

**City of Kittitas
Council Meeting Minutes
June 23, 2009**

Mayor Huber called the meeting of the Kittitas City Council to order at 7:00 p.m., June 23, 2009. Councilmembers present: Turpin, Gilmour, Camarata, Alvord, and Gay.

Staff present was Clerk/Treasurer Robin Newcomb, Public Works Lead Bosch, and Police Chief Studer.

Mayor Huber led those assembled in the Flag Salute.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilmember Turpin moved to approve the minutes from the June 9, 2009, regular meeting and to include the correction to page 5 of the verbatim where Fred was stated rather than Sean. Councilmember Alvord seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5 yes and 0 no.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

Non Agenda Speakers – Councilmember Alvord

Councilmember Camarata moved to approve the amended agenda and Councilmember Turpin seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 yes and 0 no.

REPORT OF OFFICERS AND SPECIAL GUESTS

Police Department – Chief Studer reported one of our potential reserves was in an accident. During a call on a domestic dispute, one of the residents got in her car and backed into him which pinned him between his car and hers. He has minor injuries. Chief Studer contacted our insurance company on the issue.

The police department received a grant from CTED for \$9,999. He would like to use this for the interlocal sheriff's agreement so they can be compensated for their patrol coverage so the city has 24/7 coverage. Councilmember Alvord asked if the code enforcement officer was patrolling. She thought hiring him was the solution to more coverage.

The grant money could also be used for equipment. Councilmember Gilmour asked what would happen with next year since this would only pay the sheriff's office for 2009. The sheriff's office would like an answer as soon as possible as they have been expecting this agreement for some time. Council agreed when the money is received they will make a decision on how to spend it.

Chief Studer believes the stop signs should stay where they are on Clark Street as it is a safety issue.

Public Works Department – Public Word Lead Bosch explained they are applying for a grant either through Home Depot or Lowe's for up to \$5,000 for equipment for the city parks. The match portion can be labor rather than payment.

He also believes the stop signs on Clark Street should stay where they were placed. The city owns a counter which he used to get a traffic count on Clark Street.

The John Wayne Bridge still needs to be fixed by the state parks department. There will be more discussion

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with the state parks on this and possibly another letter sent.

Delinquent Report – See handout – Councilmember Alvord asked if the delinquent amounts change month to month. Clerk/Treasurer Newcomb explained they don't change much and it also depends on what date the report is printed.

Treasurer's Report – See handout – Councilmember Gilmour asked what the current expense fund balance will be at the end of June. Clerk/Treasurer Newcomb estimated around \$70,000. Councilmember Alvord explained the fund revenues are down and so are the expenses and as a whole the city is ahead. She explained even though the department budgets were at a minimum for 2009, the spending has stayed below the budget.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Non Agenda Section on Agenda – Councilmember Alvord spoke with the City of Selah and they have a section at the beginning and the end titled public appearances. It is an open floor discussion. Councilmember Gilmour explained there was a person at the prior meeting that asked him after the meeting if the water and sewer rates were going to be raised. He explained to him that he wasn't going to but that he better talk to the mayor. Councilmember Gilmour feels this person could have had their question answered if there was a section on the agenda for it.

Councilmember Turpin explained the City of Quincy approves the agenda and then the mayor asks if there is anybody that has a question etc. At that time they listen to the citizens but the agenda is already approved so nothing can be added to the agenda. Councilmember Alvord doesn't believe council should have discussion, and it would be for the citizens to bring up questions.

Councilmember Gay explained he came to our city council meetings prior to being a council member. His biggest concern is council members listening more to the citizens at the meeting rather than the entire city. He stated that he represents the city as a whole and has concern with allowing a couple of people to speak and say the same thing at several meetings which could eventually lead council to give into them.

Councilmember Alvord explained when an issue is brought up at a council meeting, council has until the next meeting to gather information on this issue. Councilmember Gay also believes when the council has prior knowledge, it gives them time to study the information before being presented. Councilmember Gilmour explained if having a non agenda section appears to be a problem, the mayor/council can revisit it at that time.

Councilmember Turpin moved to approve a public appearance section for 3 minutes per person after the agenda is approved and after the Additions to Agenda section and Councilmember Gilmour seconded the motion. The motion passed 4 yes and Councilmember Gay voting no.

Ordinance 09-010 Amending Stop Signs – The public hearing was opened at 7:29 p.m. Councilmember Gilmour asked who spent all of the time collecting the comment sheets from the citizens on Clark Street. Mayor Huber explained Public Works Lead Bosch did this while working on Clark Street. Councilmember Alvord would like to see more research done in the future before putting in stop signs. Mayor Huber explained this is a residential street and the traffic flow should flow over to Main Street.

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Gayetta Hink explained a stop sign is suppose to be at an intersection and believes one on Clark Street isn't. Teresa McCollum is very pleased with the city and school for paving Clark Street. She has lived on Clark Street for 23 years and believes the stop signs are a plus. She explained the stop signs have slowed traffic and cars racing and pushed the traffic back to Main Street. Councilmember Gay reported some statistics of stop signs. Councilmember Gilmour believes you don't slow traffic down with stop signs but you do with speed limit signs. There is a stop sign at his corner and only about half of the people stop. Councilmember Turpin explained that stop signs should not be used as speed breaks or speed control. Other options like speed limit signs and speed bumps etc. should be used as they have shown through research to be more effective for speed control. Chief Studer explained speed bumps couldn't be used.

Linda Crow explained she is the one that collected the comment sheets and said the majority of the people that live on Clark and Railroad Streets are in favor of the stop signs. The public hearing was closed at 7:40 p.m. Councilmember Gay moved to approve this ordinance and Councilmember Alvord seconded the motion. The motion passed 3 yes and Council members Gilmour and Turpin voted no.

Union Issues/Non-Union Raises – Mayor Huber explained the union representative isn't present yet and would like to move this topic later into the meeting.

City Hall/Fire Department Remodel Amended Architect Contract – Councilmember Gilmour asked if this means we are going to remodel city hall. Mayor Huber explained that was approved at a prior meeting but Councilmember Gilmour stated he thought the council only voted on accepting the funds from USDA RD and not doing the remodel. Councilmember Camarata explained the money doesn't have to be accepted if the bids come in too high. Councilmember Alvord moved to approve the amended architect contract with Cal Jordan Associates based on our attorney's approval and Councilmember Gay seconded the motion. The motion passed 3 yes and Councilmember Gilmour and Turpin voted no.

Prior Council Pay – Mayor Huber explained council will decide how many years to go back and amend council pay but it is a management decision on how to collect the pay. The mayor will be deducting the overpayments from future pay. Councilmember Alvord explained she talked with Sarah Walker with the State Auditor's Office and Paul Sullivan with MRSC. They both stated the overpayment is a management decision.

END OF TAPE 1 SIDE 1

After some discussion, Councilmember Alvord moved to approve deducting only from existing council members pay any overpayments they have received and Councilmember Gay seconded the motion. The motion passed 3 yes and Councilmember Turpin and Gilmour voting no.

WWTP Trainee – Councilmember Camarata recommended and moved to approve hiring Brenda Bach as the WWTP Trainee. The interview committee interviewed her on Monday. Councilmember Gilmour explained she needs to be used as a backup person to both Public Works and City Hall for breaks and vacations and council agreed. Because she will be hired as the WWTP Trainee, we are required by the union contract to hire her at level 26C (\$2,738.37 per month/\$15.80 per hour). Councilmember Alvord seconded the motion. This would be effective immediately. The mayor will call a meeting together of these departments to figure out a schedule for her. The motion passed 5 yes and 0 no.

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Union Issues/Non-Union Raises – Councilmember Alvord explained our two non union employees gave up their raises in 2008 and it was to be re-addressed in June. Clerk/Treasurer Newcomb joined the union (at level 32D—salary \$3,327.35 per month) so there is now only one non union employee to receive a raise. Mayor Huber explained he signed Clerk/Treasurer Newcomb into the union. Councilmember Alvord moved to approve a 3% raise for Chief of Police Mike Studer (salary \$4,455.78 per month) starting in July and Councilmember Gay seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 yes and 0 no.

NEW BUSINESS

Council Policy Discussion on Contacting Outside Entities – Mayor Huber explained it has become confusing as to who is in charge at the City of Kittitas. Several entities have been contacted by council members and the entities are confused because they think the person calling is in charge of the city and find out later they are not. The mayor would like a policy set regarding this issue. He sees confusion down the road, for example, if the contractor gets multiple phone calls on the City Hall remodel project.

Councilmember Gay explained when a council member contacts an agency they are representing the city as a whole and thinks they should ask for the council’s permission before doing this. Councilmember Alvord believes different people are bringing things into the meetings from different sources and it needs to be in writing. Councilmember Gilmour would like it clarified what council can and can’t do. The mayor explained the USDA RD representative was confused after being contacted by a concerned citizen/council member and would like to see a protocol on this issue.

Councilmember Gilmour wants to have enough information before making decisions. Councilmember Turpin explained it is their job as council to seek the information and if don’t think they are getting the right information they should be able to go to any entity they need to formulate the best decision for the city. He used as an example the mayor not including two notices from citizens on the stop sign issue. Mayor Huber explained those two notices were his as he is a property owner on that street.

Councilmember Gay explained by contacting USDA RD and asking if the loan could be paid off early that could make them believe we do not need this money. He also explained a smarter decision to contact them could have been made if the decision was made by the entire council and not just one person. Mayor Huber explained we have a strong mayor form of government and the new mayor will have the same issues.

Councilmember Alvord explained if a council member feels they have not received enough or incorrect information in their packet, they have the option at the meeting to table the discussion until further research is done. Clerk/Treasurer Newcomb explained because they receive their packets several days prior to the council meetings, if there are any questions those should be brought to her or the mayor’s attention prior to the meeting so when the meeting takes place hopefully some of those questions can be answered then and don’t have to wait until two more weeks down the road.

Councilmember Alvord believes caution needs to be used in making this policy because it isn’t right to muzzle a council member but at the same time it needs to be done the correct way.

Councilmember Gilmour explained the memo the mayor wrote in the past on contacting the attorney is not an actual policy since the council didn’t vote on it.

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Councilmember Alvord asked council permission to contact MRSC on getting some guidelines for setting this type of policy. Councilmember Gilmour thinks council should be able to call and ask questions as individuals. Mayor Huber explained it is important to work together as a whole and not individuals. Councilmember Turpin moved to tabling this motion and council bring back information to the next meeting. Councilmember Alvord seconded the motion.

APPROVAL OF PAYMENT

Approval of June Bills – Checks #13263 to #13286 and E770609 for \$156,666.42 were moved to be approved by Councilmember Turpin and seconded by Councilmember Gilmour. The motion passed 5 yes and 0 no.

MAYORS REPORT

TIB – Mayor Huber met with John Dorfield with TIB and there will be no funds available for 2010. The main street sidewalk project funds have already been approved and the project will go forward in 2010.

COG – The city was approved for COG grant funds for approximately \$80,000 to be used as a match to the TIB sidewalk project.

Building Inspector – Mike Burtness will be resigning the end of June and the city will be advertising for his replacement.

City Hall – City Hall will need to be moved so demolition of City Hall can start.

Union – Mayor Huber explained he would like to explain to each council member individually why he put Clerk/Treasurer Newcomb into the union. He believes it would be a contentious issue with a couple of council members and would prefer to explain it in his office.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Wind Farm – Councilmember Turpin asked when the signs will be put up for the Wind Farm. Public Works Lead Bosch is in contact with David Bowen on the subject and will be working with him on this issue.

ADJOURN

Councilmember Gay moved to adjourn the June 23, 2009, meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Camarata. The motion passed 5 yes 0 no. Meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Attest: Mayor Frederick Huber

Clerk/Treasurer
