

*Town of Oakesdale*  
**TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
*for*  
*January 6, 2025*

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Dennis Palmer called the council meeting to order at 7 p.m. Soon to be appointed council member Shon Eck led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- II. **ROLL CALL:** Mayor Dennis Palmer, Bill Auvil, Shon Eck, Claudia Louk, Bruce Palmer and Randy Robinson. Also present was Mary DeGon, Clerk/Treasurer.
- III. **OATH OF OFFICE – SHON ECK:** Mayor Dennis Palmer swore appointed Shon Eck into Council Position #1 previously vacated by Al Evans.
- IV. **WI FIBER – SHANE:** He presented council members with a nonexclusive telecommunications franchise agreement between the Town of Oakesdale and Forensics LLC that does business as WiFiber. Our Town attorney reviewed said franchise agreement and requested a change on page 15 Section 2. Indemnity. He is asking for the first sentence of that paragraph to be removed and to read as follows; “The Town will indemnify and hold the franchise harmless from any claims or causes of action arising only from the Town’s sole negligence in its use of the access channel(s) or emergency alert system.” Shane explained the reason for needing such an agreement between the Town and WiFiber since they use the city right-of-way’s to install fiber. When they start to build out to new services, they will present a design to council. Guest Kris Johnson asked if the banner they have at the Willow’s could be removed. She doesn’t think it looks good with the future plans of the old mill. Shane asked if the banner bothered anyone and council members said no. Wifiber does rent the alcove of the Willows where there servers are kept. Shane will have the suggested change from our Town attorney on the franchise agreement submitted to Marcus and a revised agreement will be resubmitted for adoption as an Ordinance.
- V. **PINE CREEK SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT:** Josilyn Watson introduced herself as the Community Engagement, Education & Outreach Specialist for Pine Creek Soil & Water Conservation District. She loves being a voice for the historical agriculture planning. Josilyn handed out a few pamphlets that discussed the topics of Community Wildfire Resiliency & Forest Health and working together with the services they can provide. There was a Home Safety Checklist to take simple steps from roof to foundation to make your home safer from embers and radiant heat. Wildfires are a natural part of our native ecosystems and are increasing in frequency and intensity. We can mitigate harmful impacts by preparing for wildfires and improving forest health. Pine Creek Conservation District can help by hosting educational workshops, reduce fire risk through various conservation strategies and help communities, landowners, and ecosystems with wildfire recovery. Josilyn shared the “little green shed” will be

celebrating Wheat Week, April is Earth Month, having trout in the classroom at our Oakesdale Schools, involved in FFA soil and having the 4-H group build bird boxes.

- VI. **INTRODUCTGION OF GUESTS:** Shane with WiFiber, Josilyn with Pine Creek Soil & Water Conservation District, Kris Johnson, Kim Anderson, Dee Eck, Pete Baljo, and Frank Sabo.
- VII. **APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:** Council members reviewed December 16, 2024 minutes. Randy Robinson made the motion to approve the minutes as written. Claudia Louk seconded the motion, all council members voted yes – **motion passed.**
- VIII. **TOWN MARSHAL REPORT:** Keith Cooper was not able to attend tonight’s meeting as he was at his son’s basketball game. He did submit his department’s report for December 2024. There were six cases ranging from harassment, trespassing, civil issue, disorderly, parking problem, and discharge of fireworks. Per Town Code, fireworks can only be discharged in city limits on July 3, 4 & 5. Council members would like to review that Town Code and add New Year’s Eve to it as well.
- IX. **PUBLIC WORKS REPORT:** Mary gave the report for December 2024. Christmas decorations went up and then came down. Many compliments were received how nice our Town looked during the holidays. The homemade gnomes placed in front of the businesses are a favorite! Pam puts in so many hours with the help of Skip & Ruby Holland to get all the lights and Christmas decoration put up. Mike Crossett keeps the old Chamber of Commerce decorations lit up with the help from Avista to mount them on the poles. We started discharging the lagoons on December 9<sup>th</sup>. We are submitting our discharging samples weekly to the lab as well as our monthly water sample. We plowed and sanded the streets once so far as we had our first winter snow storm. Pam is currently working and servicing the lawn mowers.
- X. **OLD BUSINESS:** None
- XI. **NEW BUSINESS:**
  - A. **RESOLUTION 2025-434 OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER** – Randy Robinson made the motion to dispense with the reading of Resolution No. 2025-434 designating an official Town newspaper for 2025. Bill Auvil seconded the motion, all council members voted yes – **motion passed.** Bill Auvil made the motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-434 designating the Whitman County Gazette as the official newspaper for the Town of Oakesdale effective on and after January 1, 2025. Bruce Palmer seconded the motion, all council members voted yes – **motion passed.**
  - B. **RESOLUTION 2025-435 SALARIES** – Randy Robinson made the motion to dispense with the reading of Resolution No. 2025-435 setting the salaries of certain public employees. Claudia Louk seconded the motion, all council members voted yes – **motion passed.** Bill Auvil made the motion to adopt Resolution 2025-435 setting the salary of the Clerk/Treasurer as \$4,661.38 per month, Assistant Public Works Director as \$4,215.80 per month, Town Marshal as \$1,264.72 per month and the Building Inspector at \$350.00 per month. Bruce Palmer seconded the motion, all council members voted yes – **motion passed.**

- C. RESOLUTION NO. 2025-436 COST ALLOCATION** – Randy Robinson made the motion to dispense with the reading of Resolution No. 2025-436 revising the Cost Allocation Plan for 2025. Bruce Palmer seconded the motion, all council members voted yes – **motion passed**. Employees did a month time study last October 2024 showing how much was being allocated to Current Fund, Water/Sewer Fund and Street Fund. Claudia made the motion to adopt Resolution No. 2025-436 allocating Mayor and City Council to 100% to Current Expense Fund; the Clerk/Treasurer 65% to Current Expense Fund and 35% to Water/Sewer Fund; Public Works Director 70% to Water/Sewer Fund and 30% to Street Fund; Assistant Public Works Director 77% to Water/Sewer Fund and 23% to Street Fund; and the Public Works as needed part-time position shall be allocated at 50% Water/Sewer Fund and 50% Street Fund unless documented what department needed the extra help for 2025. Shon Eck seconded the motion, all council members voted yes – **motion passed**.
- D. OLD FLOUR MILL STATUTORY DEED – PORT OF WHITMAN** – Council members received a copy of an email from Kara Reibold, Executive Director for Port of Whitman, that confirms ownership of the flour mill were filed on December 31, 2024 in Whitman County transferring ownership of the flour mill from Innovia to the Port of Whitman. A copy of the Statutory Warranty Deed was attached. In other exciting news, they selected JUB Engineers as the consulting team for the planning study.

**XII. COUNCIL MEMBER’S BUSINESS:**

**RANDY** – None

**BRUCE** – None

**CLAUDIA** – None

**SHON** – He is glad to be here!

**BILL** – He called around to get other communities’ water rates. He did get rates from ten other towns as follows:

- Colton - \$53.64 for 5,000 gallons and they have no water loans
- Albion - \$46.68 for 3,000 gallons and they have no water loans, but have an annual rate increase of 4% each year
- Uniontown - \$47.07 for 1,000 gallons and they have no water loans
- Palouse - \$56.10 for 4,488 gallons (\$13 water loan included)
- Garfield - \$35.95 for \$5,000 gallons and the rate increases 6% every other year on odd number years – no water loans
- Rosalia - \$32.01 for 5,000 gallons plus \$15.25 goes to a water capital improvement fund
- Tekoa - \$47.50 for 5,000 gallons plus \$18 is charged for vacant/snowbird which goes into an improvement fund
- St John - \$48 for 5,000 gallons and they do have a water loan
- LaCrosse - \$35 for 2,992 gallons plus \$21 for water loan
- Endicott - \$65.23 for 6,000 gallons which includes \$23.08 water loan

We currently have a water loan which made our monthly rate at \$44.80 for 4,125 gallons. Council discussed increasing the monthly water rate to add funds to our improvement fund. Our currently monthly water/sewer bill with tax is \$85.99 and that does not include garbage.

- XIII. TREASURER’S REPORT/APPROVAL OF CHECKS:** Council members reviewed the Treasurer’s Report, Receipt Register and Check Register for December 2024. Randy Robinson made the motion to approved paid checks #29322 - #29343 in the amount of \$5,247.99 for claims and \$10,215.54 for payroll totaling \$15,463.53 from December 18, 2024 through December 31, 2024. Claudia Louk seconded the motion, all council members voted yes – **motion passed.**
- XIV. ADJOURNMENT:** Shon Eck made the motion to adjourn the council meeting at 8:05 p.m. Bill Auvil seconded the motion, all council members voted yes – **motion passed.**

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**DENNIS PALMER, MAYOR**

**ATTEST:**

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**MARY DEGON, CLERK/TREASURER**