

**City of Kittitas
Council Meeting Minutes
April 26, 2016**

COUNCIL MEETING

Mayor Whitford led those assembled in the Flag Salute. Mayor Whitford called the regular Council Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. April 26, 2016. Councilmembers present: Dan Sherman, Jerry Gilmour, Ben Whitehurst, Jasen Carlson and John Camarata. Staff present: Debbie Lee – Clerk/Treasurer., Dave, Anderson – Police Department, Brenda Bach – WWTP, Michelle Geiger – Building Inspector and Cathy Doyle – Utility Billing Clerk.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING DATED
April 12th, 2016**

MOTION: Councilmember Gilmour made a motion to approve the minutes; second by Councilmember Camarata.
Motion Carried: 5 yes 0 no.

ADDITIONS TO AND/OR APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: Councilmember Camarata made a motion to approve the agenda as presented; second by Councilmember Gilmour.
Motion Carried: 5 yes 0 no.

PUBLIC APPEARANCE COMMENTS

- Tiny Allphin is concerned about the 2% increase to the water/sewer base rates and the 4% that was added last year to the B&O tax. Tiny wondered if these increases stay on for a number of years.

REPORT OF OFFICES AND SPECIAL GUESTS

A. Staff Reports (informational only)

Brenda Bach - WWTP

- Brenda informed Council last week that after she left the plant for the morning rounds she got a call from Moon Security saying there was a fire at the WWTP. When she and Mike got to the plant it was smoky, smelled like burnt rubber and skunk. The belt to the pump had burnt, thus the pump could not turn. When they tore the pump apart they noticed a skunk had gotten in the pump. They aired the building out and everything is working fine.
- Mayor Whitford suggested putting a barrier by the pump so other animals don't get caught in the pump.

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UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Gray & Osborne Patrick Avenue Phase 1 Consultant Agreement

- Tabled until Gray & Osborne get the finalized Consultant Agreement.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Ordinance 16-008 Water/Sewer Rates and Charges

- Mayor Whitford explained that this ordinance is in effect every April 1st unless voted down by Council. It increases the base water and sewer rates by 2% for inflation.
- Last May Council approved a 2% increase to each water and sewer base rates. Due to a clerical error the 2% was not added to the sewer base rate. Clerk Debbie Lee will check with MRSC regarding the proper way to handle this mistake.
- Councilmember Gilmour stated that if the City did not charge the right amount it is not the citizen's fault.
- Discussion was had regarding the 4% increase to the B&O tax that affects the general fund. Several newspaper articles were presented where it was stated it was being used for the Library/Community Hall Project. Councilmember Gilmour believes the citizens feel betrayed by the administration at that time.
- It was discussed that the increase in the tax went towards a new employee, inmate care, and the public works shop.
- Mayor Whitford stated that in the check register for approval tonight is a pump repair in the amount of \$10,000. She stated that the City needs to be proactive not reactive and the Council is in a quandary.
- Councilmember Carlson stated that the citizens of Kittitas were told the Library was going to be updated and this did not happen. He stated he did not get an increase in his wages this year and believes that a majority of the citizens did not get increases as well. Councilmember Carlson wants to make the City of Kittitas fiscally stronger so he doesn't want to see the tax reduced. His other concerns were that this is an election year. Councilmember Carlson also stated that a healthy City needs proper equipment and tools and he will strive to make that happen during the budget time.
- Mayor Whitford suggested leaving rates/taxes the same since the budget has been set and seriously

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look at the budget for 2017 to see if the B&O can be reduced at that time.

- Councilmember Camarata stated his concerns are that the water/sewer department needs repairs on vehicles, the chlorinator and the water leak that they are currently fixing.
- Councilmember Sherman wanted to know what the total increase to the water/sewer base rates and B&O tax was. He was told 6%. He stated he is not opposed to taking more from the community if the water/sewer department needs it. He also suggested looking at the budget hard and listening to the department heads and their needs.
- Citizen Tiny Allphin stated that he was on the Council when Gray & Osborne suggested putting the 2% increase in the ordinance for inflation.
- Citizen Frankie Storlie suggested rejecting the increase and if there is an emergency use the monies in the reserve account.
- Brenda Bach stated that she believes the Council should consider raising the sewer base rate by 2%; they have already spent ½ of their maintenance budget this year.

MOTION: Councilmember Gilmour made a motion to reject the 2% increase to the water/sewer rates and remain as they are, keeping the sewer base rate at \$45.39 (it was not updated in Bias last May, even though Ordinance 15-010 stated the change.); second by Councilmember Camarata.
Motion Carried: 4 yes 1 no (Councilmember Whitehurst).

B. Marijuana Ordinance – Planning Commission

- The Planning Commission met and had several recommendations to give to Council.
- To establish a moratorium on marijuana.
- Annex the island of property into the city of Kittitas.
- Mobile home placement.
- The Planning Commission does not feel the current code of mobile home placement is being enforced. They are concerned about the closing of a trailer park in Ellensburg and some of those trailers being brought to Kittitas. Council will make sure that the current code is enforced.
- Michelle explained that there is an island of property currently in the county but they receive city water and sewer. They will first approach the property owner and discuss the possible annexation.

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This will get the city more tax revenue and eliminate the island.

- The Planning Commission would like to propose the complete banning of marijuana. Michelle explained that completely banning marijuana would need the attorney's approval as there could be legal ramifications if adopted. If marijuana is banned altogether the city could potentially lose tax revenue.
- Councilmember Carlson stated that marijuana is already being sold illegally so why not regulate it and collect the tax revenue. Councilmember Carlson stated that the State of Washington is hiring approximately 50 new employees to the liquor control board.
- Mayor Whitford felt the Planning Commission had some good ideas and if Michelle could report the feedback to the Planning Commission.
- Councilmember Sherman thought that the projected \$30,000 in tax revenue would not outweigh the extra cost to the police department.
- Officer Dave Anderson stated that the culture does change with legalization of marijuana.
- Councilmember Camarata stated with the limitations of the marijuana businesses being near parks, schools and churches it really limits where the business could be located in the City.
- Michelle will move ahead with another moratorium and have the attorney draft a new ordinance.

C. City of Kittitas CD Maturity \$53,140.24

- Mayor Whitford explained that the CD had matured and the Council needs to look at the options of the length of the CD.

MOTION: Councilmember Gilmour made a motion to have the CD be a 12 month time period; second by Councilmember Carlson.

- After discussion it was agreed that the CD would be for a 6 month time period.

MOTION: Councilmember Camarata made a motion to amend the earlier motion and approve a 6 month time period; second by Councilmember Gilmour.

Motion Carried: 5 yes 0 no.

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PAYMENT APPROVALS

A. April 26th, 2016 Payables \$27,359.40

MOTION: Councilmember Gilmour made a motion to approve April 26th, 2016 payables; second by Councilmember Camarata.

Motion Carried: 5 yes 0 no.

- Councilmember Carlson inquired if the PSE bill included the WWTP.
- Councilmember Camarata inquired why we have not seen a difference in the billing since we got solar panels. It was explained that they just were activated in April.

MAYOR'S REPORT

- Mayor Whitford informed Council that she met in Roslyn this week with Dave Reichart from the 8th District. There were several other Cities being represented and the topics for discussion were TBD's, affordable housing, marijuana, and education with children regarding drug use. Crystal Church was there representing the Kittitas County Coalition.
- There will be a Town Hall Meeting May 23rd at City Hall at 6:00 p.m. Mayor Whitford feels like this is a good time to have one since she has been in office for approximately 6 months. She will get a newsletter made up and will be at the post office and encourage citizens to attend the Town Hall Meeting.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION

- Councilmember Sherman wanted to know the current count for the reader board fundraiser. The May 7th swap meet raised \$365 and \$200 came from Councilmember Gilmour and Sherman. The goal is \$1800.
- Councilmember Camarata attended the COG meeting and informed Council that there is a GMA Comprehensive Planning Meeting being put on by the Department of Commerce. The Department of Commerce is the agency who awards grants. This meeting is open to all Mayor's, Council, Staff and Planning Commission members. It will be June 15th at the Armory from 1:00-5:00 p.m. Mayor Whitford encourages everyone who is available to attend.

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ADJOURN: 8:30 p.m.

Attest:

Mayor Whitford

Debbie L. Lee Clerk/Treasurer