

Town of Garfield
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – Final Draft
December 21, 2009

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Jarrod Pfaff called the meeting to order at 6:58 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Jarrod Pfaff, Andrew Flodin, Larry Hunt, John Kuehner, Tim Southern and Rob Watkins.
Staff – Public Works Superintendent David Ulrick, Police Officer Joe Merry, Clerk/Treasurer Annie Pillers.
Guests: Newly elected councilmember Daymon Marple.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Larry Hunt **MOVED** the minutes of December 7, 2009, be approved as written. John Kuehner seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

VEHICLE ABATEMENT HEARING: Mayor Pfaff opened the hearing at 6:59 pm. Mr. Devaney confirmed only one car was not a runner/driver. Mayor Pfaff said he could have two weeks to get his vehicles re-inspected by the Police Department. Then he could have another hearing to see how much gets fixed. Larry Hunt clarified if a vehicle only meets 2 of the 5 junk vehicle elements it is not considered a junk vehicle. Officer Merry confirmed this. Officer Merry further noted often when a vehicle gets tagged it is not known whether the vehicle is running or not. By doing an inspection, a function check can be done (windshield, engine, transmission) to determine whether the vehicle is inoperable or not and street legal under Washington state law. Mr. Devaney confirmed one car is licensed and he could have taken Joe on a ride. He further indicated only one car is not street legal and it's a parts car. As soon as he gets the parts off of it, he will get rid of it. He noted the 1966 Charger belongs to his son and that it is a runner/driver and street legal. Officer Merry said the department's position on junk vehicles is that they are 3 years old or more with defective equipment. This vehicle has flat tires, a cracked window, has not moved, and no valid license or insurance. He indicated if Mr. Devaney can get it down to only 2 items on the junk criteria list (such as no license and not insured) then it would no longer be a junk vehicle. Mayor Pfaff asked Mr. Devaney if 2 weeks from now would work for a re-inspection. Mr. Devaney said that would be fine and that he has Sundays and Mondays off. Monday, January 4th was set for the re-inspection. Officer Merry confirmed 10 am was not too early for Mr. Devaney. Mr. Devaney left the meeting at 7:02 pm.

PUBLIC WORKS:

1. WWTP Inspection Follow Up. Dave confirmed he had put a call into the new DOE representative about the recent inspection report, but has not heard back from him. He noted the DOE representative has a large territory that covers the whole east side of the state. Dave said he wants to talk with him about the testing location at the plant, changing TSS and BOD from the contact chamber to the polishing cell effluent. He has 5 years of testing at the effluent to the contact chamber. By switching to a new testing site for the next 5 years, the town would then know what that the system was doing. Dave further noted he's been running the flow monitor he bought last spring. He has both a wet season and dry season through the pipes. Next spring he plans to do some again to see if there are any changes. He confirmed this would determine infiltration problems and what area of town it was coming from.

2. Water Reservoir Overflow Meter. Dave reported H2E was coming the next day between 7 and 7:30 am to reprogram the system. He said the float switch is in and would be hooked up to the system. Once the programming is completed the town will get a disk of the program, how it was set up, and how to change it. Mayor Pfaff asked if the tank started to overflow would it shut down. Dave confirmed once the float switch was set to a certain level (he thinks likely 39.5 feet) the system will shut down automatically. In theory the tank should never overflow again.

The first time they noticed the problem this past year was when Paul called. The transducer was bad and the pumps would turn on and off intermittently. Dave confirmed they check the tank level every morning. Mayor Pfaff asked about an idiot light. Dave noted the system lights up to tell them whether the pump is on or off. Tim Southern asked about a back up to indicate an overflow. A light or bell were suggested. Dave said he would talk with the programmers tomorrow to see if there was a backup option.

Dave clarified this past year there were problem because the system had been wired incorrectly with the battery warning device connected to the overflow. It was showing a battery problem when it was really an overflow problem. The battery warning was coming on when it overflowed. Once the wiring was switched back properly it has worked fine. Mayor Pfaff noted with the new programming being done, the town will now have its own software.

3. General Maintenance. Dave said they had been busy with water leaks and frozen pipes, the normal every day stuff. He indicated normally sanding gravel is ordered after the first of the year. After checking prices and getting a quote of \$13.25, he had placed an order. He thought the supply should last 2 years.

4. Recycle Center Drop Off. Dave confirmed the recycler had come and got one more load over the weekend. The loading truck and his truck are gone. Dave said there was still more for him to get, but the fence area was cleaned out. He said there is only heavy stuff left on the right side. He usually calls him once a week, not wanting to bug him too much. Dave further noted once a year he will come over with a magnet.

POLICE DEPARTMENT:

Police Officer Joe Merry provided council with the November 2009 Garfield Activity Log. He briefly discussed the modified approach to junk vehicles, noting it should help eliminate hearings. He said the police department was going back to the approach of contacting folks first, giving them a few days to a week for the department to inspect the vehicles with them there. By doing so, they can start the vehicles up to determine any problems. With that then they have a certain time period with discretion to tag a vehicle and then give them the normal notice. This should help alleviate some of the hearings.

Mayor Pfaff said he liked the new approach to junk vehicles. Tim Southern asked if the department meets with them, and then still thinks it's a junk vehicle, do they give them a timeframe from then. Officer Merry said if they are working with them, and it's a matter of money and opportunity they would generally not tag the vehicle and give the person a timeframe. If they are not working with the department, the vehicle would be tagged. Tim Southern asked what standpoint the council would take on giving the person more time. He did not believe the council should give more time once arranged by the police department. Officer Merry said the narrative in the letter to the person would include the options discussed and the timeframe given by the police department. There would be more detail in the paragraph of what was happening. Larry Hunt said if the person was given that time before a hearing was schedule it would alleviate hearings. If they did come to council for a hearing, they have already had that time. Larry said the council should not give them more and more time after that. Officer Merry asked for guidance from the council as to the timeframe they should offer. He noted everything was time and money. If it was the 2nd of the month and the person didn't get paid until next month, he might ask for 30 days. Mayor Pfaff was clear it should not go past 30 days maximum. Tim Southern said he trusted the department. It was agreed a person should be given one chance. That's it. The department should stay on top of the timeframe given.

It was confirmed the re-inspection for Mr. Roper was scheduled for December 23rd.

Office Merry noted the definition of street legal included such things as no big cracks in the windshield and insurance. It was clarified the junk vehicle ordinance criteria lists no valid license or proof of insurance and means both. Officer Merry was clear the intent was both and he would make sure the notices state such. Larry Hunt reconfirmed street legal means the car must have insurance.

Officer Merry noted recent suspicious activity in town. There was one theft in November of a carburetor off a power motor. Officer Dentler is looking at a couple of folks. Also, a laptop was taken from a residence on 3rd Street. Officer Dentler worked on that case and the item got returned the following Monday. Officer Merry confirmed there are still plenty of loose dogs and barking dogs. He said if it is first time out of the shoot, the department will work with the person, giving them a verbal warning. If they can't identify a dog, it goes to the pound.

Officer Merry noted EMS calls were starting to heat up a little bit more. In the last 3 months since

September, they were averaging 10 calls a month. Officer Merry said he goes when on duty or in town.

NEW BUSINESS:

Joint Fire Board Discussion: Mayor Pfaff reported all 3 rural fire district commissioners are willing to discuss the idea of forming a Joint Fire Board (JFB). Tim Southern talked about the 3 town representatives to the board. He said the only 3 who could rightfully do it were the Mayor, Larry Hunt and John Kuehner, since they were not on the fire department. Larry Hunt talked about the 3 remaining council members doing double duty as council members and firefighters. He talked about the importance of needing their input at council meetings. Tim Southern said an existing firefighter could be a rural commissioner or a council member on the board now, but after the fact a person couldn't become a firefighter and be a commissioner or council member. Council discussed who should be on the JFB. Mayor Pfaff thought the 3 council members on the board could rotate between the 6 council/mayor positions. Rob Watkins said it might be easier for people, and they would be more agreeable, to say they would only be on the JFB for one year. Tim Southern suggested perhaps choosing 3 of the council positions, such as positions 1, 3 and 5, and as a person comes onto the council in that position, they are also on the JFB. He said this would allow for consistency on the board. Tim noted the JFB would oversee the fire operations, but there would still be the two separate boards.

Council talked about going to commission meetings and the commissioners coming to council meetings to get a framework on the Joint Fire Board written down. It was agreed a framework should be developed and the board could work out the details.

It was noted in March 2010, all the radios would need to be digital. The commissioners were agreeable to buying new radios for the trucks, but not the portable radios. Mayor Pfaff thought some of the truck radios and handhelds might be okay. Andrew Flodin said one truck radio would be fine.

Council discussed the repairs needed on rural truck 311 that was damaged after the starlight parade. Larry Hunt did not believe the town should pay for repairs to the rural trucks now. Things would be different under a JFB with shared expenses. The estimate for repairs was now about \$1,200. Other options for payment of the repair included the WRD and checking on the insurance coverage. Mayor Pfaff noted the main focus now was the JFB.

APPROVAL OF CHECKS: Larry Hunt **MOVED** to approve the following bills presented to council for payment. Andrew Flodin seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously. Check Register #9300-9316. Claims: \$12,348.66 Payroll: \$6,476.45 TOTAL: \$18,825.11

Following up on the town's small works rosters, Annie Pillers noted the majority of the Police Department JAG grant items had been purchased and that the town should be ready to transfer to use of Whitman County's small works and professional service rosters. Council agreed. Tim Southern **MOVED** to reaffirm Resolution 2009-13 authorizing the Mayor to sign the interlocal agreement with Whitman County for use of the county's small works and professional service rosters. Rob Watkins seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously. Annie Pillers would submit the interlocal agreement to the county this week.

JOHN KUEHNER COUNCIL MEMBER THANK YOU: Larry Hunt noted this was John Kuehner's last meeting on the council and thanked him for his many years of service and hundreds of hours of work on behalf of the community. Mayor Pfaff presented John with a certificate of appreciation. Letters of thanks were submitted from Daymon Marple with the Garfield Public Development Authority, the Planning Commission and the WRD (Whitman Rural Development).

ADJOURNMENT: Tim Southern **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 p.m. Rob Watkins seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Jarrod Pfaff, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Annie Pillers, Clerk/Treasurer