

Town of Oakesdale
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
for
July 1, 2024

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Dennis Palmer called the council meeting to order at 7 p.m. Guest Pete Baljo led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- II. **ROLL CALL:** Mayor Dennis Palmer, Bill Auvil, Bruce Palmer, Randy Robinson and Claudia Louk by phone. Councilman Al Evans was not in attendance. Also present was Mary DeGon, Clerk/Treasurer.
- III. **BEN CROSSETT – PALOUSE SOFTWARE & SUPPORT:** Ben Crossett gave a short presentation introducing his new business and would like to lease the business incubator. His business would provide custom software solutions and computer support services tailored for residents and businesses of the Palouse and surrounding areas. Ben already has the Town of Oakesdale and the City of Palouse as clients. Council members gave Ben their support and agreed to lease the space for the same amount as the last tenant at \$250 per month. Council members’ consensus was to begin the repairs on the incubator space.
- IV. **INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:** Jenna Brozik, Kris Johnson, Kim Anderson, Ben Crossett, Pete Baljo, and Frank Sabo.

Jenna Brozik, candidate for Superior Court Judge for Whitman County, gave a brief presentation on why she is running for this position. Her law firm handles cases in a major areas of law seen in Whitman County Superior Court. As the managing attorney, she oversees and participates in most of the cases at her law firm in Pullman. Her extensive range of experience and depth of knowledge makes her the most well rounded and qualified candidate running for Superior Judge. There are three candidates running for this position that have not been a judge before. Jenna answered questions from our guests as well as council members. Jenna was thanked for her time and wished good luck in her endeavors.
- V. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Council members reviewed June 3, 2024, minutes. Claudia Louk made the motion to approve the minutes as written. Bruce Palmer seconded the motion, all council members voted yes – **motion passed.**
- VI. **TOWN MARSHAL REPORT:** Keith Cooper was on duty for the County and was not able to attend the council meeting. He did submit his department’s report for June 2024. There were ten cases ranging from civil, suicidal persons, driving while suspended, trespassing, junk vehicle, animal problems, and domestic dispute. Out of these ten cases, six of them involved the same person.
- VII. **PUBLIC WORKS REPORT:** Brad Sullivan could not attend tonight’s meeting as he had today off. He did submit a report for June 2024. Current projects completed included loading a

county container every two weeks for outdoor recyclables, mowing weekly, junction at Montana & Jackson was widened and the sewer lid raised, installed new turbo in the backhoe, replaced water service line at 202 E Williams, changed out the battery on the flow meter, read water meters, and continue weed control. One of the upcoming projects will be to install a sprinkler system at the little gas station area.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS:

- A. BUSINESS INCUBATOR MAINTENANCE** – Council members have already given their approval to repair the business incubator office space under Section III now that we have a tenant.

- B. PUBLIC WORKS BOARD FUNDING APPLICATION** – Our engineering firm, TD&H, notified City Hall that if we applied for the approximate \$10 million dollar grant application to finish the water system upgrades and add another water tower, it would increase our monthly water rate and addition \$140 - \$150 per month. We decided it would be best to back the scope of the grant to the size of a project that would not have as steep of an increase to the monthly water rates. Our engineers submitted a grant request of \$2.572 million to replace the water main on Steptoe Avenue from the Town’s gravel pit area to the County Road Department as well as the service lines, water meters and fire hydrants. This is all state funding and has a possible grant forgiveness up to 25%. If our application is approved, we are looking at an estimate of a \$40 per month increase in our base water rate.

IX. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. RESOLUTION NO. 2024-429 SPECIAL LEVIES** – Council members reviewed an email from the Whitman County Assessor’s office that revealed our second street levy cannot be an excess levy for more than \$1.90 per 1,000 of value. The district total funds can’t equal more than 5.90. The current tax district is at 4.00658803. We will not be able to have our Proposition #3 at the value of \$100,000 for laying asphalt and patching streets. The amount has been reduced to \$50,000 to keep within the scope of the tax district cap of 5.90. Randy Robinson made the motion to dispense with the reading of Resolution No. 2024-429 adopting our special levies for the November 5, 2024, General Election Ballot. Bill Auvil seconded the motion, all council members voted yes – **motion passed**. Randy Robinson made the motion to adopt Resolution No. 2024-429 showing Proposition No 1 – a special tax of \$14,000, an estimated \$0.53 per \$1,000 of 2024 assessed valuation for public safety to fund fire protection and emergency medical services for 2025; Proposition No 2 – a special tax of \$60,000, an estimated \$2.28 per \$1,000 of 2024 assessed valuation for street work, street lights, street expenses, and maintenance for 2025; Proposition No 3 – a special tax of \$50,000, an estimated \$1.90 per \$1,000 of 2024 assessed valuation for street work of laying asphalt mats, and patching streets for 2025. Bruce Palmer seconded the motion, all council members voted yes – **motion passed**.

- B. RESOLUTION NO. 2024-430 STIP** – Mary sent the STIP to our engineers and they said it looks good and to add ten percent to the costs. Randy Robinson made the motion to dispense with the reading of Resolution No. 2024-430 adjusting the Six Year Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Bruce Palmer seconded the motion, all council members voted yes – **motion passed**. Randy Robinson made the motion to adopt Resolution No. 2024-430 detailing the STIP for work to be done between 2024-2029. Bill Auvil seconded the motion, all council members voted yes – **motion passed**.
- C. OFM PRELIMINARY POPULATION ESTIMATES** – Council members reviewed a letter from the State of Washington Office of Financial Management that included the preliminary April 1, 2024, population estimates developed by their office. The 2024 estimate review worksheet was included that show Oakesdale at an all population of 402.
- D. OLD MILL DAYS** – Council members received a copy of the schedule of events for Old Mill Days. Mayor Palmer will drive the antique fire truck and council members can ride on it during the parade. Kris Johnson said next Wednesday is the next Old Mill Day’s committee meeting. She is in need of trivia about Oakesdale. Ben Crossett will be in charge of the fun run.

X. COUNCIL MEMBER’S BUSINESS:

RANDY – None

BRUCE – None

BILL – None

CLAUDIA – None

- XI. TREASURER’S REPORT/APPROVAL OF CHECKS:** Council members reviewed the Treasurer’s Report, Receipt Register and Check Register for June 2024. Randy Robinson made the motion to approve paid checks #29064 - #29103 in the amount of \$19,759.57 for claims and \$22,632.35 for payroll totaling \$42,391.92 from June 4, 2024, through July 1, 2024. Bill Auvil seconded the motion, all council members voted yes – **motion passed**.

- XI. ADJOURNMENT:** Claudia Louk made the motion to adjourn the council meeting at 7:47 p.m. Bill Auvil seconded the motion, all council members voted yes – **motion passed**.

DENNIS PALMER, MAYOR

ATTEST:

MARY DEGON, CLERK/TREASURER