

MEETING OF THE CITY OF CONNELL, WASHINGTON
CONNELL, FRANKLIN COUNTY, WASHINGTON
September 6, 2023

The Regular meeting of the Connell City Council was called to order by Mayor Lee Barrow at 6:01 pm in the City Hall and was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

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

STAFF PRESENT:

Fire Chief Ken Woffenden, City Clerk Marissa Ortiz, Treasurer Teresa Steele, Public Works Director Hallie Tuck, City Administrator Cathleen Koch, Police Chief Chris Lee, and City Attorney Heidi Ellerd.

PRESENTATION

- a. Mayor Barrow presented the Council with an Ordinance Veto letter, stating he vetoed Ordinance No. 1033-2023 in accordance with RCW 35A.12.130.
- b. Nicole Stickney with AHBL spoke on a few proposed code amendments to the zoning and subdivision code. The presentation specifically focused upon allowing zero lot line developments and the creation of a new zoning district for certain types of high-density housing. In addition, she stated that the State Legislature had recently adopted requirements for cities to address Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU). City staff directed AHBL to review the requirements and draft proposed changes.

CONSENT CALENDAR

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

- a) Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting August 16, 2023
- b) Accounts Payable 9/6/23 for \$113,417.53
- c) Check Register 8/23/23 for \$8,397.00
- d) Payroll Register 8/18/23-8/18/23 for \$87,316.36

Councilmember Escalera seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS

PUBLIC HEARING – EXTEND MORATORIUM LARGE-SCALE SOLAR ENERGY FACILITIES

Mayor Barrow recessed the regular meeting at 6:03 pm and opened a Public Hearing for the purpose of considering an ordinance to extend the existing moratorium on the acceptance or processing of applications for any new commercial / industrial solar or wind energy projects.

STAFF REPORT:

During the City Council Meeting held on September 19, 2022, the City Council approved Ordinance No. 1025-2022. The City Council extended the moratorium an additional 6 months by adopting Ordinance No. 1030-2023. The Mayor vetoed the Ordinance because a Public Hearing was required to be held in order to extend the moratorium an additional 6 months. Provided was a new Ordinance to extend the moratorium. It would allow staff to continue the investigation, study, and consideration of changes to the Connell Municipal Code to establish siting guidelines and development standards for commercial / Industrial Solar and Wind Energy Projects.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Amy Davis – spoke against a Solar Farm.

Paw Welch – agreed with Davis’s comment and was not in favor of a Solar Farm.

Helen Tobin – asked the City Council if they had toured other Solar Farms, or researched the benefits, and the risks.

COUNCILMEMBERS COMMENT PORTION OF THE HEARING:

Joe Escalera – glad to hear comments from the public and would like to see a lengthier extension of the moratorium.

Pat Barrera - pleased to hear and see the public in attendance.

Mayor Barrow closed the hearing and opened the regular meeting at 6:11 pm.

Motion: Councilmember Kunkel moved to adopt Ordinance No. 1034-203, extending the moratorium on commercial/industrial solar and wind energy projects. Pro Tem Barrera seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING - ANIMAL CONTROL CODE AMENDMENT AND ADOPTION

Mayor Barrow recessed the regular meeting at 6:13 pm and opened a Public Hearing for the purpose of considering animal control code amendments and adoption.

STAFF REPORT:

The City Council engaged in discussions, received presentations, and were provided with recommendations by city staff to amend and or adopt portions of the City Code to address various animal control needs. A thorough review of Connell Municipal Code chapters 8.08 Dogs,

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Cats, and Household Pets, 8.12 Poultry/Chicken, and 9.48 Noise Regulation was conducted by city staff and the city attorney, incorporating the guidance by city council.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Amy Davis – stated the Police Department should not deserve to chase chickens through the city.

Helen Tobin – in favor of chickens and spoke on the health and benefits of free-range chicken eggs. She requested the Council to base their decision on facts.

COUNCILMEMBERS COMMENT PORTION OF THE HEARING:

John White – stated the noise code was not enforced when it came to exhaust brakes, this would add more for the Police Department to enforce.

Katrina Kunkel - agreed with White, stating the city had a current dog issue, this would add to it and how could the Police Department deal with more.

Pat Barrera – would much rather see city funds spent in the youth than with chickens.

Mayor Barrow closed the hearing and opened the regular meeting at 6:11 pm.

Motion: Councilmember White moved to postpone and not adopt Ordinance No. 1035-2023 for more research. Councilmember Escalera seconded the motion. Motion carried (3-2).

The consensus of the Council was to bring this agenda item back and have staff present different options for their review at a following meeting.

MEETING RECESSED

Mayor Barrow recessed the regular meeting at 7:21 pm to go into Executive Session:
(20 minutes)

Per RCW 42.30.110 (1)(i) - To discuss with legal counsel representing the City matters relating to agency enforcement actions and current or potential litigation.

Nicole Stickney, Senior Project Manager for AHBL, Inc. and Howard Saxton, Attorney at Saxton Riley & Riley, PLLC were invited to join the session.

At 7:41 pm Mayor Barrow extended the executive meeting by 10 minutes.


MEETING RECONVENED

Mayor Barrow called the regular meeting back to order at 7:51 pm.
No action taken.

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MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business before the City Council of Connell Mayor Barrow adjourned the meeting at 7:55 pm.

ATTEST: 
Marissa Ortiz, City Clerk


Lee Barrow, Mayor