

City Council Work Session
October 23, 2017

Present were: Mayor Grenier, Councilors Higbee, Otis, Rozek, Remillard, and Theberge, Morgan Allain, and Gentili; Councilor Nelson was absent

Others present: City Manager Jim Wheeler, City Clerk Elaine Riendeau, Public Works Director Michael Perreault, Barbara Tetreault *Berlin Daily Sun* and public.

Councilor Remillard moved to add the American Community Survey for Coos County to the agenda; Councilor Morgan Allain seconded and the motion carried.

Sewer Service Alternatives for Route 110

Mr. Wheeler reported that Wright Pierce has evaluated the Bass Shoe/Dead River pumping station which is in poor condition. As development seems eminent on Route 110, Wright Pierces analyzed the needs taking additional development into account. They found that the pumping station could be upgraded at its current location at a cost of \$590,000. Councilor Otis entered the meeting at this time.

Mr. Wheeler noted that he contacted the owners of the campground about timing and they informed him that it is not realistic to think the campground will be done next year. We know there will be development but we don't know how quickly it will happen. There is only one house that is serviced by the pump station. We want to be ahead of development but don't necessarily want to upgrade the station without knowing more about the development. Mr. Wheeler suggested going forward with the design so that there is a shovel ready project.

Councilor Rozek asked if we've checked on federal grants adding that this is an opportunity to apply for federal money and a perfect project for Bill Hounsell. Councilor Higbee confirmed that the project would not include the extension of the sewer system. Councilor Rozek asked if this would be a candidate for a CDBG grant. Mayor Grenier noted that CDBG has low income requirements that have to be met and because this is a speculative project, it may not be eligible.

Mayor Grenier summarized the question before the Council as: 'do we want to pay for the design of a pumping station upgrade to have a project ready to go when an announcement is made or do we get more information on alternative funding for this type of design.' He also noted that if there is an announcement, in the time a project needs to be permitted and built, we can upgrade the pumping station. The consensus of the Council was to explore funding options before moving forward with design.

AVRRDD Transfer Station Rules

Mr. Wheeler reported that Patty put together data regarding revenue and expenses relating to transfer station permits. The net cost to the City in 2017 was \$23,296 which is our cost out of the general fund. The further back one goes, the higher the cost. Councilor Rozek confirmed that the City pays AVRRDD for tires based on what is discarded and not based on the number of passes handed out. Mayor Grenier gave a brief history saying that the City used to pay for a fall and spring clean-up; however the cost was

very high. When the Council decided to forego the clean-up, the concession was to offer residents a free transfer station one day pass. Raising the fee could increase illegal dumping.

Councilor Higbee comprised the data into a spreadsheet that made it easy to see that paid passes account for half of the annual costs, while contributing less than \$5,000 per year. Councilors did not want to increase costs for paid passes to the transfer station. Councilor Rozek thanked Councilor Higbee for compiling the information adding that the recycling effort is showing in the numbers. He gave kudos to the Mayor saying that the effort has saved the city a lot of money. Councilor Remillard stressed the need to educate people about how they can make a difference by recycling.

Councilor Rozek asked when the change would be made to tire passes and Mr. Wheeler stated that we can bring it to the next meeting. The change proposed would treat ATV tires like any other tire and create a fee based on the size of the tire.

American Community Survey

Mr. Wheeler distributed data from the American Community Survey that says Coos County is no longer the poorest county in the State. Coos has been bumped down by Belknap and Carroll Counties that have a slightly higher poverty rate. Mayor Grenier commented that it is real evidence that the slow steady hand is what builds a new economy.

Non-Public Session Councilor Theberge moved with a second from Councilor Higbee to enter into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3II d) land matters. So moved, the motion carried unanimously by roll call.

Councilors were presented with a draft letter to Brookfield Renewable Power regarding items from the Recreation Plan for their FERC license for the Saw Mill Dam hydro. The City will be taking on a Riverwalk project that has \$172,000 of match, some of which could be assigned to Brookfield. Councilor Rozek moved with a second from Councilor Higbee to sign and send the letter to Brookfield Power on behalf of the city. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Rozek moved with a second from Councilor Higbee to come out of non-public session; so moved, the motion carried.

Other

Monday, October 30

With next week being the fifth Monday, Mayor Grenier noted that unless there is an emergency, there will be no meeting.

Thanks for Brush Clearing

Councilor Gentili read a letter from Brian and Denise Valerino thanking the Recreation Department for the brush clearing done at Horne Field last week, ahead of Riverfire.

Councilor Rozek moved to adjourn; Councilor Higbee seconded and the motion carried. The meeting ended at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Tremblay
Administrative Assistant

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