

**City of Kittitas
Council Meeting Minutes
December 27, 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. December 27, 2016. Councilmembers present: Jerry Gilmour, Pat Cort, John Camarata, Jasen Carlson and Ben Whitehurst. Staff present: Debbie Lee – Clerk/Treasurer, Dave Anderson – Police and Cathy Doyle – Utility Billing Clerk

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING DATED DECEMBER
27th, 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

Mayor Whitford stated that an addition to the agenda under New Business D. City – County Library Service Contract needed to be signed.

MOTION: Councilmember Whitehurst made a motion to approve the agenda as amended; second by Councilmember Cort
Motion Carried: 5 yes 0 no.

PUBLIC APPEARANCE COMMENTS

- None

REPORT OF OFFICES AND SPECIAL GUESTS

A. Staff Reports (informational only)

Debbie Lee – Clerk/Treasurer

- Debbie reported that the State Auditors were on site at City Hall.

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UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- None

NEW BUSINESS

A. Public Hearing 16-021 Adding Section 13.04.075 Water and Sewer Reserves Surcharge

- The Public Hearing was opened at 7:00 p.m. for public comment.
- Daniel Menth felt there was a better way to raise money than putting it on the taxpayer's backs. He stated that he had suggested a few years ago to raise the consumption amount. Daniel stated he did not feel this was fair and a lot of people cannot afford this.
- Bev Allphin had questions about the 6%. Bev wanted to know if this surcharge would go away after the water tower was painted.
- Councilmember Camarata stated that the next Council will come up with an excuse to keep the surcharge in place after the tower is painted.
- Mayor Whitford stated that for 5 years the water tower has needed painted and has been neglected and not taken care of with the past administration and this is the road that is needed to be taken.
- Councilmember Gilmour stated that it was unfortunate that it has ended this way. Councilmember Gilmour does not like this surcharge and would like the Ordinance to state an ending date.
- Councilmember Gilmour asked if the City received the money from Council of Governments (COG) and was questioning where in the budget this was stated.
- Councilmember Cort would like to see this re-evaluated in 5 years. Councilmember Cort stated that there has been no planning in advance and now the City is paying the price. Councilmember Cort also stated that if the City did not take the stance now it will be worse in the long run.
- Bev Allphin is concerned about the 2% increase in April.
- Bev Allphin stated that she noticed the next agenda item of a Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) for the employees and she said let the employees take a hit as well.
- Bev Allphin also inquired if the new businesses that will be affected by the sewer extension will have to pay a connection fee. Yes.

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- The Public Hearing was closed at 7:17 p.m.
- Councilmember Camarata stated that he received 23 phone calls regarding the surcharge all expressing the same concerns. Councilmember Camarata said that \$5.00 increase will pull money out of the economy and the City will have a huge surplus and find a way to spend the money.
- Councilmember Cort stated that this is not an easy decision and she has a different view since being on the Council. Councilmember Cort also stated that Council needs to be more aware of grants and match money so the City can plan ahead and be active in researching all aspects of the project before the City leaps into one. Councilmember Cort encourages citizens to come to the meetings or talk with Council to have a better understanding of how Council has come to these decisions.
- Councilmember Carlson does not want to raise water/sewer rates as he and the other Councilmembers will be affected by this increase as well. He believes that he and the Council took the budget process very seriously and had many meeting with great discussion. The reason he agrees with this increase is that Council looked at the budget and the need for new police cars, painting the water tower and other projects the City needs to plan ahead. Councilmember Carlson stated that the Council is the voice of the citizens.

MOTION: Councilmember Carlson made a motion to approve Ordinance 16-021; second by Councilmember Cort

Motion Carried: 3 yes 2 no. (Councilmember Camarata and Councilmember Gilmour)

B. Public Hearing Ordinance 16-022 2017 Final Budget

- The Public Hearing was opened at 7:25 for public comment and closed at 7:26 with no public comment.
- Councilmember Camarata stated that he did not feel this was a balanced budget since the recommendations are to have a 20% surplus in fund balances. Councilmember Camarata stated that the general fund and water/sewer funds were over budget and the TBD and Library were under balance.
- Councilmember Gilmour stated that you can make the figures say anything you want.

MOTION: Councilmember Carlson made a motion to approve Ordinance 16-022 2017 Final Budget; second by Councilmember Whitehurst.

Motion Carried: 5 yes 0 no.

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C. 2017 Union Wage Opener 2.25% Cost of Living Allowance (COLA)

- Mayor Whitford believed that Council and Staff had reached an agreement. Staff had proposed 3% council countered at 1.5% and Staff countered at 2.25%.
- Council wanted to see more of the negotiation process and have the Union Rep come and discuss the process. Council would like to have an executive session at the next meeting after more information is gathered.
- Councilmember Gilmour is not in agreement with a Cost of Living Allowance. (COLA)
- Councilmember Carlson would like to meet face to face with the Union Rep and have a better understanding of the process. He would like to see this tabled until the next Council Meeting.

D. City – County Library Service Agreement

- This agreement is for the City of Kittitas to receive \$8,000.00 from the County for library services.

MOTION: Councilmember Gilmour made a motion to accept the agreement; second by Councilmember Cort.

Motion Carried: 5 yes 0 no.

PAYMENT APPROVALS

A. December 27, 2016 Payables \$10,607.14

MOTION: Councilmember Camarata made a motion to pay December 27, 2016 Payables; second by Councilmember Gilmour.

Motion Carried: 5 yes 0 no.

- Councilmember Gilmour stated that he would house the K9 dog. Clerk Debbie Lee informed Council that the Police Department explained that boarding a K9 in a kennel setting is acceptable since it is not a pet, and this is in the best interest of the dog.

MAYOR'S REPORT

- Mayor Whitford wanted to thank everyone for all that has been done in the past year from the Community Hall improvements to Council for gathering information on different subjects and working thru everything and the support of the citizens. Mayor Whitford is thankful and grateful.

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COUNCIL DISCUSSION

- Councilmember Gilmour would like to see a sign posted on the Recycle dumpster stating the hours and if it is full. Mayor Whitford said that she would discuss this at the staff meeting in the morning.
- Councilmember Cort attended the Council of Governments (COG) meeting and informed Council that the BERK Consulting Service Study is complete and the City has an invoice from the County for their share. This study was done for population and employment in the next 20 years that will affect the Kittitas County areas.
- Councilmember Camarata stated that the report estimated the City of Kittitas to increase their population by 807.
- Councilmember Cort stated that this study will help with the future planning of the City of Kittitas and how new businesses will work in the community.
- Councilmember Gilmour inquired if other Cities had to pay as well. The cost was based on the current population of the Cities within Kittitas County.
- Councilmember Carlson asked when the next Council of Governments (COG) meeting was. It is the 18th of January in the County Commissioners Room at 6:00 p.m.
- Councilmember Carlson wanted to thank the citizens that do come to the meetings and keep Council accountable. Councilmember Carlson does not feel that the Council and Mayor are irresponsible and are running the City as efficiently as possible.
- Councilmember Carlson does not agree or disagree with the Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) but would like to see true negotiations and believes that the City needs to take care of the employees that the City has and encourages training. Councilmember Carlson stated that the City needs to gain the employees and not whip them and retain good employees.
- Jeanette Bryant stated she cannot negotiate her Social Security wage. Bryant also stated that the City does need reserves for turnout gear etc.
- Councilmember Gilmour said figure out where the money will come from for the Cost of Living Allowance (COLA). He can tell Council a couple of ways but no one listens.
- Councilmember Carlson said at the next budget Council should look at where cuts can be made.
- Councilmember Cort encourages citizens to come to the meetings and the more involved she has become the more her mind thought has changed.

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- Bev Allphin stated that if the current Council stays this will be better.

MOTION: Councilmember Cort made a motion to adjourn; second by Councilmember Carlson.
Motion Carried: 5 yes 0 no.

ADJOURN: 8:15 p.m.

Attest:

Mayor Whitford

Debbie L. Lee Clerk/Treasurer