

Town of Twisp

Council Minutes – 11/24/2020

Mayor Ing-Moody called the video conference meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

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

Council Members Absent: Hannah Cordes

Pledge of Allegiance:

Council Member Smith led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Hearing – 2021 Final Budget Hearing:

Mayor Ing – Moody opened the public hearing for the 2021 Final Budget at 5:33 p.m. She asked the Council and public for comments. All phone lines were unmuted to give anyone the option to speak. Mayor Ing – Moody read the following public comment that was submitted in writing:

Hello Randy,

Could you make sure that this is put into the minutes for the Public Hearing portion on the Final Budget 2021. I am concerned over what I had read in the paper for the upcoming 2021 Budget of \$8,644,970, which includes the new Town Hall Project? Why? To the best of my knowledge and research, those funds are not guaranteed and promises from the governor's office can be taken back due to the financial mess that we are in at the present time. That is money that we do not have in our possession and how can we spend it or claim it on the books? I truly think that we should make a correction to the budget and proceed with caution in this new year. Thank you, Leone C. Edson - Twisp Resident.

Council Member Smith clarified that budgets are not typically created as a true reflection of finances already in the Town's possession but rather are based on assumptions of projected revenues to be received and expenditures of assumed projected expenses for the coming year. He stated that budgets are simply fiscal planning tools and as such can and must be amended as needed if assumptions are not met.

Mayor Ing – Moody thanked Council Member Smith for his clarifying comment and closed the public hearing at 5:37 p.m.

Additions/Deletions to the Agenda:

N/A

Public Comment:

Mayor Ing-Moody asked both Clerk/Treasurer Kilmer and Deputy Clerk Grennell if any public comment had been received prior to the meeting. They both verified that none had been received.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Ing – Moody reported that she’s been working on the budget. She said it’s been a particularly challenging and painful exercise this year, but commended staff for doing a fantastic job of strategically reducing expenses where possible. She said that there have been sacrifices made to mirror these uncertain times. She thanked the members of the Finance Committee, Councilmembers Smith and Easton for their dedicated service and recognized Clerk/Treasurer Kilmer for doing a great job.

Staff Reports:

Deputy Clerk Grennell reported that the Facebook page is now active online. She said that it was created as a group called the Town of Twisp so that it would align with the Social Media Policy. The way it is currently set up, it will not allow any comments and will be used for informational purposes only.

Director Denham reported that we had our first big snowfall event. He said that the Public Works crew were down one operator for plowing and that they did their best to get the streets and sidewalks cleared. He said they received some feedback and complaints from residents about the quality of the plowing. He explained that every snowfall lends itself to a unique situation for snow plowing. He will make the proper adjustments as the season progresses and he noted that he does take the input seriously. He assured the Council that he is working hard on the issues.

Council Member Smith wanted to acknowledge Director Denham’s work in filling in for staff by plowing the streets and thanked him. He asked how the snow is affecting the projects that are wrapping up? Denham replied that the meter replacement project has been completed and that there are a few meters which his staff would work on installing. He said the North Town project only has a small list of the remaining work and he isn’t worried that the weather will affect it. Council Member Easton wanted to compliment Denham on the meter replacement project. He said the contractors were fast, neat, and he hadn’t even known they had been there. He was impressed.

Commission/Committee/Board Reports:

Council Member Easton reported he attended the Twisp Chamber of Commerce’s Annual Retreat. He said they are thinking of creating different committees within the Chamber. He said, for example they were considering the creation of a Downtown Association Committee. They also talked about Sandy Moody’s retirement and that they are still looking for a replacement for President and also for Jonathan Baker’s Board position. He said they would like new members to serve.

Council Member Smith reported on the Finance Committee meeting. He said they have spent a great deal of time on the budget. He said they are recommending a 9-10% decrease in the general fund budget for 2021. He said that this projection is based on the expected decrease in revenue as a result of the pandemic. He said that if the forecasting proves to be incorrect, we would respond by modifying the budget later in the year; he said he believes it to be a well-thought-out conservative budget. He stated the importance of the General Fund being balanced and yet do so required the hard decision to not open the pool in 2021. He shared that in the many discussions it was decided that the Town cannot afford to operate the pool, especially under a modified opening – it would not only cost more to open but would also result in less revenues. Regardless, despite the closure there are costs that will still be associated with the general maintenance of the facility, however, much less than if the pool were open. He reported that the 2% Lodging Tax revenues are expected to be impacted in 2021 as travel will likely continue to be limited. Funding for the Chamber of Commerce will be affected as a result and reduced to \$26,000. Part of the decision takes into account the fact that reserves are being depleted at a time when we may need them more than ever and in light of business complaints of the need to provide public restrooms; some funds will need to go to address this growing concern.

Director Denham reported on behalf of Councilmember Cordes regarding the recent Parks and Recreation Commission meeting. He said it's been awhile since the Committee had met, and that they have quite a bit of work to do. He said they will be working on developing the Parks and Recreation Plan. He said they voted to keep the Capital Facilities Plan as drafted and not make any changes at this time. They believe that once they finalize a Parks Plan that they would ask for more to be put on the CFP.

Council Member Smith said he attended the Airport Advisory Board meeting. He said they spoke about Hangar Lease rates. They would like more information prior to adjusting the 2021 base rate as they don't see a need to increase them any further at this time. They would like to not price out future hangar owners. They discussed the Capital Facilities Plan and bumped the timeline on future items. He believes it was a good meeting overall.

Mayor Ing-Moody attended the Methow Watershed Council (MWC) meeting. She shared that Commissioner Hover stated that the County is interested in exploring the idea of convening a group to discuss water and hopes that the Towns would want to join in that endeavor. She said that she believes it is imperative that the Towns be included in any water conversations affecting the valley. She shared that the Council does not intend to meet again until the new year. Following an executive session the Council voted to hire George Schneider to help facilitate a conversation on the next steps for the MWC moving forward.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS:

Discussion/Action: Glover Street Parking – Sawtooth Dental:

Mayor Ing-Moody stated that the Town has received a letter from Sawtooth Dental requesting to use temporary signage in front of their business to help their patients be able to have a place to park and check in while remaining in their vehicles. Since the pandemic does not allow them to congregate in their waiting room, they would like to ensure that their patients can remain in their vehicles where it is warm. Council Member Smith stated that it would be possible to create an emergency sign ordinance that would be in effect during health emergencies to allow medical/dental related offices to use signage needed to ensure their patients can get the care they need while following Covid protocols. Mayor Ing – Moody said she will have the administrative staff work on creating that and bring it back to a future meeting, as needed.

Discussion/Action: Twisp Chamber Fund Request: “What Local Looks Like”:

Mayor Ing-Moody stated that due to the updated Governor's orders, the Twisp Chamber has decided to cancel the Mistletoe Madness event. In place of the previous event, they have created a campaign called “What Local Looks Like.” This event will be an event where shoppers that spend more than \$50 in any Methow Valley Business will be entered into a drawing for a \$100 gift card to a local restaurant. The committee is asking the Town to purchase an ad in the Methow Valley News for \$631.55 and to sponsor 5 weeks of radio ads on KTRT for \$150.

Council Member Smith moved to approve using the 2% funds as requested. The motion was seconded by Council Member Easton and passed unanimously.

Discussion/Action: Resolution #20-667 – 2021-2026 Six Year Capital Facilities Plan:

Council Member Smith moved to approve Resolution #20-667 2021-2026 Six Year Capital Facilities Plan as presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Easton and passed unanimously.

Discussion/Action: Resolution # 20-669 – Highlands Associates Contract Amendment – 2021 Planning Services:

Council Member Smith moved to approve Resolution #20-669 Highlands Associates Contract Amendment for 2021 Planning Services as presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Easton and passed unanimously.

Discussion/Action: Resolution # 20-670 Interlocal Agreement for Building Inspection:

Council Member Smith moved to approve Resolution #20-670 Interlocal Agreement for Building Inspection Services as presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Caswell and passed unanimously.

Discussion/Action: Resolution #20-671 – 2021 Salary & Medical Benefits Schedule:

Mayor Ing-Moody stated there is another increase in the medical benefits for the upcoming year; she stated that the good news is that amongst other medical plans, our plan's increase was lower.

Council Member Smith moved to approve Resolution #20-671 2021 Salary and Medical Benefits Schedule as presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Easton and passed unanimously.

Discussion/Action: Resolution#20-672 Fee Schedule:

Council Member Caswell moved to approve Resolution #20-672 – Fee Schedule as presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Smith and passed unanimously.

Discussion/Action: Resolution #20-673 Building Permit Extension:

Council Member Smith moved to approve Resolution #20-673 – Building Permit Extensions as presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Studen and passed unanimously.

Discussion/Action: Springbrook Software Services Contract:

Clerk/Treasurer Kilmer explained that our current contract with BIAS Software will now be changed as they were purchased by Springbrook Software.

Council Member Smith moved to approve the Springbrook Software Services Contract for 2021 as presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Easton and passed unanimously.

Discussion/Action: Methow Valley Community Center Library Lease:

Council Member Smith moved to approve the Methow Valley Community Center Library Lease as presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Easton and passed unanimously.

Discussion/Action: Simple Power IT Contract 2021:

Council Member Smith moved to approve the Simple Power IT Contract for 2021 presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Studen and passed unanimously.

Discussion/Action: Okanogan County Fire Protection District No. 6 – Extension of Interlocal Agreement:

Mayor Ing-Moody stated that the current agreement for Fire Protection is expiring this year. She said that Fire District 6 has agreed to keep the rates the same for 2021 with the extension of a one-year interlocal agreement. They would like to move forward with a conversation about annexation in the new year.

Council Member Smith moved to approve the extension of the Interlocal Agreement with Fire District 6 as presented. The motion was seconded by Council Member Easton and passed unanimously.

Discussion/Action: Ordinance #763 – 2021 Final Budget:

Mayor Ing-Moody said the budget is balanced after considering multiple budget scenarios; the 2021 general fund budget will include some notable changes, largely in response to the ongoing pandemic and its economic impacts. The biggest change is that the pool is slated to remain closed throughout 2021. Also, a portion of the anticipated beginning fund balance (ending 2020) is being used to balance the budget. Additionally, all departments had been asked to take a hard look at their budgets and make cuts wherever prudently possible. She said the intention for 2021 is to not have to furlough any employees.

Council Member Smith wanted to point out that since the pool will not be opened, the Wagner Funds typically received for pool operations will also not be used. Mayor Ing-Moody said that by not using the Wagner Funds it is intended that the life of the pool will also be extended an additional year under more normal operations.

Mayor Ing-Moody reiterated what Councilmember Smith had reported earlier - that there is a proposed cut to the 2% Lodging Tax funds given to the Chamber of Commerce. She acknowledged that it will be hard as a recipient to not receive the funds they were accustomed to receiving and shared that the Finance Committee spent a lot of time discussing the Chamber's request for 2021. Council Member Smith said the contract ends at the end of 2020 so a new contract needs to be negotiated to reflect what the 2021 funds will be used for. He would like to point out that part of the contract states that the funds needs to be used for tourism funds "in" the town of Twisp and is interested to see what will be proposed. He shared the Finance Committee's deliberation regarding the 2021 recommending amount to Chamber; he explained that part of the reduction is due to a projected revenue decrease and the increasing demand by local businesses to fund Public Restrooms in support of visitors to the Town.

Mayor Ing-Moody wanted to stress the importance of the relationship that the Town has with the Chamber of Commerce and how much we value their partnership and the relationship with our local businesses.

Discussion/Action: CARES Funding – B.E.E. Campaign:

Mayor Ing-Moody stated that the remaining CARES Act Funding needs to be spent by the end of the month. She asked for approval to use the remaining funds for the BEE Campaign. She would like to order masks to disseminate to the general public to encourage empathy and care for others with the BEE Logo on them.

Council Member Smith moved to approve the remainder of the CARES Funding for the BEE Campaign as requested. The motion was seconded by Council Member Easton and passed unanimously.

Discussion/Action: Twisp Airport Advisory Board – Position Openings

Clerk/Treasurer Kilmer stated that it came up at the recent Airport Advisory Meeting that some of the positions have exceeded the term limits and others are coming close at the end of this year. Mayor-Ing Moody stated that as per usual process, the positions should be advertised so that anyone interested can apply for the positions.

Consent Agenda:

- Accounts Payable/Payroll
- Minutes 10/13/2020, 10/27/2020, 11/10/2020

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 24th of November 2020.

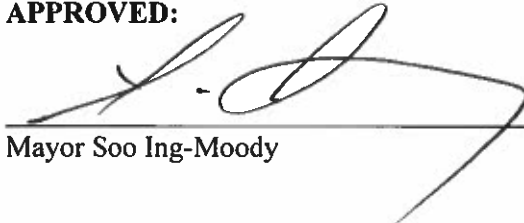
Payroll	EFT# 2245-2252	8648.00	11/16/2020
Accounts Payable	Warrant # 35842-35871	565796.78	11/24/2020
Accounts Payable	EFT # 2272	683.00	11/24/2020

Council Member Smith 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 7:24 p.m.

APPROVED:



Mayor Soo Ing-Moody

ATTEST:



Clerk/Treasurer Randy Kilmer