted on the website, and sent to all property owners by email for review and feedback. All comments will be kept together and reviewed by the Council and discussed at both the Planning Meeting, in December and at the Public Hearing if necessary. A resolution will be presented and adopted potentially at the January Council Meeting. The Public Hearing will be held in February and can be officially adopted following the Public Hearing. If the Hearing is held prior to the Council Meeting the final Zoning Regulations can be adopted at February's Council Meeting. All correspondence regarding the Zoning Regulations whether by phone call, email, or handwritten notes will be kept on file at Town Hall and will be available to anyone interested in review. With the results of past workshops held it seems that scheduling any further workshops would be ineffective. Roger Carlton ask if the Public Hearing would be scheduled in February on the same day as the Council Meeting. Acting Mayor Jim Hager acknowledged that it would be appropriate to have the Hearing on the same day so that it may be approved. Carlton reminded the Council of advertising requirements that coincide with Public Hearings. Hager confirmed that all steps would be followed. Councilman Bob Wehr explained that this was a work in progress and until the suggestions and comments begin to come in we would not be sure what we were working with. Councilman John Garland agreed that we should get the draft posted as soon as it is received and go from there.

#5: Proposed Plans from John Cochran: The plans submitted by Mr. Cochran cannot be approved until he receives confirmation from Brookfield that he can continue to maintain a dock at his location. According to Jack Gross that in a phone conversation yesterday Mr. Cochran stated he was having a meeting on Wednesday at Town Hall with Brookfield. Town Staff is unaware of any meetings planned but will delay any action on this matter until Brookfield makes their decision. Councilwoman Connie Gross asked that Town Administrator Kim Matheson call Mr. Cochran to determine if there was a meeting planned. Jack Gross confirmed that his phone conversation with Mr. Cochran was concerning his dock that had come loose and nothing that involved Town business.

New Business

#1 Appointment of Council Officers: Attorney Ellen Davis provided the rules of procedure for accurately appointing new officers among the Council. Acting Mayor Jim Hager made a motion to accept nominations for Mayor. Councilwoman Connie Gross seconded. All others approved. The motion carried. Hager asked for nominations for Mayor. Councilman Bob Wehr nominated Jim Hager. Connie Gross, Karen Anderson and John Garland also nominated Jim Hager. With no other nominations Acting Mayor Jim Hager passed the gavel to Acting Vice Mayor Bob Wehr for approval. Bob Wehr asked that all in favor of Jim Hager as Mayor say, yes. All approved.

The motion passed unanimously. Councilwoman Connie Gross made a motion to close the Mayor vote. Councilman John Garland seconded. All others approved. The motion carried. Mayor Hager asked for a motion to accept nominations for Vice Mayor. Councilwoman Connie Gross made a motion to accept nominations for Vice Mayor. Councilman Bob Wehr seconded. All others approved. The motion carried. Hager asked for nominations for Vice Mayor. Councilwoman Connie Gross nominated herself for the Vice Mayor position. Councilwoman Karen Anderson nominated Bob Wehr. Councilman John Garland made a motion to close nominations. Councilwoman Karen Anderson seconded. All others approved. The motion carried. Each Council Member has paper slips in which they may write down who they wish to become Vice Mayor, Bob Wehr or Connie Gross. Town Administrator read the votes, Bob Wehr is the Vice Mayor after a three to one vote. Mayor Jim Hager asked for a motion to accept nominations for Assistant Finance Officer. Councilman Bob Wehr made a motion to accept nominations. John Garland seconded. All others approved. The motion carried. Councilwoman Connie Gross nominated herself for the Assistant Finance Officer. Councilman Bob Wehr nominated Karen Anderson. Councilman Bob Wehr made a motion to close nominations for Assistant Finance Officer. John Garland seconded. All others approved. The motion carried. Each Councilmember voted by writing their choice on the allotted slip. The votes were counted by Town Administrator Kim Matheson. Karen Anderson is the Assistant Finance Officer after a three to one vote. All new officers will become effective as of midnight tonight. The Mayor, Vice Mayor and Finance Officer all receive \$200.00 monthly. In this case Mayor Jim Hager assumes the role of both Mayor and Finance Officer but will only collect \$200 monthly.

#2 Check Signee in the case of Finance Officer Absence: The signature cards at both First Citizens and United Community Bank will be updated with the newly elected officers. The Assistant Finance Officer will also be added to the cards as a signee in the case of the Finance Officers absence. Town Administrator Kim Matheson will contact both banks and let them know of the changes. The approved minutes will be required by the banks in order to complete the update therefore the changes may not occur until next month after the minutes have been approved.

#3 2015-16 Final Audit Review/Approval: The final audit for 2015-16 fiscal year has been posted on the website and available at Town Hall for review. With no further comments Councilman Bob Wehr made a motion to approve the audit. Councilman John Garland seconded. All others approved. The motion carried.

#4: Mass Emails/Advice from Ellen Davis: Residents who have recently received mass emails have called and visited Town Hall to question if the email was sent from Town Staff. In the future all mass emails sent should be clearly identified if coming from another resident according to Ellen Davis. Typically mass emails are sent from Town Hall so often those who receive them assume that the information provided is from the Town. To avoid any future misunderstandings we ask that it is clearly specified.

#5: Annual Surcharge for Lot Owners: Mayor Jim Hager briefly explained that in the past there seems to have been some discrepancies in regards to the water charges for lot owners within Lake Santeetlah. In the records some owners were charged while others were not and there is no record of explanation. Hager suggested that to be fair it seemed in the best interest to charge the water connection fee upon building and avoid any annual charges for lot owners. All past due charges for those who have not paid will remain effective and the owner will not be allowed to build until the amount is paid in full. Councilwoman Connie Gross made a motion to charge only a water connection fee and no longer bill lot owners annually. Councilwoman Karen Anderson seconded. All others approved. The motion carried.

#6: Security System for Town Hall: A security camera for \$259.00 has been recommended for purchase to place in Town Hall for security purposes. The usage of the videos will not be available to the public and used solely for security. \$100.00 per year allows ten days of cloud storage which would be sufficient in the case of an incident. Councilman Bob Wehr made a motion to purchase the camera. Councilwoman Connie Gross seconded. All others approved. The motion carried.

Discussion Items

#1 Tax Report 2016: \$58,221.35 has been collected in property taxes since July 1, 2016. \$132,998.39 is the remaining total to be collected.

Announcements:

Mayor Jim Hager announced that there would be a Planning Meeting December 15, 2016 at 10:00AM and a Council Meeting December 20, 2016 at 10:00AM.

With no further business at this time Councilman John Garland made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Connie Gross seconded, all others agreed. The motion carried. Mayor Jim Hager adjourned the meeting at 11:05AM.

Meeting Adjourned

Jim Hager, Mayor

Emily Hooper, Town Clerk