

Town of Twisp

Council Minutes – 7/14/2020

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 Studen led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Additions/Deletions to the Agenda:

Mayor Ing-Moody would like to add a presentation from the Okanogan County Coalition for Health Improvement regarding Covid-19 Communications Strategy for Okanogan County.

Public Comment:

Mayor Ing-Moody read the following Public Comments that were issued to the Clerk's office in writing:

Hello,

My name is Adam Custis and I am the owner operator of Linwood restaurant at 108 Glover St N in Twisp. I am writing to voice my opposition to closing down North Glover Street. My opposition is based on several different concerns about how this could impact both my business and the local community.

1. My fear for the community is that closing down the street will encourage large gatherings of people many of whom are from out of town and not wearing masks which could help to spread COVID-19 amongst the community of Twisp.
2. I for one do not have any desire to argue with people on the streets about wearing face masks. With the governors mandates about mask wearing I am afraid my business license could be taken away or I could be blamed because someone got Covid while in the proximity of my business especially if I used the outside space for dining. I feel there are just too many questions about liability to effectively use the space provided by closing down the street.
3. While this might be anecdotal two of my employees fell ill with COVID symptoms in March right after someone who had COVID ate at the restaurant. If you were to close down the street I fear that this would put my employees at risk and make me and possibly the town of Twisp liable if someone were to fall ill.
4. The cost to utilize the space outdoors would be so great that it makes it virtually impossible to justify me doing so. Because the street has no sun blockage and I don't have outdoor tables I would have to purchase full umbrella chair table sets. These are expensive and god willing would only be needed for this summer. This is not something I can afford to do right now.
5. If I can't and won't use the closed down street to my advantage it then interferes with my business as I am running it now. My customers will no longer be able to pull up in front of my business, grab their food and go. As a business owner I would not rather inconvenience my customers as it usually doesn't help a business thrive.
6. Linwood opened its doors mid December after the shutdown my business pivoted to deal with our new reality and we have been successful so far. By shutting down the street we would effectively be forced to

implement a new business model for a third time in 6.5 months. I feel this is asking too much of a new business.

For all these reasons I am opposed to closing down North Glover Street.

Thank You for Your Time,

Adam Custis

Owner-Operator Linwood Restaurant

To whom it may concern,

My name is Tina Houser, and I am the owner of Sage Brush Beauty Shop. I have been in business in Twisp for over 20 years. It was brought to my attention on Monday, July 13, 2020 that there is a proposal in place to turn down town Twisp into a plaza. Not only was I unaware of this proposal, but I feel it would adversely affect the majority of my clients, as well as my business. About 90% of my clients are senior citizens, many of which struggle to get around, and have disabilities that limit their mobility. As we know, the parking in Twisp is already grossly underserved, not to mention the impact this would have on the side streets, and other businesses. The largest demographic in Twisp is retired and elderly, and allowing something like this to move forward would be a disservice to our most precious citizens.

Thank you for considering my position on this matter,

Tina Houser

Sage Brush Beauty Shop

RE proposal to Twisp council to close "N Glover St" to cars in order to provide space for businesses to move outside:

The owners of Twisp Movement Studio (Becky Studen, Sarah Prochnau, Mary Gray) were surprised when contacted by the Town of Twisp on Monday July 13, regarding the proposal. That was the first we had heard about it. We were not contacted by the organizers of this proposal, did not "sign" onto the proposal or give permission for our business name to be a part of the proposal.

Becky Studen, Sarah Prochnau, Mary Gray

Twisp Movement Studio

Hi Amy,

Thank you for the information.

I support a creative solution to outdoor wine tasting as long as all affected businesses are in agreement and none of the surrounding businesses are negatively impacted.

Before I could support the attached proposal, I would need more information: What day of the week? What time of day? What is the duration of the event?

At this point, the Cinnamon Twisp Bakery has no intention of extending our hours nor expanding our outdoor seating.

Katie Bristol

Owner, Cinnamon Twisp Bakery

Attention Mayor and council,

It has been brought to our attention a few businesses on Glover Street would like to close the street so they can accommodate outside seating and dining. Being owners of BJ's Branding Iron and El Valle building, we are not in favor of this proposed plan nor did we sign any proposed letter stating otherwise. If they shut down the street, the parking would be very limited and our clients with disabilities would have to long of a distance to walk. We strongly disagree with this proposed closure and if need further statement please contact Bill Bates or Melissa Holt.

Greetings Ladies & Gents, I thought the idea of closing off N. Glover St. block for a community space was grand. It would

facilitate and make possible eating outside, gathering safely, & providing much needed outside community space especially during this time.

I could see my business using this outside space for classes and a place to sit and knit and feel the company of others while distancing. Before covid, our classes were always full (12 participants), and now limited to 5. I wasn't even sure if anyone would come now, but they did, because it was outside. I would also use the space to have Friday Night Knit Club, where we have a social distanced gathering of knitters, crocheters, spinners & a few weavers. Sitting outside and being seen doing the arts and crafts always inspires others to be creative as well, and encouraging the arts. Creating a space to enjoy the downtown always brings greater commerce and invites them to stay, pause and enjoy the setting. My hope is that this idea would also be a welcome addition during non-covid times into the future with possible music and art brought into the mix. Let's really make Twisp the valleys art hub!

Thank You for hearing my thoughts and taking them into consideration. Feel free to include me in any future conversations or questions on this topic. I feel it is a great step for our community.

Cindy Ruprecht - Fiber

Town of Twisp,

I have been analyzing the plan they have for closing Glover Street, and it has come to the point that it does not benefit us because we have older clients and it would not be appropriate to have to park so far and having to walk to our business. It is more appropriate to keep parking lots open so our clients can be parked. Our restaurant has 50% capacity but we have a few tables to eat inside or we have the option to order for takeout. We do not want the street to be closed.

Sincerely,

El Valle Restaurant

Note to the Town Council: The Cove Food Bank is willing to support the local merchants in most any way possible, including the street closing proposal. We would need some designated, close, parking for the senior bus and other disabled patrons of the food bank on Thursdays from 12:30 to 4:00pm. This could be accomplished by designation along the proposed end of Glover St. or along Twisp Ave. next to Antlers. We support our local business neighbors.

Glenn Schmekel (The Cove - Exe. Director)

Re: Glover Street Business Alternative Use
Council

God forbid I oppose anything that might improve or assist in the economic recovery of downtown Twisp during these trying times but I would have appreciated some direct communication from town before you decide to close down the North end of Glover Street. Whereas it will not impose a particular hardship on Tackman Surveying Business it will indeed impact my other tenant, Sage Brush Beauty Shop. I do not have a solution but would hope that you take all the downtown business into account in your search for solutions to this problem.

Respectively

Willian R. Tackman

Hi- I want to express my support for opening the pool for swim lessons, if feasible. Perhaps more lessons would be possible to make up for the lack of open swim sessions.

Thanks for considering.

Ann Glidden

How do you have a public meeting in the building with no public allowed? I guess it's a closed door public meeting...

Average person when they find out they cannot afford the house that they would like to buy, that don't have enough money to complete the purchase, 99 out of a 100 are going to find a smaller home, or one that they can afford.

Not the Town, we are going to borrow more money, because we are obsessed with building the Taj Mahal.

Thank you,
Mark Edson
Twisp Resident

Mayor Ing-Moody asked if there were any other public comments submitted. Clerk Treasurer Kilmer responded that no other comments had been received.

Public Hearing – USDA RD Loan Application:

Mayor Ing-Moody opened the public hearing for the USDA RD Loan Application at 5:42 p.m. She asked Clerk/Treasurer, Kilmer to ensure all attendees were unmuted. She asked the public for any comments. There were no public comments made. Mayor Ing-Moody closed the public hearing at 5:44 p.m.

Discussion/Action: Resolution # 20-661 – USDA RD Loan Application:

Council Member Smith moved to approve Resolution #20-661 – USDA RD Loan Application as presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Caswell and passed unanimously.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Ing-Moody reported that it is business as usual – though not exactly normal, given the Covid-19 pandemic. She has been busy keeping up with various meetings. She reported that she held a meeting with town department heads earlier in the day and reported that it was good to connect with everyone and enable departments to work concertedly together as needed on current projects / issues. As the Chair of the AWC Legislative priorities, she informed the council that there are areas currently being discussed for legislative consideration when the Legislature reconvenes. She will continue to inform the council of any updates regarding legislative requests made by cities and towns. There had been a discussion on a potential special session in early August but that has been postponed by the State legislators and the Governor. There will not be a special session until at least November, if at all, with the regular session beginning again in January. She informed the Council that a new AWC committee called the Equity Committee has been formed and that she has requested more representation from Eastern Washington Elected Officials to serve on the committee.

Staff Reports:

Council Member Easton asked director Denham about an approximate schedule on the commencement of the Canyon Street Crossing Project. Denham stated that they just created a new schedule for the project because the engineer had to rework the optimal schedule. It is still on schedule to be completed in the fall although there are always concerns about weather and the asphalt bonding. He also stated that WSDOT has not given authorization for construction yet as a lot goes into federally funded projects. Council Member Easton explained that he is concerned that with the current chip seal project going through town that there are no crosswalks painted and it is unsafe for citizens to cross when vehicles are not stopping. Denham stated that they are supposed to do striping within 48 hours, and he will follow-up with Granite Construction to ensure they can get the crosswalks completed.

Council Member Smith asked Denham about the Northtown Project possible water contamination. Denham stated that while they used the best means available to mark the lines, the contractor hit a water main and also a service line. He said thankfully they were able to make the repairs with parts they had on hand. There was a loss of pressure that was less than 20 psi so they followed the Department of Health protocol for the loss of pressure. Since the health and safety of the town citizens is important, the town issued a boil water advisory until tests came back to ensure that the water was safe to drink. He stated it was the first time since he's been employed here that they had to issue a boil water notice.

Commission/Committee/Board Reports:

Council Member Cordes attended the Friends of the Pool (FOP) strategy board meeting where they discussed moving forward with listening sessions using citizen feedback and the survey from last year. Cordes said that FOP realizes that this isn't the time to enter into any type of agreement or partnership with the town, but they would like a quote from the Mayor and Council that would show support for the future of the pool. Mayor Ing-Moody stated that she will probably be able to come up with a statement for them.

Mayor Ing-Moody reported that she attended the Okanogan Council of Governments meeting last night. They discussed the backroads study and that a survey showing places of importance to the Town still needs to be completed and have asked department heads to assist in completing it. She also stated there is a Methow Watershed Council special planning session coming up on Thursday where they will be reassessing and defining the MWC's future plans. She is unsure if she will be able to attend and gave her alternate, Council member Easton, a heads up that he may have to attend.

Presentation: Okanogan County Coalition for Health Improvement (CHI) Covid-19 Communications Strategy for Okanogan County:

Elana Mainer of CHI and Lauri Jones, Okanogan County Public Health Director, gave a presentation on a new communication plan that the CHI has created in support of Okanogan County Public Health. It includes the development for a new Covid website that will be able to help the citizens of Okanogan County be able to easily seek information all in one concise authorized place related to Covid-19. The new website will be available to all users as it goes live within the next day.

The presentation was informational, and Council will provide any feedback to CHI should they have any after having an opportunity to explore the site. The Town intends to provide a link to this site on the Town's webpage once it is up and running.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS:

Discussion/Action: Wagner Memorial Pool:

Mayor Ing-Moody opened the discussion on opening the pool this year despite the current pandemic. She stated that since the previous Council Meeting, it was discovered that a Phase 1.5 opening for aquatic recreation had been issued by the Governor's office. Under the new guidelines, though it allows for an earlier potential re-opening, it was considerably stricter than the Phase 3 opening. The Phase 1.5 would only allow a pool to operate at 25% capacity, along with other requirements. Following the last meeting, the Mayor had also spoken to the Mayor for the City of Okanogan to verify rumors that they might be re-opening their pool; she shared that the Mayor had informed her that they had not yet made a determination but would personally let her know if they were to.

Mayor Ing-Moody invited Lori Jones from the Okanogan County Public Health Department to provide an update about the County's current cases and asked for her thoughts or questions on re-opening the pool. Jones stated that with a heavy heart she can confirm that the County now has 263 confirmed cases and a 3rd death in Okanogan County. She stated that there have been 51 new cases since yesterday with the hot spots stretching between Oroville to Pateros. She stated that while the Methow Valley has not seen any new cases in the recent update, she warned that there is a definitely prevalence of Covid cases in the County demonstrating that the virus is very much active in the area.

Council Member Easton stated that just prior to the meeting, he read in the Seattle Times that Governor Inslee gave an update stating that he is putting a pause on any Counties movement to any new phase until July 28th and then will see how things develop from there. Easton wanted to make sure that Council was aware of that.

Council Member Studen stated that he reviewed the restrictions and there was no question in his mind that it would not be financially beneficial for the town to open the pool. He feels that with the restrictions it would not allow enough users of the pool to generate the kind of revenue it takes to run the pool.

Sarah Schrock – Friends of the Pool (FOP) representative asked to make a statement. She said that while they will support the town's decision, she is upset that FOP was not able to engage in conversation with the Town about the June 10th ruling from the Governor's Office for a Phase 1.5 opening. She felt that the pool management didn't give any options to FOP to come up with a solution that would allow opening sooner.

Mayor Ing-Moody stated that she appreciated Schrock's comment and all that the Friends of the Pool have done in the past, including with financially assisting the Town to prepare the pool for a potential re-opening, if feasible. She stated that she was not aware of the Phase 1.5 opening guidelines until late June / early July and once she was aware, she followed up with additional questions to the Governor's office. She said there are many factors and requirements that would need to be in place in order to open the pool, a task that is not taken lightly by her administration. She stated that health and safety are always paramount in the running of a pool, and even more so during times of a pandemic. Risk factors that go into a consideration to open the pool, includes not only the physical ability to do so but also must take into account the risk factors posed to the general public as well as the overall increased liability to the Town. There are other factors that need to be weighed to determine the risk versus benefit for both public and the Town. She stated that it was clear that the Council had wanted to give the issue more time before reaching a decision in the hopes that the numbers of Covid cases within the county would decline, instead they have increased significantly in a rather short period of time.

Council Member Smith stated he was hoping to be in Phase 3 by now but that it obviously didn't happen. He said that he wasn't aware of the Phase 1.5 guidelines until recently. He said that there has been money spent to get the pool ready and that the town would not be able to recoup those funds without some revenue generation. He said he isn't sure if opening for lap swim or swimming lessons would help recoup fees because once you open you have to hire lifeguards and wonders what the price structure for lap swim would have to look like in order to recoup any otherwise lost revenues.

Council Member Studen stated that if you increase the cost of swim passes, but aren't able to service the number of customers that purchase the passes, there are going to be unhappy people wanting to swim but won't be allowed to due to capacity restrictions. He doesn't feel it would generate enough revenue.

Council Member Cordes asked Director Denham how long it would take to get the pool ready to open per the Phase 1.5 guidelines. Director Denham reported that he doesn't have any staff hired or trained at this time. He said he might be able to get a few lifeguards, though that may already be a challenge. He stated that he could have protocols in place as soon as possible, and the pool physically ready within days, but that he might not be able to get it fully staffed.

Lori Jones commented that if the pool opens, you can not control where the pool users come from. She said that if Brewster has a hot spot of Covid outbreaks and a group comes from Brewster to use the pool and they somehow infect someone at the pool, then it might begin an outbreak here.

Council Member Studen moved to not open the Wagner Memorial Pool this year as it would not be prudent or financially feasible. The motion was seconded by Council Member Caswell and passed unanimously.

Council Member Smith brought up the need for youth to have something to do. He said that some parents are able to work from home, so they are able to be with their kids, while other parents work. The pool has always provided a way for those kids to have something to do. He would like to look at pool expenses and see if there is way that the town could partner with other entities to be able to come up with a solution for the youth to have something to actively do, while remaining Covid safe.

Mayor Ing-Moody stated that it is a difficult time for both youth and families and agreed that it would be good to have partners to help solve his dilemma during Covid times.

Discussion/Action: CARES Act Funding allocation: Local Small Business Grant:

Mayor Ing-Moody went over the contract agreement with TwispWorks Foundation to provide grant money from the CARES Act funding to Twisp businesses. Mayor Ing-Moody pointed out the highlighted parts in reference to changes that would be made to tailor it to Twisp.

Don Linnertz responded that the contract has been adapted many times depending on the entity they are working with, so he is willing to make any changes necessary to enable it to be acceptable to the Town. They have awarded 25 grants, the majority of them are in the Town of Twisp. He stated that the majority of the grants awarded were for relief money that helped pay rent, utilities, etc. He appreciated the considerations that the Town has made; he feels it speaks volumes of the Town's support of local businesses.

Council Member Smith asked if Linnertz felt the amount of \$7500 would be either overfunding or underfunding the need based on his knowledge of the need still out there. He asked if it has already been decided as to who the grant money would be awarded to? Linnertz responded that he has looked at existing business applications that have not been awarded any money. Out of 17 applications, there are 5 businesses in Twisp that might be eligible to be considered for application.

Council Member Easton asked if this award money will be going to existing businesses that have already received a grant or will it be only to businesses who have not yet received assistance? Linnertz responded that they would like to use a new modified application for phase 2 of their grant program so some businesses might be eligible for additional grant funding.

Linnertz stated that additionally they will be checking in with businesses to see how things are going for them and see if they have the tools needed for cashflow management. He asked if the funds need to be within the postal code of Twisp or within the Town limits itself. Council Member Smith answered that he believes it should stay within the Town's jurisdiction since it was given to Twisp based on population to use within the same jurisdiction.

Council Member Smith moved to approve the agreement between TwispWorks Foundation and the Town of Twisp for grant funding through the CARES Act as amended to reflect the changes discussed. The motion was seconded by Council Member Easton and passed unanimously.

Discussion/Action: Sports Complex Interlocal Agreement:

Mayor Ing-Moody stated that this Interlocal Agreement has been vetted by both the School District and Town Attorneys and is an agreeable partnership to both.

Council Member Smith moved to approve the Sports Complex Interlocal Agreement as presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Easton and passed unanimously.

Discussion/Action: Glover Street Business Alternative Use:

Mayor Ing-Moody began the discussion by reviewing the discussion at the Council’s previous meeting. She noted that a plan has since been presented by Colbey Breed of Glover Street Market, along with several public comment submissions, as read aloud during the public comment period. Council Members were asked to weigh in with any thoughts or questions. Council Member Smith asked Colbey Breed for comment on the proposal and thoughts pertaining to the public comment submitted. Breed stated his desire to see an alternate use considered by the Council to assist businesses desiring alternative ways to do business during the pandemic. Council discussed what may have gone wrong as several businesses identified on the documents provided by Breed in support of the initiative had been reached out to by the Town, upon request of Council Member Smith, to confirm their support and was surprised to discover that the businesses had not heard of the proposal and some providing comment opposing the idea. Chief Budrow shared that he had even received complaints from two businesses upset that their business names had been used without consent. Council Members stated that given the conflicting understanding and that a substantial number of businesses were opposed to the idea, they would not be proceeding with any further consideration. Council members decided to table the discussion indefinitely, unless, as stated by Council Member Studen, an overwhelming majority of Glover St. businesses were to desire it.

Discussion/Action: Cascade Pipe and Supply Ground Lease:

Mayor Ing-Moody stated that this contract has expired and there are new owners at Cascade Pipe and Supply requiring a new contract.

Council Member Easton stated that as their neighbor he would like to say that they are great neighbors. He does have a concern in the winter about snow that is removed from the leased land and put onto S. Methow Street, creating a narrow street for residents.

Director Denham stated that he will follow up with the new owners about snow removal.

Council Member Easton moved to approve the Cascade Pipe and Supply ground lease as presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Cordes and passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda:

- Accounts Payable/Payroll
- Minutes: 6/9/2020, 6/23/2020

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# 1364-1378, 1378, 1396-1398, 1420	59821.05	6/30/2020
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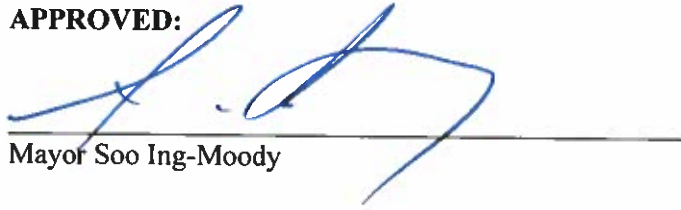
Accounts Payable	Warrant# 35573-35577	5736.65	7/10/2020
Accounts Payable	EFT # 1431-1433	1146.68	7/14/2020
Accounts Payable	Warrant# 35578-35607	57347.97	7/14/2020

Council Member Smith moved to approve the consent agenda as amended with changes to the meeting minutes from 6/23/2020, as noted by Council Member Easton. 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 7:50 p.m.

APPROVED:



Mayor Soo Ing-Moody

ATTEST:



Clerk/Treasurer Randy Kilmer

