

**Town of Twisp
Council Minutes – Special Meeting
03-16-2007
6:00 PM**

Meeting called to order at 6:02 PM by Mayor Nations -- Adjourned at 7:03 PM

Council members present: Mayor Vern Nations
Jackie Moriarty
Clint Estes
Stephanie Hickman
Shari Brown

Council members absent: Sam Hanan, passed away 3/14/07

Request for additions or changes: None

Council Member Hickman led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Meeting Minutes:

Council Member Moriarty moved and Council Member Brown seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the 2/27/07 meeting as drafted. None opposed; motion passed.

Mayor Nation's Update to Council:

- Mayor Nations talked about the passing of our Council Member Sam Hanan. He said Sam's memorial would be held on Monday, March 19th at 1:00 p.m. with a gathering afterward at the Community Center. He also explained that it was tough to consider filling Sam's spot on Council, but that we had to start the process of doing so soon.
- The Mayor then introduced Rick Balam who he planned to recommend and appoint as the new part-time Twisp Police Chief. He introduced Rick and his wife Kathy and asked Rick to give a short history of his experience in law enforcement. Rick started in law enforcement in 1969 at the City of Stanwood, then worked with the Snohomish County Sheriff's office for several years. He became Chief of Police for the Tribe in that area in 1989 including supervising 63 employees and acting as their Director of Public Safety and the Gaming Commissioner. He tried to retire in 1996 and worked as a consultant providing testing for law enforcement agencies, then in 2001 was asked to be Chief of Brewster, which he did for two years then retired again. He has been working part-time for Winthrop and lives outside of Twisp. He has basically over 35 years in law enforcement. He has a Master's Degree in Public Administration as well. Mayor Nations said that he feels real fortunate that Rick is available to start up our force again and he is confident that he will do a great job.

Department Heads & Committee Reports:

➤ **Colleen Storms, Clerk/Treasurer**

- She explained that she had gone to a training the week before, with Toni Nelson of the State Auditor's office, and had learned that the BARS codes that are still set up wrong are going to need to be changed. She further explained that the year previous,

while doing the year-end reports after 6 years of no submittals by Twisp, she had made many changes, but stopped short of changing all the general ledger code numbers (called BARS codes in the State of Washington). She said she hadn't changed them because when you do you lose the history tied to those numbers and it makes it difficult to compare year-to-year. She had submitted the year-end statements and received no feedback, so thought that we were ok to leave them alone. However, Toni explained that it is necessary to change to the State's system because they put all of our data in with all the other cities in the State in a database used by the legislature and many agencies. This will be an additional 10 hours plus added to the year-end closing this year.

- She then presented a projection report on cash flow in the law enforcement department with the new assumptions regarding restarting our force. She explained that she doesn't like to make decisions without accurate financial information and wanted the Council to have this before they approve the changes necessary to start up our force. She pointed out the one-time start up costs and which months they would be expended, then the ongoing costs per month. The increase over this year's approved budget would be about \$8,000, including one-time start-up costs of about \$37,000.
- She then pointed out that the general fund budget as approved was fairly tight, so she had gone back to the revenues to see how the first two months of 2007 compared to the budget. She also pointed out that the Council has recently approved some additional expenditures, approximately \$5,500 in total, that will require a budget revision. She next analyzed revenues and found that the sales tax revenues really increased toward the end of 2006 and have continued higher into 2007. In fact, January and February of 2007 are 32% higher than the same two months last year. This is a very good indication that the 2006 actual sales tax revenue is likely to be equaled or exceeded in 2007. Just these increases in revenues alone indicate we will have \$29,000-\$30,000 more in revenues than budgeted. This information allows her to feel comfortable recommending a budget for the police department that would be about \$8,000 higher than the original approved. She will bring back a budget revision as we firm up these costs a little more and complete the 2006 adjustments.

➤ **Gary McConnell, Public Works Superintendent**

- He said that he and Council Members Moriarty and Hickman had met and gone over the qualifications presented by engineers interested in being on our short list for future projects. They said they selected several that they felt represented different specialties. He said RH2 had been on top for the 2nd Avenue and Glover St. projects. He felt like they had a really good roster for all types of projects. He wants to move forward on the road projects and asked Council for approval to do so, which they agreed he should do.
- He talked about the old bathrooms at the pool that opened from the pool deck. They had been abandoned for several years because of vandalism and problems with them and he had discussed recently with Tim Sprague of Friends of the Pool about converting them into a snack bar area. Tim thought the Friends of the Pool might be willing to pay for the materials, which he estimated at \$500. He asked whether the Town had budget to pay part of it, to which Clerk Storms responded that she believed the capital money in the budget was pretty much committed to other projects.
- Gary then said he'd received a complaint about the handicapped parking spot near the Post Office. A person who uses a wheelchair in Town asked that it be put back in front of the fire hydrant by Bonica's restaurant to give them more room to get in and out of their vehicles. Gary suggested it be moved farther down the street where the

parking is parallel and it might be safer for the users. The Council supported Gary's idea if it was the safest spot for it.

Public Comments: No public comment offered.

Old Business:

- Approve Resolution 07-395 authorizing Mayor to take action with regards to reestablishing a police department
 - Clerk Storms explained that the Resolution was drafted in conjunction with Scott Detro and our consultant, Cynthia Stewart, to authorize the Mayor to hire necessary staff and to state the Council's priorities for the law enforcement department. The goals are to start the force off correctly.
 - While emergency calls are a concern because response time has been poor, there's definitely a priority for having visible community presence that works with the business owners and residents in Town.
 - Rick Balam spoke about his experiences working with Winthrop in the valley and how they would prioritize when they start the force back up. He said the call out 24 hours a day will present the biggest challenge with current staffing; he plans to be available and will work on the best schedule for coverage. However, this will be much easier when we can hire the third person in 2008.
 - Council Member Moriarty moved and Council Member Hickman seconded a motion to approve Resolution 07-395 authorizing the Mayor to take necessary actions to reestablish a police department. Motion passed unanimously.
- Approve Ordinance 572 adopting salary ranges for the positions at the Town of Twisp
 - Scott Detro, our Attorney, had recommended we adopt a salary scale ordinance establishing the ranges for all positions. This would assist the Mayor in hiring police staff as Council has to set salaries as well as approve a budget.
 - Discussions with the Police Advisory Committee had centered around the importance of having competitive salaries. The Committee had determined they wanted the Town to pay above the median for like cities in the State. To this end we used the AWC Salary Survey information and set a range with a top end 25% higher than the AWC numbers. The range intended to encourage retention for at least 10 years with moderate increases annually.
 - Council members asked questions about the salary range that the new administrative assistant/police clerk would fall into. Clerk Storms explained that one of the financial ranges was the closest match for three different positions that Town might have, including the Administrative Assistant. If the Town becomes lead agency for the Water Basin Planning Unit(WBPU), the Assistant hired to cover the Police Department could also cover the administration and secretarial work of the WBPU. The Admin. Assistant range could be used and an hourly amount set that would meet both approved ranges.
 - After further discussion, Council Member Estes moved and Council Member Hickman seconded a motion to adopt Ordinance 572 setting salary ranges for the Town. Motion passed unanimously.
- Approve agreement with Methow Valley Community Center for tourism promotion services through the visitor's information center.
 - Clerk Storms explained that the visitor's information center provides vital tourism promotion for the Town of Twisp and needs compensation to keep the doors open. Further, an agreement for services between the Town and the

- MVCC building that houses the information center, would allow Twisp to allocate some Hotel-Motel tax money to them.
- o The Council discussed the importance of the center to local tourism; it allows access to information by phone and in person on the weekends when Town Hall is not open. They also answer the phone for the Twisp Chamber. Council Member Hickman moved and Council Member Moriarty seconded a motion to approve the operating agreement with the Methow Valley Community Center for tourism promotion services through the visitor's information center. Motion passed unanimously.
 - Approve the special arrangement for Gary McConnell to carryover 2006 vacation leave balance in excess of 120 hours.
 - o The Mayor explained that Gary had a hard time using all of his vacation in 2006 with the waterline and sidewalk contract work that he had to monitor. He felt that an arrangement allowing him to carry the additional 102 hours over that he would have lost (120 + 102 special) was appropriate.
 - o Council Member Moriarty asked whether it might be more appropriate to adjourn into an executive session since there was to be a discussion regarding a personnel issue that Mr. McConnell may not want to have in the open meeting. The Mayor agreed this might be more appropriate and the Clerk said she believed it met one of the exceptions to the open public meeting act. The Mayor then adjourned the regular meeting at 6:40 to call an executive session for 5 minutes.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Personnel Issue – 5 minutes.

REGULAR SESSION: The Mayor called the Regular Meeting to order again at 6:45 p.m.

- Council Member Moriarty moved and Council Member Brown seconded a motion to approve the special arrangement allowing Gary to carryover all of his remaining 2006 vacation hours to 2007. Motion passed unanimously.

New Business:

- Approve the purchase agreement with Spillman Technologies to purchase police software.
 - o Rick Balam explained that Okanogan County had received a \$1.1 million grant to purchase this software and implement it in all the cities in the County. The software is a reporting and database software that allows all the agencies to share immediately the information on all police contacts in the County. It lets the police know about people who might be in the area in three counties, including Chelan and Douglas counties. He said that we were very fortunate to get into this for \$5294; originally, they told us it would be \$80,000 to buy it on our own.
 - o Mayor Nations asked him if this was proven software that's been in use in other areas, to which Rick said that this is one of the industry leaders and has been around for sometime. He said it even connects the prosecutor's office and the jail as well, so it saves on paperwork transfers between departments.
 - o Council Member Brown asked about the annual maintenance fee after the first year; it was approximately \$3,000 per year including an amount for maintenance that will be paid to the County for their server costs.
 - o Council Member Brown moved and Council Member Hickman seconded a motion to approve the purchase and licensing agreement with Spillman Technologies. Motion passed unanimously.

- Authorize the write-off of two old utility bills.
 - Clerk Storms presented the account information on the two accounts that date back to 2004 and 2003. In both cases the tenants defaulted on the bills and the Town then billed the accounts to the owners of the houses. The owners have since sold the homes.
 - Clerk Storms read a narrative written by Deputy Clerk Surface about our efforts to collect the bills, which total \$99.37. We did not have adequate deposits on hand and we did not have social security numbers or a way to pursue professional collections on them either.
 - Council Member Brown moved and Council Member Estes seconded a motion to authorize the write-off of the old accounts totaling \$99.37. Motion passed unanimously.
 - Approve acceptance of a grant of \$2,500 from the Community Foundation of North Central Washington
 - Melissa Larson wrote this 2007 grant application in continuation of the Glover Street beautification activities approved by Council about 3 years ago. She asked for \$5,000 this year, but was awarded \$2,500. She feels she can raise private donations to cover the balance of the expense. Clerk Storms said that Melissa planned to come back probably in May to go over the plan and the story board and Council can make sure they allow for handicapped access on the sidewalks, which has been Council's concern in the past.
 - Gary McConnell said he is concerned because two people cannot walk side by side down the sidewalks now. Council Member Moriarty also commented that the design is important since Town staff empty them regularly.
 - Council Member Estes said he is concerned that in making them decorative, it makes them larger and they could become an obstacle and for that reason, he'd like to see them before giving final approval.
 - Council Member Moriarty moved and Council Member Estes seconded a motion to approve acceptance of the Community Foundation grant with the provision that Council wants to see the specifications on the trashcans and approve them before purchase. Motion passed unanimously.
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Public Comment – None

Routine Approvals:

The bills and previous payroll draws and taxes were briefly discussed.

Motion to approve the current accounts payable and disburse payment was made by Council Member Brown and seconded by Council Member Hickman. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion to approve the current payroll and benefits was made by Shari Brown, seconded by Council Member Hickman and approved by majority. Jackie Moriarty abstained.

Council Member Brown moved and Council Member Estes seconded a motion to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

Attest: _____

Clerk/Treasurer Colleen Storms

Mayor Vern Nations