

Town of Twisp

Council Minutes – 10/13/2020

Mayor Ing-Moody called the video conference meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

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

Pledge of Allegiance:

Council Member Studen the Pledge of Allegiance.

Additions/Deletions to the Agenda:

N/A

Public Comment:

Mayor Ing-Moody asked Clerk Treasurer Kilmer if any public comment had been received prior to the meeting. He verified that none had been received.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Ing-Moody reported that she has been working on the budget and will be for the next several weeks. She said that good progress is being made. She's had a couple of meetings with department heads who have been working at balancing the general fund. She said it has been a difficult and challenging budget year and shared that Randy is doing a good job in keeping up with the timeline. She shared that staff have been working hard to meet the needs of our community during an unprecedented year.

Staff Reports:

The Public Works staff report is available in the packet.

Council Member Easton asked Andrew about the new chipper and if it would be available for the community to use? Director Denham responded that it may be possible with some details to be reviewed first with the mayor. He said they haven't thought much about it because of COVID, and originally determined they may have to wait until next year for any community wide events. He said the staff is using it today so it's still being used, but he will have a conversation since it is still during an emergency period.

Commission/Committee/Board Reports:

Council Member Easton attended the Climate Task Force meeting where they continue working on the mitigation solutions for climate change in the Methow Valley. They are working on the first draft of the report, and resiliency is the word that continues to come up and how to face the changing climate. He said

the Water 2066 report has come up in conversation as everyone is reading the report. They will be meeting each week into December. He said they hope the report to come out early next year.

Council Member Easton also attended the Twisp Chamber of Commerce meeting. He said that Chamber President Sandy Moody is stepping down, and Jonathan Baker stepped down earlier year, so they are looking for interested board members. Easton said he was on the agenda to talk about the Town budget projecting a 20% decrease, and to be aware and prepare that the 2% funds may be drastically less than they usually get. They also discussed the need for Public Restrooms. He said that Jamie Petitto reviewed the Mistletoe Madness event and he requested that she meet with the mayor. He said they will meet this Friday to discuss the event. He also said that membership is steady, and they have new members this year. Mayor Ing-Moody said that in regards to the Chambers 2% request, they have asked for the last budget position report to review. She stated that although there are 2% funds available, some of the 2% may be used for other business / events.

Mayor Ing-Moody asked if there will be Climate committee meetings open to the public for input? Easton replied that currently the meetings are with top level individuals from different sectors forming the Climate Task Force and he isn't sure if that will be changing.

Council Member Cordes attended the Friends of the Pool listening session, which had been held in a small in person group. FOP did a great job with a comprehensive slideshow beginning with the history of the pool, their mission, the plan for new pool, and fundraising. She said it was a great small group meeting and great ideas emerged. They would like to gather feedback to put together and present to the community at large so as to decide what direction would be best to move forward with the pool. She said they will be putting together a presentation for Town Council to review.

Council Member Smith attended the Civic Building meeting. They met to review the funding that has been appropriated and obligated for the approved project. He said that value engineering is going on to bring the next round of bids closer to the funding amount. He said some changes in the building footprint may be warranted to help with the reduction of costs. They want to keep the timeline on the project to break ground in the spring. Architects West will put together a fee schedule for the next round of changes that he believes will be able to be accomplished without effecting the programs for the building. He reported that it was all good news and is hoping to get the timeline met so it can get out to bid. Mayor Ing-Moody said she is feeling hopeful and will know in a couple of weeks a little more information.

Mayor Ing-Moody reported that she attended the Okanogan Council of Governments Meeting where they spoke about COVID, and about Emergency Communications with Mike Worden. They discussed upcoming needs on county communication issues relating to dispatch, and potential funding to improve the dispatch communications going forward. She said they will continue pushing up to state and federal levels for potential funding. They might be able to get help from FEMA to purchase generators since they don't have them for all of the sites yet. She said anything that improves the communication system, helps us with communication needs in the Methow Valley. She reported they continue to have SCJ work on the backroads study for the County, as a need for safe evacuation routes and transportation routes came out of past fires. Commissioner Branch brought up the previous issue with WSDOT and snow removal and wondered what the status is for this year? She said that last season, the Towns were told they would have to chip in, or not have snow services completed on the state route that runs through the towns. She said she and other mayors had to complain and Secretary of Transportation, Roger Millar, halted that directive to not plow but the issue has yet to be resolved. She said to stay tuned, as they will still argue the point, especially with COVID impacting budget shortfalls.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS:

Discussion/Action: Methow Watershed Council and Methow Watershed Foundation:

Travis Thornton was present to discuss what is currently happening with Watershed Council (MWC) and the Watershed Foundation. His presentation is included in the packet. He said that the MWC had been having discussions to combine the two and are running into issues deciding on how to move forward. He stated that the current structure of the two is not feasible to continue working as the Foundation is to raise the funds and the Council is to perform the work. Members of the Foundation would like to be able to join the Council. Mayor Ing-Moody asked for information to better understand what the new configuration would look like moving forward. Thornton said an upcoming watershed meeting will help generate a better understanding on how to move forward. Council Member Smith asked if there is a specific request from the Watershed Council or Foundation that is being asked of the Town to take a position on? Thornton replied that he will know more after the next meeting.

Discussion/Action: Facility Plan Report Section 7:

Director Denham stated that he needed to submit this as the deadline was yesterday. He said following the submission of this will be the Ecology grant application. The Public Works Committee discussed previously about doing the design build versus the design bid build. He said they decided on conventional delivery systems for design and bid build. His thought is that the Town just apply for design from the Department of Ecology and talked about a timeline to apply for funding. His experience with USDA is that it has better funding with construction projects, which is why they wanted to use the design for the Department of Ecology grant, mostly for efficiency, to cut down the costs as much as he could. His goal is to be as efficient as possible to lower the final cost to the end user as much as he possibly can.

Council Member Smith have his support and agreement with Denham and said that at the Committee level and he has reviewed this and are aware of what both the needs and the costs are. He said he agrees with the direction Director Denham is going in being financially prudent while getting the value back to the rate payers as to what they implement.

Director Denham stated he had received a copy of the Wastewater Facilities Plan and thinks it is well done. He just received a hard copy in the mail today and will look over it again.

Mayor Ing-Moody asked if this is just discussion or is action needed? Denham replied that he will need action after Ecology's comment. He wanted Council to see what he submitted and will bring it back at a later time for Action.

Discussion/Action: CARES Act Increased Funding:

Mayor Ing-Moody wanted to let everyone know that additional appropriations from the Governor to cities of Cares Act funding is available. The Town of Twisp is allocated an additional \$14,007. She said that we have been using CARES money related to the emergency and the Clerk/Treasurer has been keeping track of expenditures so far. The additional funds have the same guidelines and the deadline for using the funds is December 1, 2020. She explained the need for a messaging reader board that is especially critical during emergencies to better communicate with the public immediately. Since we are already midway through October, she is asking for a release of these CARES dollars for this purpose. The purchase would meet the timeline for expending the funds while also serving the needed purpose of emergency communications during Covid and any other emergencies, including wildfires. It would be a quick and easy way to relay information even if other modes of communication go down and to motorists travelling from outside the area.

Director Denham stated that he would be able to use the funds to purchase a reader board that is on a trailer and mobile. The cost depends on the type and size that you choose.

Council Member Easton asked the Chief if there was anything he feels his department could use or needs that fits into the scope of what the CARES Act money is meant for? Chief Budrow responded that he thinks the reader board would be beneficial for his department too. Council Member Easton expressed his opinion that the reader board is a great idea.

Council Member Smith moved to approve using the additional CARES Act money to purchase a mobile emergency reader board. The motion was seconded by Council Member Easton and passed unanimously.

Discussion: Committee/Commissions Open Public Meetings:

Mayor Ing- Moody stated that while we remain in phase 2, we are allowed to continue with virtual meetings to get business done with the only requirement of posting the meeting notice 24 hours in advance. She said that it has been quite a while since we have had any committee meetings and she would like to hear from the Council about their thoughts on starting those up again.

Council Member Smith stated that he printed the materials from the MRSC website and are included packet regarding the Open Public Meetings Act. He wanted to share with Council and have a discussion to get everyone's thoughts on resuming the meetings. He said he has been privy to conversations from certain commissions and advisory boards expressing their desire to continue to conduct business. He has heard that people would prefer to move forward with business and not get behind. He would like everyone to consider the balance and whether we can bring on the other boards to operate in a virtual atmosphere. He said that he knows that the Twisp Airport Advisory Board is wanting to continue their work and would like to meet virtually. If started again, each committee would need to know what requirements would be necessary. He said he spoke to Clerk/Treasure Kilmer about his department and to see if they can handle the workload staff-wise and what would be a potential cost to the town? Smith said he doesn't have a good answer to the solution, but feels a responsibility on the Councils' side to continue to conduct business.

Mayor Ing- Moody stated that it is actually the Deputy Clerk that is impacted as her department takes the meeting minutes and would need to ensure that staffing and training is adequate. She said there are some changes in hours for employees who have younger school children and need to be mindful when thinking about staffing a meeting. She said we also need to consider the general public and who is unable to technologically attend a meeting where a virtual meeting is needed. She feels it's important to be open to the public and all public should be able to attend.

Council Member Easton thinks we should do what we can to have regular commissions and other meetings because we don't know how long we will be in phase 2, and the longer we delay, the longer the backlog gets. He asked how are other cities and towns are conducting their meetings?

Council Member Smith thinks maybe the boards will only meet at a certain time/or number of times so we best staff the meetings and facilitate moving forward. He said most of the boards have not met since March and their backlog of work continues to grow. Mayor Ing-Moody will have staff reach out to each Board, Committee or Commission to get a sense of how they would like to move forward and will revisit this at the next meeting.

Discussion/Action: Public Restrooms:

Mayor Ing-Moody stated that the Town has received two letters about the need for public restrooms on the weekends as it is overcrowding local businesses such as the Glover Street Market. Previously there was a meeting with the Mayor, Director Denham, and MERC Board Members where they discussed the

illicit behaviors happening in the public restrooms. There was a constant problem with the misuse of the restrooms. The Town continued to pursue how to address public restrooms. Since the Public Restrooms were constructed with a grant, she had wanted to speak to Commissioner Andy Hover about what to do. She said there are a lot of public restrooms that are closed across the state due to COVID, and there are porta potties instead. She wasn't sure how best to provide a public restroom in the upcoming winter months. She said there are a lot of costs involved in building a permanent structure and the cost of maintaining the public restrooms which use the 2% funds; she expressed that unlike Winthrop who has more accommodations options, Twisp does not receive near the amount of revenue from that fund. Chief Budrow said the main reason we had to close the restrooms were that people were damaging the property, stealing toilet paper, using the premises for drug use, other illicit behaviors. In winter months some of these individuals had used it as a shelter in the evenings, often by breaking in. He shared that we are currently inundated with crime because the bad guys are not going to jail due to COVID. He said that he has written 4 search warrants in the past two weeks. His concern would be that if we open the public restrooms now that it is going to be like a moth to a flame.

Mayor Ing-Moody said the letter from Glover St. Market noticed more people using their restroom and attributes it to the absence of a public restroom at this time. She shared that there is one porta potty at the community center to take care of the farmers market traffic, which will be closing soon.

Council Member Easton is interested to know Chief Budrow and Director Denham's thoughts about using porta potties as public restrooms. Chief Budrow said we can't really use them in winter because they will freeze so he doesn't think it's a good idea for the Town right now. Director Denham said that normally every year they have used one ADA porta potty at the park for \$100 a month. Usually they have problems with graffiti, and they tip them over which causes PW to secure them in the ground. He said it takes PW staff's time to clean them out as they get complaints from public about their condition. He said that PW did the public restroom cleaning the past year and it was very time consuming.

Council Member Easton said they discussed this at a Chamber of Commerce meeting, and they have realized all facilities in town are shut down due to COVID. There really wasn't a public restroom available all Summer. He said now that the season is over, it would be a good time to start brainstorming to come up with ideas and a solution moving forward.

Mayor Ing-Moody said maybe a community wide meeting is needed to listen to other thoughts and ideas. In the meantime, the Town might not be able to lessen the impact that it's having on area businesses right now.

Council Member Smith said he feels a broader scope and dialogue is needed. He feels the need to point out that the new civic building will provide restrooms available for the public to use and could provide and replace what's currently lost at the MERC. He thinks maybe there needs to be a surveillance and enforcement strategy for the current public restrooms if they are to be reopened. He said he is surprised we made it this long before anyone said anything.

Discussion/Action: Halloween:

Mayor Ing-Moody asked the Deputy Clerk to update the Council on any concerns we have heard from the public about Halloween. She responded by saying that there was a request from a resident to hold a Halloween Parade on Glover Street and wanted some more information. The resident was given the appropriate information about how to complete an event request form and said she was going to be contacting the Chamber of Commerce to partner with them in planning a parade. As of the meeting the Clerks Office had not heard back from the resident.

Mayor Ing-Moody spoke about the public health flyer and about how to be safe on Halloween. She asked the Council Members if they have heard anything about Halloween from the community or if there are plans being made this year. Council Member Cordes mentioned that she lives on Burgar Street where historically there is a closure of the street for Trick or Treaters as a Halloween Event. She said a number of families on Burgar Street she has spoken to and what she is consistently hearing is that the

neighborhood is not planning on doing anything on Burgar street that includes large gatherings this year. She said it is a concern for many that if there is a COVID outbreak, it could close schools or cause an even bigger impact on the community.

Chief Budrow wanted to clarify that when Burgar Street usually gets shut down, it is due to an event request that is approved by the Town. He said this year the Town has not received an event form and on Saturday, the Police Department will have limited staffing and he is not planning on using any overtime. Council Member Easton mentioned that we should post the Health Department Halloween tips on our website and make sure to help spread the information. Mayor Ing-Moody said everyone will need to spread the word that the Burgar Street neighborhood has chosen not to have a Halloween event this year. As we have not received a request, the Town will not be closing the street for an event this year.

Consent Agenda:

- Accounts Payable/Payroll
- Minutes – 9/22/2020

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 13th of October 2020.

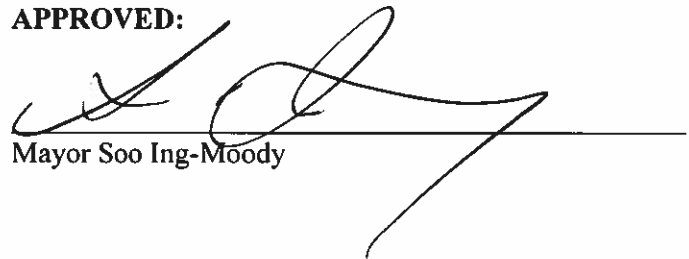
Payroll	EFT# 1949-1962, 1968-1971, 1976	61943.88	9/30/2020
Accounts Payable	Warrant # 35734-35778	125520.01	10/13/2020
Accounts Payable	EFT # 1999-2001	1146.68	10/13/2020
Accounts Payable	Warrant #35779-35785	5652.20	10/13/2020

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 7:33 p.m.

APPROVED:



Mayor Soo Ing-Moody

ATTEST:



Clerk/Treasurer Randy Kilmer