

Town of Twisp Council Minutes – 8/11/2020

Mayor Ing-Moody called the video conference meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Council Members present via phone/video: Hans Smith
 Aaron Studen
 Mark Easton
 Alan Caswell
 Hannah Cordes

Pledge of Allegiance:

Council Member Easton led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Additions/Deletions to the Agenda:

Council Member Easton requested a Discussion/Action: Methow Watershed Council/Foundation be added to the end of the meeting. Mayor Ing-Moody added it as a final item.

Public Comment:

Mayor Ing-Moody asked Clerk/Treasurer Kilmer to confirm that no comments had been received. It was confirmed no comments had been received.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Ing-Moody reported that COVID-19 testing will be available free of charge this coming Sunday 08/16 at the Winthrop Barn. She encouraged people to go get tested. The tests would be self-administered, with the support of the National Guard. Mayor Ing-Moody mentioned that preparations were being made to offer free testing the following weekend in Twisp, location to be determined.

Mayor Ing-Moody reported that OCOG has discussed the status of the census for Okanogan county. A representative from the Census bureau reported to OCOG that Okanogan county response rates are faring very poorly and that potential tax dollars could be lost as a result. Currently Okanogan county is at a 40% response rate in comparison to a statewide average response rate of 69%. This represents potential millions of dollars of lost revenue due to underreporting.

Mayor Ing-Moody also participated in a press conference representing AWC that was put on by Senator Murray. She spoke regarding the HEROS Act and its shortcoming as it relates to monies for state/local governments. The previous CARES Act appropriation only had funding for city governments with populations of 500,000 or more. For Washington state, only the City of Seattle meets this population threshold, so the funding was virtually useless to the majority of local governments in the state.

Staff Reports:

Council Member Caswell asked Director Denham about the status of the dust abatement project on gravel roads in Town.

Director Denham reported that he met with the vendor yesterday, and that the majority of the work was planned for the following Friday and came in under the original budget allotted.

Council Member Easton inquired as to any contingency plans in place if a Town staff member contracts COVID-19. Mayor Ing-Moody responded affirmatively, reporting that plans and policies have been put into place since the beginning of the COVID-19 emergency. Different policies, required for being on job, social distancing, and cleaning were the first put into place. Policy derived from CDC guidelines on what to do if you get sick, how long to isolate, and steps for returning to work have also been put into place. Policy for telecommuting has been generated and is on the agenda for Council approval tonight.

Council Member Easton asked about the status of the Canyon St. Crossing project, and when it would be expected to go out to bid. He also asked if the project would be completed in 2020.

Director Denham responded that he had had an in-depth conversation with the project engineer. Due to COVID-19, a significant portion of WSDOT staff are working remotely, which accounts for some of the project slowdown. WSDOT has given authorization to put the bid out, which will be done soon. Director Denham hopes for a low bid by a contractor with a late season project opening, and the ability to meet the project schedule. It would be his intention to meet with the contractor before awarding the bid to discuss the schedule, and possibly wait to award bid if their schedule does not meet the Town's timeline. Another option would be to award the bid, but not immediately issue the notice to proceed. If the bids were to come in overbudget, the project would be rebid in the spring of 2021.

Commission/Committee/Board Reports:

Council Member Cordes reported on the activity of the Friends of the Pool. The FOP is hard at work updating their website with info about what is going on with the Wagner Memorial Pool. They are working on a banner to hang at the pool that would direct attention to their website and encourage public input moving forward. The FOP has also issued a public statement in the form of a letter to the editor of the local newspaper. They are actively beginning the process of putting together public outreach including small and large group discussions to gather input for concepts for a new or updated pool. These group meetings are anticipated to start in September and their nature will depend on social distancing guidelines at that time.

Council Member Smith reported on the Public Works committee. The committee met and discussed the Apollo agreement and the proposed 2020 Water Improvement project. Council Member Smith mentioned that these items are on the agenda and would wait to discuss them when Council gets to these items. He noted that it was a very productive meeting. The PW committee also discussed the request for dealing with dust abatement on non-paved streets. He continued that the PW committee agrees with Director Denham's recommendation to reject the Apollo agreement. He reiterated the need for the project and was pleased that other options were being considered to fund and accomplish the project. He also wanted to note the Town's gratitude to have the information Apollo provided for analysis.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS:

Discussion/Action: Reject Civic Building/EOC Bids

Mayor Ing-Moody recapped the status of the Civic Building/EOC project. She reminded the Council that bids for the project came in higher than the available funding. The decision was made to wait to reject the bids to give Town staff an opportunity to pursue other funding. Rejecting the bids puts the Town in a position to move forward, rescope, and rebid. In doing so, Director Denman would inform the bidders of the Council's decision.

Council Member Smith moved to reject the Civic Building/EOC Bids. The motion was seconded by Council Member Caswell and passed unanimously.

Discussion/Action: Resolution #20-662-- Amending USDA Civic Building Grant/Loan Application

Mayor Ing-Moody reported that the Town of Twisp had already submitted an application as approved by Council in the amount of \$600,000. This amendment to the application is being requested as contingency on the project if the project should need to draw on them. Director Denham has been working to reduce the cost of the building through value engineering. This process has been able to reduce the cost estimate by \$680,000 which would leave the Town \$600,000- 650,000 short on funding if the low bid came in the same amount as last time. The current plan is to put the project back out to bid in December or January. Work is still being done to look for areas to trim cost without changing the intended footprint or function of building. If the project were to be put out to rebid as is, there is a large possibility the bids will come in too close to the max budget. For these reasons, the project needs a bit of buffer.

Council Member Smith commented that he feels good about making this application. He recalled that when the Town of Twisp first addressed the need for a Town Hall building even before the Emergency Operations Center was included, the Council was under the assumption that the Town would have to take on a loan to complete the project. He continued that \$750,000, depending on the terms of the loan, would be an appropriate obligation for the Town. Council Member Smith was also supportive of concurrently exploring other potential cost saving measures. He noted that he is supportive of the application being increased to ensure the project gets done and not lose programming. He cautioned that reducing the scope of the building will take away the ability to house certain departments. The purpose of the building is to have an efficient and all-encompassing space that will serve well into the future.

Council Member Smith moved to approve Resolution #20-662 as presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Cordes and passed unanimously.

Discussion/Action: Resolution #20-663- Police Department SOP/Facial Coverings

Clerk/Treasurer Kilmer reported that legal counsel was consulted to make wording correct for the resolution. Legal was the initial author of the policy. This policy was presented at the last Council meeting, and Council requested that it be brought back with a resolution to approve.

Council Member Smith moved to approve Resolution #20-663 as presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Caswell and passed unanimously.

Discussion/Action: Okanogan County Public Safety Emergency Communications Dispatch Services Agreement

Mayor Ing-Moody reported that as directed by the Council at the last meeting Town staff had inquired about what dispatch costs the Town would be responsible for under the new contract. Mike Worden responded to the questions, confirming that the Town is only responsible for the cost of calls within Town limits. He also confirmed that the Town is not responsible for agency assist calls and that under the new contract Fire Departments and EMS departments would pay their share of dispatch fees. Chief Budrow gave his approval for the contract per the clarification of Mike Worden's comments, but assured the Council he would be monitoring the billing closely to make sure it takes place per the contract.

Council Member Smith moved to approve the Okanogan County Public Safety Emergency Communications Dispatch Services Agreement as presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Cordes and passed unanimously.

Discussion/Action: Resolution #20-664 Telecommuting Policy

Council Member Smith asked how department heads felt about the language in this policy, and if they had any concerns.

Mayor Ing-Moody commented that the policy enables department heads to have staff work remotely if needed but requires department heads and or the Mayor where appropriate to outline what work can be done remotely. She also noted that telecommuting requires Mayor and department head approval.

Council Member Smith commented that the policy looks good in reasoning and limitations. He noted that it would be no issue if it needs to be adjusted due to department head feedback at a later date. He offered a thanks to the Public Safety committee for working on this policy.

Council Member Smith moved to approve Resolution #20-664 as presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Caswell and passed unanimously.

Discussion/Action: Reject DES /Apollo Agreement

Director Denham reported that he was quite disappointed to be making this recommendation. The Town had stipulated in the cost-effective criteria that the proposal needed to be a 15-year simple payback. That would mean that the project would effectively fund itself in 15 years regardless of financing. The proposal presented is a 29-year simple payback. The proposal cost of \$337,000 recommends a meter type that the Town of Twisp currently does not use and is not what was requested. Twenty of these meters were installed as a test. Out of the twenty, three had issues, representing a rate of 15%. Even after a tech was sent out to correct the problem, they still had issues.

Director Denham has been happy with performance of the updated Neptune meters currently used for updates. The Neptune meter constantly sends out AMR (automatic meter read) and AMI (advanced

metering infrastructure) signals. This meter upgrade project will move the Town from a manual read system, to an AMR. Currently it takes 3 to 3.5 days to read the meters, and they cannot be read for 5 months a year due to the snow. With the AMR upgraded meters, they can be read all year. The AMI feature is tied to information systems and requires no meter read. Rather, the AMI has constant input that can be read or accessed with live data on meter flow and consumption. Director Denham does not believe we will have the infrastructure for AMI in next few years, but that we would go there eventually.

These Neptune meters are made with a brass body, fully ultrasonic, and will work for decades. When Apollo was instructed to put the Neptune meters in the project it brought cost up even more, altering the proposal to a 40-year simple payback. Director Denham noted that there was a lot of good info in proposal, but ultimately it was too expensive. To that end he has been pursuing more affordable options.

Council Member Smith asked if we reject the Apollo agreement is there a reactive cancellation of the prior agreement with DES that needs to be conducted at the Council level. He also asked if there was any cost associated with canceling the proposal, or any financial obligation for work already completed.

Director Denham responded that the Town would not be responsible for any additional cost. He remarked that he feels bad that Apollo did the work for no cost, but that it was a known factor to both parties from the beginning if the project were to be rejected.

Council Member Smith asked if the Town maintains the cooperative agreement with DES to do other projects of different scope.

Director Denham was not sure, but he believes that we would be rejecting only the Apollo agreement.

Council Member Smith wanted to note that the Town of Twisp appreciates service of DES and the great value in it for municipalities.

Council Member Smith moved to reject the DES/Apollo Agreement. The motion was seconded by Council Member Easton and passed unanimously.

Discussion/Action: 2020 Water System Improvement Project

Director Denham explained that the project includes water meter replacement, well 2 rehab, and SCADA updates. He reported that we are experiencing Town-wide sewer and water issues and that this project will address the highest priority items. The proposed project will allow public works to operate the well pump accurately and reliably.

Director Denham noted that even this morning there was a SCADA malfunction. The previous day it happened twice. In the previous month there were three malfunctions. These issues are becoming more and more prevalent despite daily staff checks and temporary repairs.

He continued that this project would upgrade to a cloud-based SCADA system with the ability to read, monitor, control, equip from a mobile device, smartphone, tablet, or laptop.

Director Denham reported that updating the VFD for Well 2 will constitute a huge energy savings project, and the well rehab will fix issues such as sand being drawn into the system. Director Denham has received a quote from Core and Main for the meters and installation.

The 2020 Water System Improvement project is \$279,224. Director Denham inquired with three funding sources for financing proposals. The best proposal came back from Holman Capitol. Their

proposal outlines a seven-year term at a 2.9% interest rate. The debt service would be \$44,485.58 per year.

Council Member Smith noted that this project represents no rate change to water system users. Part of this project would be covered by money the Town has obligated in this year's budget to handle these issues. He expressed that this is a great value project with no rate impact.

Director Denham confirmed Council Member Smith's statement. He continued that the idea is to use the O&M funds set aside for this work annually. He noted that this doesn't even include the \$12,000 worth of savings by revenue generation for properly functioning and read meters.

Council Member Easton asked if this proposal includes installation or just materials?

Director Denham responded that the quote C&M has provided includes install, and a scope of work. The Contractor took a system-wide assessment of meters old and new. The proposal includes new equipment, software, and reading device.

Council Member Easton asked if this system will allow a customer to read their meter at any given time?

Director Denham responded that if we had the infrastructure for AMI it is possible, but at this time they could not.

Council Member Easton asked if staff believe taxpayers will not have to cover the cost of the project even with the expected downturn of revenues due to the COVID-19 emergency?

Mayor Ing-Moody responded that the water fund is separate from the general fund so its revenues are a little more stable. The Town is mandated to collect revenues for water service as decided by Council. The water fund revenues will not be impacted directly unless there is major default by rate payers.

Clerk/Treasurer Kilmer clarified what is being asked of the Council, noting that a motion to pursue funding with Holman Capitol for the project as presented is what is being asked. He continued that if that approval were given, staff would have legal counsel review the financing contract, and return at the next Council meeting with a contract for approval and a resolution prepared.

Council Member Smith moved to approve the project as presented and approve staff to pursue funding through Holman Capitol. He also noted his gratitude for Director Denham and all the hard work he put into making this a quality and cost-effective project. The motion was seconded by Council Member Caswell and passed unanimously.

Discussion/Action: B.E.E. Budget and Marketing Contract

Mayor Ing-Moody recapped that at the last Council meeting she was still waiting for a proposal for marketing items. Council had raised questions on the project's budget and how it would use the CARES act money. The Mayor noted that the old budget was earmarked at \$8,000 because there was no contract available at the time. At the last meeting Council approved \$800 for the design of the logo. At this time, a contract or hourly invoicing consideration is being discussed with Jamie Pettito to work on marketing for the campaign. At this time Jamie had submitted an outline, with a rate of \$36 an hour.

Mayor Ing-Moody reported that Methow Ready has donated a radio PSA in support of the B.E.E initiative which that Town would not have to pay for. She continued that a representative from Methow Ready is at the meeting tonight to share insights for the initiative.

Grace Butler introduced herself as the Program Coordinator for Methow Ready (MR), an organization affiliated with Aero Methow and Methow Valley Long Term Recovery. She explained that MR is focused on building community resilience especially in times of natural disaster and more recently, pandemics. Grace spoke in support of the B.E.E. campaign, commenting on the importance of culture, community interconnection, kindness, and empathy. She noted that we are facing a pandemic that is causing most to be deeply isolated, and that it is not going to change for the foreseeable future. MR believes that the B.E.E. campaign is necessary to build and maintain a culture we have in the valley of welcoming and kindness. MR has been supportive by giving labor and some funds from a community radio outreach grant. They support maintaining feelings of connection in this pandemic and want to find ways to encourage people to reach out even though they cannot be physically close. The hope is that this B.E.E. campaign would serve the community beyond the pandemic, encouraging our caring community to take care of self for the future.

Mayor Ing-Moody thanked Grace for her comments and support. The Mayor noted that in weekly Methow Valley Long Term Recovery meetings, Room One has expressed support as well, especially for working with Aero Methow on mental health issues. The Mayor asked Chief Budrow to comment on what he is seeing in the community regarding mental health.

Chief Budrow remarked that the Police department often deals with the aftermath of increased depression levels. He reported that the amount of suicide attempts has skyrocketed since the pandemic. Pre-COVID, Twisp PD responded to one every three months, but now it is more like three every month. He expressed thankfulness that we have organizations like Room One and Aero Methow where people can reach out to them for grief counseling and assistance to officers. He noted that the older generation grew up without cell phones and so much social contact compared to kids today who are now connected 24/7 with phones. This younger generation looks forward to school for socialization and have large friend groups. This pandemic is causing a disconnect which feeds into the increased depression levels.

Mayor Ing-Moody brought up that the focus of the B.E.E. initiative is being initiated by the Town but that its impacts are hoped to be further reaching into the greater community. The point of it is to engage various partners in the community and the public.

Grace Butler confirmed that the idea was founded in a collaborative effort - noting that it is meant to be a collaboration between folks who want to find a way to encourage kindness in the community. Her work in the B.E.E. campaign is an effort to make momentum in the community to encourage all to join and engage with outreach/encouragement in community and that this be reflective of the culture in Twisp. Grace offered her opinion that Jamie Pettito would be an incredible marketing person to assist in bringing community voices into the B.E.E. campaign.

Mayor Ing-Moody opened it up to the Council for questions. She noted that the logo design had already been approved by the Council while the remaining proposed budget for the B.E.E. campaign still needs approval.

Council Member Cordes expressed that she is very supportive of the campaign and thanked everyone involved. She added that it is heartbreaking to think about what is going on in the community and that any way to bring positive energy, resources, and options, is a good way to go.

Council Member Easton asked, "How is it being rolled out?". He explained that he had talked to a local business regarding support and their response was "I'll put it (a sticker) in my window, but it won't make difference with customers going in and out". He wondered how to make a "cultural shift" and actively see non-obvious partners. He asked, "Should the burden of financing it be completely on the Town? What is the marketing plan, and what is the expectation of marketing that Jamie would do?"

Mayor Ing-Moody responded that Grace, Jennifer Schumacher, and Jamie, were to work on the rollout. The plan is multitiered using social media and partnering with other entities. They would find promotional opportunities through partnerships to create “buzz”. The Mayor noted that the B.E.E. initiative is looking for a Council member to be part of the board directing the project. She continued that the movement is not about the money put into it, and that the symbols and signs are memory markers for people to develop a new consciousness of this community movement. She expressed that it is hard to talk about in tangible ways and that a shift of focus and priorities of what our community holds valuable during these challenging times is really the end goal. Mayor Ing-Moody asked if Grace Butler had more to express in response to Council member Easton’s questions.

Grace Butler noted that there have been “movements” in other communities. For example, Spokane has used the slogan, “Spread Kindness not COVID” on posters that include resources for people to follow through with. The plan would be to use community voices, newspaper, social media, and radio. She expressed that it would be unfair to call the plan fully formed as of now. The campaign represents a multi-faceted attempt to connect with a community that is geographically related despite differences in age or background. She noted that Jamie has a better sense of navigating it. She continued that dollars do not matter as much as the effort and expressed that she believes this could have a really meaningful impact.

Mayor Ing-Moody expressed that the idea is not to just do it all then be done, but to be planting seeds for partnerships. It would mean partnering with local organizations like Room One, The Cove, local businesses, and nonprofits. Supporting the campaign would represent that these places stand for “being empathetic”. They could do this for example by “free coffee in support of B.E.E.” or maybe a “river cleanup in support of B.E.E”. This would bring greater awareness of the B.E.E. initiative and highlight the businesses that support it. It can become part of a network they can reach. It is not an insular marketing campaign, but a change in thought and action. Just be yourself, be kind, be ...”

Council Member Easton commented that he never thought of this as bad idea, but his biggest discomfort was in the use of a third of the CARES act money being allocated for something that couldn’t be well explained. Because there are 2.5 months left to spend the CARES money, he would want to make sure that things we need on a practical level or things that might arise have funds available.

Council Member Smith commented that it has been a good discussion between the Mayor, Methow Ready, and Aero Methow. He believes that it is a good campaign with good ideas, but he shares Council Member Easton’s reservations on the cost. He continued that it would be hard to “nickel and dime” a proposal like this. He understands that the budget ask is seed money to get a campaign up and running. They cannot be sure of the outcome, but there is the possibility for great outcomes. He continued that the challenge is how much to put into that seed money. It is hard to identify that amount not knowing what we will get. He continued that having Grace come in and give another perspective reaffirmed a feeling that the money will go to good use. He expressed support for the current proposal. He requested that the Mayor look at all decisions on CARES act funding frugally, and make sure that we prioritize to where it is most needed. He noted that he was happy to see this money being spent locally.

Mayor Ing-Moody affirmed that any changes to the budget will be brought before Council.

Council Member Cordes volunteered to be the Council Representative on the B.E.E.

Council Member Smith moved to approve the B.E.E. campaign budget as presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Easton and passed unanimously.

The Council made a special thank you to Grace Butler for all her work on the B.E.E. and with Methow Ready

Discussion/Action: TIB Road Improvement Grant Applications (Cascade Drive Overlay & Town wide Chipseal)

Director Denham presented the two applications. This is the 3rd year the Town has applied for TIB grants on these projects. Due to state budget cuts, TIB is anticipating lower grant funding amounts than in previous years. Director Denham believes these two applications to be very competitive in the pool, yet they do not compete with each other because they are for different funding programs. Great effort has gone into reducing the scope of the projects to make these applications competitive yet still important in completing planned items on the Transportation Improvement Plan.

The Town-wide chipseal application is broken out to prioritize streets most in need, giving TIB options for funding priority. Priority 1 streets are Twisp Ave, and Borchard. This area includes next year's planned project for water system improvements. Director Denham worked with the county to get a quote for chipseal application. If this project were to go out to bid via private contractor, the quote would be an estimated 1.5 times more expensive. He concluded that both applications are "bare bones", but enough. He hopes that TIB will see that Twisp has the most efficient applications out there.

Council Member Easton commented that he appreciates Director Denham's hard work and thoroughness of information.

Council Member Studen moved to approve SCAPP application as presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Easton and passed unanimously.

Council Member Smith moved to approve SCAPP application as presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Easton and passed unanimously.

Discussion/Action: Methow Watershed Council/Foundation

Mayor Ing-Moody reported that there are talks of combining the Methow Watershed Council (MWC) with the Methow Watershed Foundation (MWF). Representatives of the MWF had asked members of the initiating governments (IGs) to bring this proposal back to their respective Councils, and request a response in advance of the MWC's August 20th meeting. Mayor Ing-Moody reported that she had reached out to Winthrop Mayor Ranzau and County Commissioner Hover to speak on this matter as a group, but hadn't been able to meet yet.

The Mayor expressed that it was never intended that the foundation would have a voice on the Council, and that the MWF was setup purely for the funding portion of activities. To expand it would not have the representation of the original intention of the watershed Council. Mayor Ing-Moody expressed reservations on combining the groups because of the risk of it becoming too unwieldy and providing a lack of representation.

Council Member Smith noted that he has a lot of thoughts on the topic but wants to be careful about participation due to possible conflict of interest with his employer. He questioned if the intent is to add additional members to MWC and to create new institution that is semi-autonomous? He continued that if the MWC want a yes/no answer, he would hesitate to stay yes not fully understanding what was being proposed. He also noted that "no" is not an informed answer either.

Mayor Ing-Moody responded that Commissioner Hover was fine with having the IG's drop out and have the advisory separate. In this case, decision making would ultimately have to come back to the

IGs. The Mayor again noted reservations on combining the MWC and MWF as current MWC members are voted in and MWF would be added to the Council without a vote.

Council Member Easton reported that the MWC meeting was a valuable resource for info, and that many people were doing heavy lifting and delving into the nuance of the situation, giving value to the Council. He also got the sense that people wanted to be part of the Council/foundation but didn't realize it was two different entities.

Mayor Ing-Moody again noted that she would like to meet with the County and Winthrop to see their opinions on the matter.

Council Member Smith commented that if there is a movement to change the framework of the MWC, the communications should come to the IGs to ask questions of the proponents of the change.

Council Member Easton agreed with Council Member Smith that unless someone can come tell the Twisp Council the reasons why they feel this should happen, that there is no need to change it. The Twisp Council needs to consider if a change would benefit the Town or be in the Town's best interests. He noted that combining the MWC and MWF feels like it would dilute, not fulfill the original scope of intent.

The Council took no action on the matter.

Consent Agenda:

- Accounts Payable/Payroll

Vouchers audited and certified by the auditing officer as required by RCW 42.24.080, and those expense reimbursement claims certified as required by RCW 42.24.090, have been recorded on a listing, which has been made available to the Town Council. The following voucher/checks are approved for payment by a majority vote on this 14th day of July 2020.

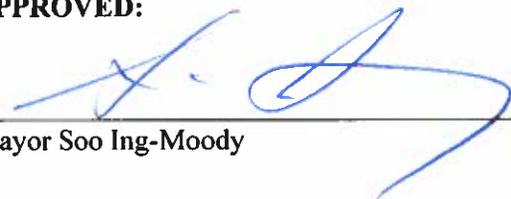
Payroll	EFT# 1579-1596, 1615-1616	59,944.69	07/31/20
Accounts Payable	Warrant# 35629-35653	22,310.19	08/11/20
Accounts Payable	EFT # 1621-1622	1,003.36	08/11/20

Council Member Hans moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Easton and passed unanimously.

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Ing – Moody adjourned the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

APPROVED:



Mayor Soo Ing-Moody

ATTEST:

Randy Kilmer
Clerk/Treasurer Randy Kilmer
