

*Town of Oakesdale*  
**TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
*for*  
*February 3, 2025*

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Dennis Palmer called the council meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Guest Kim Anderson 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 were Mary DeGon, Clerk/Treasurer and Keith Cooper, Town Marshal.
- III. **INTRODUCITON OF GUESTS:** Kris Johnson, Kim Anderson, Pete Baljo and Frank Sabo.  

Pete said Phase I of the Heart & Soul meeting was last week and it was a good start.
- IV. **APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:** Council members reviewed January 21, 2025 minutes. Bill Auvil made the motion to approve the minutes as written. Bruce Palmer seconded the motion, all council members voted yes – **motion passed.**
- V. **TOWN MARSHAL REPORT:** Keith Cooper gave his department’s report for January 2025. There were six cases ranging from traffic offense, suspicious, CPS referral, animal problem, public program and civil.
- VI. **PUBLIC WORKS REPORT:** We continue to discharge the lagoons which requires weekly discharging samples to the lab. Plowing and sanding streets as needed between storms. Pam has been working on equipment in the shop and trimming the old apple trees by the city shop. Our monthly required water test also goes to the lab.
- VII. **OLD BUSINESS:**
  - A. **WIFIBER FRANCHISE AGREEMENT** – We have not received the revised agreement from WiFiber.
  - B. **FIREWORKS ORDINANCE UPDATE** – We have not received the revised ordinance from our Town Attorney, Eric Hanson, yet.
  - C. **WATER/SEWER RATES** – Council members continue to discuss various options of increasing water and sewer rates in the near future. Bruce said doing a small percentage on both utilities would be more affordable to our residents – his example was a 3% increase every year. If you calculated out the first year it would be \$1.34 more each month for water and \$0.99 more each month for sewer. Randy expressed concern over the possible rate increase affecting our street levies in the future. Those levies are continuing to pass but we are seeing about a 10% less favorable vote. Our streets are where everyone can see the improvements and our Pubic Works team does the best job around when it comes to plowing snow. Shon made the point that Oakesdale’s property

taxes are going up in 2025. Bill pointed out you can't have a Town without water or sewer. We need to build up our reserves. Council members reviewed a twenty-year water/sewer rate history beginning in January 2005. Water monthly rates were \$22 and sewer was \$25; January 2015 water rates went to \$27 and sewer stayed at \$25; January 2016 water rates were \$27.54 and sewer stayed at \$25; January 2017 water rates were \$28.09 and sewer remained at \$25; January 2018 water rates were \$28.65 and sewer was still \$25; January 2019 water rates were \$29.92 and sewer was \$25; January 2020 water rates were \$29.80 and sewer \$25; September 2020 water rates were increased to \$37.30 for the DOH loan for the Small Water System Plan and sewer was \$25; November 2020 water was \$37.30 and sewer was increased to \$33; January 2021 water was increased to \$44.80 for DOH Water System Phase I Improvements and sewer was \$33. Council members also reviewed Water/Sewer Fund 401 twenty-year history of beginning balances and revenues & expenditures. Council members asked to table this discussion so they could review the information presented.

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS:**

- A. FEMA WORKING WITH WHITMAN COUNTY** – Council members received the FEMA flyer that went out in the water/sewer bills showing FEMA will be having flood map open houses on Wednesday, February 12<sup>th</sup> from 6 to 8 p.m. at Whitman County Public Works Auditorium in Colfax and on Thursday, February 13<sup>th</sup> from 6 to 8 p.m. at Pullman City Council Chambers. These upcoming open houses are a great chance for community members to talk with FEMA, state, and their local officials about flood risk. Mary reminded council that Oakesdale's flood map was updated in April 2015.

**IX. COUNCIL MEMBER'S BUSINESS:**

**RANDY** – None

**BRUCE** – None

**CLAUDIA** – None

**SHON** – None

**BILL** – None

- X. TREASURER'S REPORT/APPROVAL OF CHECKS:** Council members reviewed the Treasurer's Report, Check Register and Receipt Register for January 2025. Randy Robinson made the motion to approve paid checks #29364 - #29379 in the amount of \$10,264.30 for claims and \$5,782.94 for payroll totaling \$16,047.24 from January 22, 2025 through January 31, 2025. Shon Eck seconded the motion, all council members voted yes – **motion passed.**

- XI. ADJOURNMENT:** Claudia Louk made the motion to adjourn the council meeting at 7:25 p.m. Bruce Palmer 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**