



**Minutes**  
**1359<sup>th</sup> Regular Council Meeting**  
**August 12, 2020**  
**(TELECONFERENCE)**

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**6:00 p.m. Regular Council Meeting**

Mayor Bob Poch called the 1359<sup>th</sup> regular meeting of the Coulee Dam Town Council to order at 6:02p.m. via teleconference.

**Roll Call**

Council members present: Fred Netzel, Mervin Schmidt, Dale Rey, Larry Hall and Keith St. Jeor.

Staff Present: Police Chief Paul Bowden, Public Works Superintendent Mike Steffens and Clerk/Treasurer Stefani Bowden. Planning Commission Chairman Ben Alling joined the meeting at 6:28pm.

**Public Input**

Mayor Poch asked if there was anyone from the public that would like to speak. With no response heard, the Mayor moved on to the next agenda item.

**Updates and Modifications to Agenda**

Councilmember Dale Rey formally stated that he recused himself from both coffee shop lease requests to eliminate any appearance of fairness issues.

Councilmember Fred Netzel asked for discussion time on the Comprehensive Plan and Animal Control.

Councilmember Keith St. Jeor wanted discussion on the concession stand that showed up at the location of the Moomaw coffee stand request.

**Consent Agenda**

Keith St. Jeor moved with Mervin Schmidt seconding to approve the consent agenda. Motion carried.

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Vouchers:                      Claim Vouchers and Checks:  
Claim Voucher No.'s 39015 through 39051 and EFT's dated August 12, 2020 in the total amount of \$ 97,269.74 .

Payroll Checks:              Payroll Check No.'s 39008 through 39014 , EFT's and direct deposits dated July 15 and 31, 2020 in the total amount of \$ 85,539.67 .

Bank Fees:                      July 2020 Invoice Cloud fees in the amount of \$ 86.60 .

## Action Agenda

- a. AB 2020-12, Resolution No. 2020-03, Solid Waste Dumping Fees  
Keith St. Jeor moved with Dale Rey seconding to approve Resolution 2020-03 establishing solid waste dumping fees within the corporate boundary of the City of Coulee Dam. Motion carried.

## Discussion Agenda

- a. Petition to Decommission City Sidewalks between Central and Camas  
A petition was received from property owners to decommission the City owned sidewalks that run mid-block between Central and Camas. Mayor Poch asked Superintendent Mike Steffens to comment on the request. Steffens stated he had no issues with the City vacating the sidewalks but they are access points to power poles and sewer lines. He would not be in favor of transferring ownership to abutting property owners. Property owners would like to be able to put up fences to stop pedestrians from going through those areas. Steffens has no issue with that as long as the property owners install gates to allow for the utility access.

Councilman Dale Rey stated he understood what the property owners concerns were but didn't agree that the sidewalks should be decommissioned because it provides access between the two blocks. Rey said he didn't understand how they could be decommissioned and blocked off with a fence. Councilman Merv Schmidt referenced information received from the City Attorney that if the City vacates the sidewalk, the abutting property owners would have to purchase the vacated property. The problem is, the City still needs access to the utilities.

Some of the reasons that were brought up by the property owners to decommission the sidewalks were that they are required to keep the snow cleared in the winter and that drug deals take place down those sidewalks. Rey is not in favor of decommissioning them unless they are sold to the property owners so that they become responsible for ownership of them. Schmidt suggested the city find a way to block off the sidewalks without having to give up the property.

Rey asked the Police Chief what his thoughts on were regarding those sidewalks. Chief Bowden has had reports of suspicious activity during the night. Councilmen Rey and Hall both commented that it isn't much different than any other sidewalk around town. Chief Bowden stated that he realized that everyone had sidewalks that run along the front or sides of their houses but not in between garages and houses like these ones do. A few years ago, it was a big issue when there was a lot of foot traffic using those sidewalks coming and going from a well-known drug house in the area.

Mayor Poch suggested the city install gates to prevent use of the sidewalks. He also suggested having the police patrol the area more at night. Councilman Fred Netzel was in favor of installing gates if it was a reasonable cost to the city and suggested that the property owners make a donation to the city to help with it. After talking with a couple of the property owners, Rey felt that their intent was to completely block off the sidewalks. Discussion took place over what kind of gates and locks would work as a solution. Rey didn't think the city

would gain anything by installing gates unless the abutting property owners erected fences that would tie into the gates. Netzel stated that if the property owners aren't willing to invest in fencing to protect their property from drug dealers, than the town shouldn't make any investment either. Netzel is not in favor of vacating. St. Jeor stated that the amount the property owners would have to pay if the property was vacated would probably cover the expense of putting a fence up.

Mervin Schmidt moved and Larry Hall seconded to reject the petition to decommission the sidewalks connecting the 1000 and 1100 blocks of Central and Camas. Fred Netzel asked to amend the motion to request the Superintendent to look into the costs of purchasing six foot high cyclone gates to close the sidewalks off. Schmidt asked why that would need to be added to the motion. That is just something that can be discussed with the Superintendent. St. Jeor clarified that the motion was to take action to not accept the petition to decommission the sidewalk. Mayor Poch stated that a motion and a second were on the table and asked for an official vote. Motion carried with all in favor.

b. Application process for private use of City owned property.

Councilmen St. Jeor and Rey put together a draft checklist of information and items that should be submitted to the City when applying for private use of city owned property. Mervin Schmidt was concerned with the lengths of demands put onto the applicant. Rey stated that it was just a check list of items that should be submitted to the City Clerk before the application goes to the council. St. Jeor stated it was just a draft and example and is open for comment. Schmidt understood the reasoning behind some of the requirements but felt there were too many demands. Hall felt that there are a lot of hoops that people would have to jump through and they may just give up. Discussion was held on the need for references and if they actually do any good. The general consensus was to not require references.

Rey and St. Jeor wanted the council to know that the checklist was just a draft and they welcomed suggestions and comments from the council. The topic has been deferred to a future council meeting and council members were asked to submit their comments and recommendations in writing to the Clerk.

c. Fire Truck Repairs

Mayor Poch informed the council of some repairs that are needed to a fire truck. Once fire season is over, it will be going into the shop. There are some funds in the budget for repairs.

Mayor Poch thanked all the fire department members for their time and for keeping the town safe.

Rey asked what the status of the new fire department membership is. The Town is still waiting on results from drug testing which was delayed due to a change in the labs performing the tests.

d. Comprehensive Plan

Fred Netzel asked when the council will be providing input on the draft Comprehensive Plan. Mayor Poch would like to schedule a Special Meeting for that purpose. A public hearing will need to be held prior to the town accepting the plan. Dale Rey asked how the plan will be provided to the public in a timely manner in order for them to review and make comments.

The Clerk explained the public notification process and stated that the draft plan will be posted on the Town's website. At this time, the tentative plan is to hold a public hearing on September 23<sup>rd</sup>. The Clerk asked the council to submit comments to her in writing so that the planner can make a list and address the comments in the hearing. Fred Netzel does not want the plan posted online until after the council has accepted it.

Mayor Poch asked everyone to take the time to review the draft plan. Once the council has reviewed the plan, a special meeting can be called to discuss it. Discussion was held on what would take place in the special meeting and whether or not the council would take public comment at that time. Special meetings are open to the public but the council does not have to allow public comment. The council felt that it may be more productive to not allow public comment for the initial meeting on the topic. The public will have the opportunity at a later date and time to voice comments.

e. Animal Control Ordinance

Fred Netzel stated that he had attended as an EMT to an ambulance call recently that involved a situation where "a dog tore somebody up pretty good". He thought it was the owner's dog. He doesn't feel comfortable that the town started working on updating the animal ordinance a while back but nothing has been completed due to the coronavirus. He would like the council to start working on it again.

f. Concession Stand located on Sixth Street

Keith St. Jeor reported that a concession stand has been put up at nearly the exact location of the Moomaw proposed coffee stand. Councilman Rey thought that it might be a fundraiser. Mayor Poch asked the Police Chief to look into it.

### Staff, Council & Committee Report

Clerk

A liquor license renewal notification has been received for Harvest Foods. The state audit is currently underway.

Police Department

Chief Bowden is aware of the dog bite issue that was brought up by Councilman Netzel and it is being looked into by the police department.

Public Works

Mike Steffens noted that the city vacated the sidewalks years ago between Camas and River Drive.

### Adjournment

Mayor Poch adjourned the meeting at 7:13pm.

Mayor



Bob Poch

Clerk

Stefani Bowden