

Town of Garfield
TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Town Hall – February 13, 2013

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

ROLL CALL: Jarrod Pfaff, Larry Hunt, Daymon Marple (6:59), Sharon Schnebly, Tim Southern and Mark Young. Staff – Public Works Superintendent Perry Brown (7:00), Police Chief Jerry Neumann, and Clerk/Treasurer Annie Pillers.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Larry Hunt **MOVED** the minutes of the regular council meeting of January 23, 2013, be approved as written. Daymon Marple seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT: Chief Jerry Neumann updated council. The police committee met in Palouse and is interested in pursuing renewal of another 3-year contract. They also talked about what it would take to bring Officer Dentler back whole, starting in 2014. Chief Neumann was not sure of the final number but said the current savings at the reduced hours is about \$11,000. Chief Neumann agreed to provide a police log for the next council meeting. He confirmed the hours are fine and that the department is spending more time in the schools, interacting with the students and teachers. He confirmed it has been quiet in both Garfield and Palouse.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT: Public Works Superintendent Perry Brown:

WWTP – Council was updated on the various operational issues at the sewer plant. One of the pumps is not functioning properly. The valves have been changed and the pumps re-routed but it still does not pump to the top. It looks open but with the re-routing, not sure it has enough power now. Perry thought it was 350 gpm. He noted maybe it was a valve issue too. Mayor Pfaff suggested he contact the engineer, Eric Hasenoehrl to talk about the distance and the power effect. Perry said they tore the pump three-quarters apart and have a complete rebuild kit. He noted the other main problem is a programming issue. He knows how to override it manually but the remote mode wipes out the programming. When flows are high he can hit the start and it will run. He will continue to work on the programming issue. He said there is a lead and lag pump. The lag pump should only go on when the lead can't keep up. Perry also noted the sludge pump in basement has two halves joined that just need to be wired in.

Sewer Line Maintenance – there was a sewer main plug at the bottom of South Hill on 3rd Street between Jefferson and Wesley. They cleaned it out this week and it is now working well. It had a significant back up from when a property on that line had a problem. While doing the repair they discovered the jetter was not working and they cleaned it. It is now working. Also, when working in the manhole Perry found an infiltration leak and plugged it with perma seal. He plans to do that every time he finds a leak like that. Dave bought the perma seal originally and it works great.

General Maintenance – the Christmas lights are down.

Street Maintenance – In the next week or two the sales representative for the “best cold mix in the world” will be in town to do a free demo. Apparently this material is activated by water and sets up.

Garbage Relief Worker Schedule – Council was agreeable to having Isaac Anderson fill in for garbage collection on Tuesday, February 19th so that Perry could attend the annual McGregor pesticide training class.

Safety – Council was agreeable to offering the Hepatitis B vaccination to the public works employees.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. PDA Appointments: It was confirmed Katie Young was willing to accept a reappointment to the Garfield Public Development Authority. Tim Southern **MOVED** the reappointment of Katie Young to the Garfield Public Development authority for a term 3/7/2013 – 3/7/2017. Larry Hunt seconded the motion and the motion carried. Mark Young abstained.

2. Building Permit Fees: Mark Young provided council copies of his research results on building permit fees, noting this topic originally came up when the building inspector asked about the town paying towards his cell phone. Mark noted the fees have not been looked at in some time. He discussed the mayor's

original suggestion to add a 10% administrative fee, noting this could be substantial, depending upon the project. Mark said he looked at as many jurisdictions that he could, including the county. The town's fees are more than the city of Pullman in some cases, but it's like comparing apples and oranges. Basically the amounts are pretty close. The town is equal to or more than Oakesdale, Palouse, Rosalia and Endicott. The fees are based upon the Uniform Building Code. In 2009 the state suggested using the International Building Code (IBC) rates. Mark explained the IBC basically is a way of establishing the fees by evaluating the dollar amount of the construction historically over two or three years, not counting land costs and factoring in a host of other things. He noted no jurisdiction around here follows it.

Mark addressed the document that shows the town's building activity since 2008. Currently the inspector gets 75% of the permit fee. The balance goes to the town. He also referred to the document that shows what inspectors in other jurisdictions get. He outlined 4 options for consideration. 1 – Adopt the IBC. He noted this basically does not address the initial objective. However, over time, based upon the formula fees are always going to rise. 2 – Keep the same fee structure and charge a 10% administrative fee. The costs would then be paid by the Garfield residents with no cost to the town. He said this would be more than enough to cover the phone service. 3 – Continue to use the current fee structure with no changes. The town could choose to change the percentage paid to the inspector for his services. This would roughly give him \$40 a more a month for phone service. It essentially raises the town's fees. 4 – Continue to use the current fee with no cost to the residents or city and the inspector pays the phone service out of his portion of the building permits.

Mark recommended doing this one of two ways. Either change the percentage to the inspector or not do anything at all. He said he wanted to encourage people to use the permit process to make sure their investments are covered and they have safe, habitable buildings. He said even though the town had not raised the rates since 1997, neither have the other jurisdictions. He said raising the rate fee could have a negative impact. He wanted to be able to say Garfield was a builder-friendly place, with houses brought up to code, while still keeping costs down. Tim Southern agreed and suggested not changing the rates. He said they are on par or better in some cases. He did not think contributing \$360 a year towards the cell phone would break the town. Sharon Schnebly noted the cell phone cost can be deducted on the inspector's taxes and he was getting paid from Palouse, so why can't he pay for a phone. Mayor Pfaff noted originally when the current inspector was hired after the last inspector quit unexpectedly the town was going to pay 75% of the permit fees and one-half the phone costs, but Palouse never billed for it. After looking at the figures from Mark, Mayor Pfaff said he was comfortable paying a portion of the phone bill. He talked about how difficult it is to get a building inspector in the small towns. Council discussed whether a written contract was needed or not, the requirements and expectations for a building inspector, and the building department operations in Garfield. Mark Young noted perhaps a whole revamp of the department and fees was not needed as this originally came up just as a request for cell phone costs. Sharon Schnebly noted no other town employees are getting their cell phone covered and they use it for work. That could then come up too. The other option suggested, instead of covering the cell phone bill, or a portion thereof, was raising the 75% payment from permits to 80% or 85%. Mark Young noted breaking down the average payment per month for the inspector from 2008 to present was \$127 a month. Tim Southern **MOVED** to pay a flat \$20 a month to the building inspector for the cost of a cell phone. Daymon Marple seconded the motion and the motion carried. Nay vote - Sharon Schnebly. Tim Southern asked if the town should be supplying cell phones for the other employees. Perry Brown noted he did not want to carry a second phone. No action was taken.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Compost Facility Plan of Operation and Closure Plan Adoption: Mayor Pfaff noted the Department of Ecology had follow-up questions on the plan, so adoption was postponed for now.

2. Resolution 2013-01 Whitman County Hazard Mitigation Plan Adoption: It was explained this was an update to the original plan done about 6 years ago. Projects on the plan may be eligible for grant monies at some time. Tim Southern **MOVED** to adoption Resolution 2013-01 adopting the Whitman County Hazard Mitigation Plan. Larry Hunt seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Resolution 2013-02 adopting 2013 Interest Apportionment: Mayor Pfaff noted a couple years ago the council passed a resolution that took interest from reserve funds and moved the interest into current expense. These reserve funds where from current expense. These reserve funds are no longer under current expense and are their own capital funds. Now the town needs to keep separate the interest from those funds. Larry Hunt **MOVED** to adoption Resolution 2013-02 updating the 2013 interest apportionment. Mark Young seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously. Annie Pillers reported periodically checking the investment earnings and the town continues to get a higher rate of return than the Local Government Investment Pool offers.

4. Resolution 2013-03 Updated Personnel Manual Domestic Partners Insurance Coverage: Mayor Pfaff discussed the proposed personnel manual change that would allow for domestic partners to be covered for insurance, just like spouses currently are. He noted in Washington state domestic partners are like spouses. The proposed changed to the personnel manual went to Stephen Bishop. Sharon Schnebly **MOVED** to adoption Resolution 2013-03 updating the town's personnel manual to include insurance coverage for domestic partners of town employees. Larry Hunt seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

FINANCIAL:

1. Approval of Checks, 4Q2012 Financial Reports, 4Q2012 Spoiled/Voiced Check Register, and 4Q2012 Adjustment Register: Tim Southern **MOVED** to approve the following bills presented to council for approval. Larry Hunt seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Check Register #10805-10810
Check Register #10811-10827

Payroll: \$ 7,423.02
Claims: \$22,788.08 Total: \$30, 211.10

Larry Hunt **MOVED** to approve the Spoiled/Voiced Check Register, 4Q2012 Adjustment Register, and the 4Q2012 Financial Reports. Tim Southern seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

PDA Restaurant: Daymon Marple provided an update on the proposed operators of the restaurant. They are very excited and are moving forward with some very creative ideas for working with the school and welcoming seniors. Daymon has met with them every Saturday for several weeks in a row. Daymon noted there was some damage to the building from the water leak that was not completed with the insurance monies, roughly \$3,000 for carpets and lights. This works still needs to be finished.

ADJOURNMENT: Tim Southern **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 8:18 pm. Larry Hunt seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Jarrod Pfaff, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Annie Pillers, Clerk/Treasurer