

**City of Kittitas**  
**Special Council Meeting Minutes**  
**July 24, 2017**

**COUNCIL MEETING**

Mayor Whitford called the Special Council Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. July 24, 2017. Councilmembers present: Pat Cort, Jerry Gilmour, Ben Whitehurst, John Camarata and Liz Smith. Staff present: Debbie Lee – Clerk/Treasurer.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**A. 17-013 Kittitas Volunteer Merger with Kittitas Valley Fire & Rescue**

**MOTION:** Councilmember Camarata made a motion to approve the agenda as presented; second by Councilmember Cort.

Motion Carried: 4 yes 0 no.

- Mayor Whitford informed Council that Councilmember Whitehurst would be about 5 minutes late. Council wanted to wait until they had attendance of all Councilmembers.
- Mayor Whitford was not present at the last Special Meeting and wanted to know what was discussed.
- Councilmember Cort informed Mayor Whitford that they wanted the vote to go to the citizens of Kittitas and have them make the decision if they wanted to merge.
- Councilmember Camarata stated that the Fire District citizens will vote for this merger because it will lower their taxes.
- Councilmember Cort stated that the correct process needed to be followed in order for the Ordinance to be correct.
- Councilmember Smith explained that this is why the attorney had to write up the Ordinance so everything was done according to the RCW's.
- Councilmember Cort stated that both the City of Kittitas and the Kittitas Fire District voters vote on this ballot issue. The other thing to consider is the cost to replace the equipment, turnout gear is very expensive and actually the number of volunteers in the City of Kittitas has gone down. And could the City continue to run as is.
- Mayor Whitford asked Councilmember Whitehurst how many turnout gear the department needs, Councilmember Whitehurst thought that there were 1 or 2 good sets and they currently

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have 7 volunteers. A full turnout gear costs anywhere from \$5,000-\$10,000.

- Councilmember Cort asked what the total dollar amount would be to get the department up to code. Councilmember Whitehurst did not know this answer.
- Councilmember Smith stated that was a big question to ask and a hard number to come up with off the top of your head.
- Mayor Whitford explained to Council that if the Ordinance was approved that Clerk Debbie Lee will take it to Yakima in the morning for the attorney to sign and take back to Sue Higginbotham at Kittitas County.
- Councilmember Camarata stated that if the merger happens the residents of Kittitas will help pay for the bond for Fire District #2 and the citizens of Ellensburg taxes will decrease.
- Councilmember Whitehurst asked Councilmember Camarata where he got his information.
- Councilmember Smith stated that it does not seem wrong for all citizens to share the cost of fire protection.
- Councilmember Gilmour inquired if the cost of the attorney for handling this Ordinance was in the budget. Mayor Whitford stated that there is money in the budget for attorney costs.
- Councilmember Smith stated that it is required that the attorney write up the language for the Ordinance.
- There was discussion had how the votes would be tallied and if Ellensburg and Kittitas votes were counted separately.
- Councilmember Cort stated that if the growth of the City of Kittitas happens this merger will be a necessity.

**MOTION:** Councilmember Smith made a motion to adopt Ordinance 17-013; second by Councilmember Cort.

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

- Councilmember Gilmour stated that he tore the carpet off the steps of the Community Hall/Library and found paint with a sandy surface for \$50 per gallon that might work better.
- Councilmember Cort explained that she is still working on the grant from the Home Depot and

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it could be as high as \$5,000. This would possibly cover the building of the stairs, insulation and maybe windows. Councilmember Cort stated she needs Councilmember Gilmour to help with some bids and get a list of volunteers together to submit the grant application.

**MOITON:** Councilmember Cort made a motion to adjourn; second by Councilmember Whitehurst.

Motion Carried: 5 yes 0 no.

**ADJOURN: 6:19 p.m.**

**Attest:**

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Mayor Whitford

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Debbie L. Lee Clerk/Treasurer