

MEETING OF THE CITY OF CONNELL, WASHINGTON
CONNELL, FRANKLIN COUNTY, WASHINGTON
May 1, 2023

The Regular meeting of the Connell City Council was called to order by Mayor Lee Barrow at 6:00 pm in the City Hall and was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Mayor Lee Barrow and Councilmember's: John White, Katrina Kunkel, Shelly Harper, Pat Barrera and Joe Escalera.

STAFF PRESENT:

Fire Chief Ken Woffenden, Treasurer Teresa Steele, City Clerk Marissa Ortiz, Public Works Director Hallie Tuck, City Attorney Heidi Ellerd, and Public Works Supervisor Ed Brown.

PRESENTATIONS

The young women from the 2023 Miss Connell Scholarship Program joined City Council and presented a handout of parade dates. They displayed a pin button that was distributed at each parade to promote Connell. They thanked the city for their continued support.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Motion: Councilmember Kunkel moved to approve the consent calendar as presented:

- a) Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting April 17, 2023
- b) Accounts Payable 5/1/23 for \$111,777.13
- c) Check Register 4/19/23 for \$6,759.56
- d) Payroll Register 4/20/23-4/20/23 for \$46,824.43

ProTem Barrera seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Councilmember Kunkel moved to approve the agenda as presented. ProTem Barrera seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

HEARING EXAMINER CONTRACT – KOTTKAMP, YEDINAK & ESWORTHY PLLC

At the April 17th meeting, staff presented a Hearing Examiner contract for the Council's consideration. After discussions, the Council decided to table the item until the May 1st meeting.

Additional materials were put together for Council's review including:

- Ordinance No. 819 – Created the Office of Hearing Examiner (adopted March 7, 2007)
- July 2, 2018, staff report to approve a Hearing Examiner Contract with Powell & Gunter (Attorney Benjamin Volmer)

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- Hearing Examiner Agreement dated July 2, 2018, with Benjamin Volmer MRSC article – Should Legislative Bodies Conduct Quasi-Judicial Hearings? By Joseph W. Tovar on August 31, 2016
- RCW 35A.63.170 Hearing examiner system

Also mentioned was the City would not utilize these services often but was required to utilize these services on occasion. For the times a Hearing Examiner was required by code a contract should be in place so the City could handle matters as quickly as possible and in accordance with the law.

After taking into consideration Mr. Kottkamp's experience and qualifications as a Hearing Examiner, the majority of the City Council voted to appoint Mr. Kottkamp as the City's Hearing Examiner.

Motion: Councilmember Kunkel moved to approve the Hearing Examiner contract with Andrew Kottkamp. Councilmember Harper seconded the motion. (Vote 4-1) Motion carried.

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-03 AMENDED SALARY SCHEDULE 2023

The City's Public Works Supervisor Ed Brown gave notice of retirement earlier this year, this allowed staff to plan in advance for his replacement. The timing of his notice and the resignation of a crew member placed the Public Works Department in an ideal position in which that position could be utilized differently in the short term. Staff proposed placing Ed Brown in a temporary position (Assistant Public Works Director). That position would only be filled until his departure in March of 2024. Moving Mr. Brown out of that position would free up the Public Works Supervisor position so the department could recruit and hire someone that could shadow Mr. Brown. The person hired would be able to learn critical details and history from the current supervisor. Upon retirement in 2024, the City would advertise and fill a crew member slot once again.

The difference in cost for around 7 months would be approximately \$16,000. The crew member position would be vacant for at least a couple of months before the position became filled, \$10,000 in savings. Staff could recommend taking the remainder of the increase from reserves. The amended salary schedule for 2023 was provided for the Council's consideration.

Motion: Councilmember Escalera moved to adopt Resolution No. 2023-03 authorizing the amended 2023 Salary Schedule. Councilmember White seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT FOR SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT

The Connell Police Department was a party to the Interlocal Agreement for the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) to investigate officer involved incidents. SIU was established in 2011 and the purpose of the SIU was to investigate officer-involved incidents occurred with Benton, Franklin, and Walla Walla Counties that involved substantial bodily harm or death.

In accordance with RCW 10.114.011, the SIU should conduct an independent criminal investigation to determine the facts of what occurred. The results of the SIU investigation would be forwarded to the Venue County Prosecutor's office for review and determination if there were

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any criminal violations. The SIU would meet the definition and criteria of Independent Investigative Team (IIT) as defined by WAC 139-12. The SIU Commander was responsible for ensuring SIU complies with relevant RCW's and WAC's.

Motion: Councilmember Kunkel moved to approve the Interlocal Agreement for Special Investigations Unit to investigate officer involved incidents and approve the Mayor, Chief of Police, and City Attorney to sign said agreement. Pro Tem Barrera seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC WORKS BOARD CONSTRUCTION LOAN CONTRACT

Provided to the Council was a Public Works Board Construction Loan Contract, this contract was required to fund the BNSF Utility Relocation Project in the amount of \$850,000. The length of the loan was 20 years at 1.39% rate of interest. This project would relocate one sewer line, a storm water line and case two water lines. These items were brought to staff by BNSF due to the expansion of the rails at the Connell yard. The lines served the citizens on the west side of the railroad tracks.

Motion: Councilmember Escalera moved to approve the Public Works Board Construction Loan Contract in the amount of \$850,000. Councilmember Kunkel seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

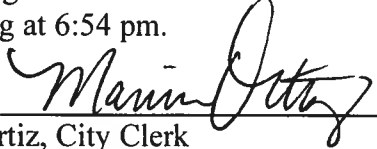
CITY COUNCIL CLOSING REMARKS

John White – as a member of the Franklin County Mosquito Control District, Mr. White advised the public in reducing mosquito habitats to eliminate outdoor containers on your own property that could collect standing water.

Katrina Kunkel – made a request for temporary street closures for two community events.

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business before the City Council of City Administrator Koch adjourned the meeting at 6:54 pm.

ATTEST: 
Marissa Ortiz, City Clerk


Lee Barrow, Mayor