

Town of Garfield
PUBLIC HEARING AND TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Town Hall – September 28, 2011

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Jarrod Pfaff called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Jarrod Pfaff, Andrew Flodin, Larry Hunt, Daymon Marple, Sharon Schnebly, and Tim Southern. Staff – Public Works Superintendent Bill Bowman, Police Chief Jerry Neumann and Clerk/Treasurer Annie Pillers.

GUESTS: Cher Curtis, Larry Kruse, Cathie May, and Joe Merry.

1. Taxes/Reserves/Equipment Purchases - Larry Kruse questioned the recent purchase of equipment in light of the utility taxes imposed on services a couple of years ago. He had heard the town was going to buy a bobcat and said the town did great before with the backhoe and equipment they have. Mayor Pfaff explained this equipment would make the town more efficient. The crew rented equipment a couple of times this year and liked the way it worked. The town would hang onto the backhoe for a year and see how it gets used. If needed, it could be surplused. The mayor said the bobcat would be more efficient removing snow and the white tractor with a loader could be used.

Larry Kruse asked what was happening to those funds being collected on utilities. Mayor Pfaff clarified the utility tax is not going up and has not gone up since put into effect. The rates for service (water, etc.) go up every 2 years as an inflation factor – 3% per year. It goes up again in 2013. The mayor said he looks at the budget every year to see if the town is still hitting zero. He's watching if it gets too high. It was noted for many folks, there has been no increase in their income – social security or wages. The 13.5% sewer rate increase in Spokane was mentioned. Council indicated that was why they implemented the utility tax and graduated increases. They did not want to find the town in that position in 6, 7, or 8 years and raise rates 10%, 12% or 14%.

Larry Hunt agreed with Larry Kruse on the recent equipment purchases. He understood the increases were to be put aside for the reserve funds which were very low then. If over a period of years the town got comfortable with reserve, they could back off on the increases. He said the town was not comfortable enough to back off on taxes for reserves, but yet is spending money on equipment. Tim Southern said Larry Hunt made valid points then and council listened to him, but after renting the bobcat and equipment, felt the town could be much more efficient and faster getting work done with that equipment. Cher Curtis said she agreed with Larry Hunt.

2. Park - Cathie May complimented the crew that the park looks good. Bill said David Ulrick took the hanging branch down. Cathie noted the men's bathroom fan is not working. Bill said they had to clean the restroom 3 times this week. Cathie asked if there was anyone that needed community service hours to do some of this work. She noted the park benches and tables really needed to be painted. Chief Neumann said it is complicated because they have to pick up, feed and then taken back. Bill reported the price of a stainless steel toilet was \$1,600 versus \$350 for a porcelain one.

3. Street Repairs - Joe Merry complimented Bill on the great job on 10th street. He said putting down the street grindings was a great start, noting this makes the street eligible for overlay grants in the future.

PUBLIC HEARING – 2012 REVENUE SOURCES: Mayor Pfaff opened the public hearing at 7:21 PM. He discussed the proposed general levy increase of 1% for \$580 and the 1.55% banked capacity increase of \$899 for a total of \$1490. Tim Southern noted the 1% increase is the usual increase with the limit set by the state. It was noted the special levy for the streets is the same \$55,000 at approximately \$2.60 per \$1,000 valuation. There was no additional comment received. Mayor Pfaff closed the public hearing at 7:25 PM and resumed the regular council meeting. Joe Merry left the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Annie Pillers noted a minor typographical correction in the minutes correcting

the last name of Officer Dentler. Tim Southern **MOVED** the minutes of the September 14, 2011 Regular Council meeting be approved, as corrected. Daymon Marple seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

POLICE DEPARTMENT: Police Chief Jerry Neumann said the department has been busy with some families recently. He updated council on the question of a town curfew, noting in the early 90's this was done regularly but then declared unconstitutional. The town could curfew public properties, such as the park from dusk to dawn and this would provide the department authority to contact someone in the park.

Council discussed dog licensing in town. Chief Neumann said it's difficult when they catch dogs at-large and are unable to identify the owner when the dog is not licensed. Currently to get a dog licensed the animal has to have a current rabies vaccination certificate. This helps to ensure the dog is healthy and protect the public. There was an incident last year where a dog bit a person and through the dog license, it was confirmed the dog had its rabies vaccination. Chief Neumann asked how aggressive the council wanted the department to be on this matter. It was thought in some circumstances dogs aren't licensed because people either don't know to do so or the cost to get the dog vaccinated. It was suggested trying to do a mobile vaccination clinic. Tim Southern **MOVED** to issue a \$150 ticket the first time a dog is found running at-large. Larry Hunt seconded the motion. Tim suggested this citation be held for one week and if the owner brings in the vaccination certificate and gets a license, it be cancelled. Motion failed. Council talked about the \$5 cost to license a spayed or neutered animal and \$35 or more for the vaccination. Larry Hunt **MOVED** that a \$50 at-large fine be issued unless the owner can show proof of a current vaccination and license within one week. Tim Southern seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Chief Neumann reported an increase in ongoing credit card fraud. There were recent arrests in Maryland where hackers accessed a huge database of credit card information. The new cards issued go on the black market. They make these credit cards with the person's name on it and then they show up at a point of sale. He suggested people contact their credit card company and pull a free credit report.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT: Bill Bowman reported:

1. New water service installed – the fire riser for the day care is done.
2. 2nd Street Overlay - this project is done and turned out very well. The town saved a little on spot sealing with the amount of grinding done. This allowed more funds towards asphalt and made for better drainage.
3. Dumpsters - the dumpsters have been ordered.
4. Park Restrooms – council requested the park restrooms remain open until after the apple harvest at Bishop's Orchard
5. WWTP Repairs - ML Albright quoted \$3,541 for the WWTP valve work. Bill was not able to find another contractor that was interested in doing the job. By consensus, council approved the quote from ML Albright for the WWTP valve work. Bill confirmed speaking with Dave and Perry and that the crust on the top of the plant is fairly normal. Bill doesn't like in anyway and plans to clean it off. Daymon Marple asked if the boiler was fixed. Bill indicated one of the controller's is popping off so he has to keep setting it. He's going to have the company come back out and show him how to service it. It maintains 90 degrees or better but pops off and doesn't shut off. Bill noted the controller is from the original plan.
6. Garbage collection - Larry Kruse asked if a household in his neighborhood was missed this past week when garbage was collected.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Ordinance No. 407N Setting the November/December 2011 Meeting Schedule Ordinance No. 407N: Larry Hunt **MOVED** to adopt Ordinance No. 407N setting the November and December 2011 Meeting Schedule. Sharon Schnebly seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.
2. Tree up on 3rd Street near school – Larry Hunt has not been able to catch Bill's Tree Service. He took a closer look and it and was recommending cutting the tree down and then grinding the stump. It would open up the sight radius and corner. He noted the sidewalk is within one foot of the base of the tree. Removing the tree won't widen the radius unless the sidewalk corner is changed. He said there is plenty of room on the inside of the hill to do that. He said the only way to make a difference is to remove the tree stump at probably a substantial cost. He confirmed there have been some near misses up there. With the

house across the street now occupied and cars parked up there, it narrows the corner. He noted the cars are parked legally; it's just a tight area. He said food service trucks and busses struggle up there. Bill Bowman suggested the town could haul off the downed tree and stump grindings to help with the cost. Larry Hunt would call Bill's Tree Service back.

3. Street Lilacs up on 8th and Union. It was requested that the property owners at 8th and Union be contacted and asked to trim their bushes to the fence line. There is a street sign buried in the foliage and traffic is obstructed.

4. Active Utility Service - there was a question about active service at a house on California Street near D Street. Currently there is no service at this property. Chief Jerry Neumann left the meeting at 8:06 pm.

5. Citizen Complaints - Larry Hunt reported recently being asked about a citizen complaint sent in, but he knew nothing about it. He felt bad he couldn't respond and felt uninformed. He asked if complaints should go to the council. Larry requested he be notified of citizen complaints.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Ordinance No. 408N Setting the 2012 Property Tax Increase: Tim Southern **MOVED** to adopt Ordinance No. 408N setting the 2012 Property Tax Increase. Larry Hunt seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

2. Ordinance No. 409N Setting the 2012 Regular and Special Levies: Andrew Flodin **MOVED** to adopt Ordinance No. 409N setting the 2012 Regular and Special Levies. Tim Southern seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Vacating Property: Tim Southern removed himself from the council table and addressed council as a private citizen. He discussed the property adjacent to his house and the state highway, noting about 6 years ago he addressed this issue with the council. He was told then that neither the town nor the state owned the property. At that time he was given permission by the council to install a fence. The state did not care about the fence being installed as long as he understood it could be removed if they needed it to be. Tim asked council if the property could be vacated and understood he would pay the cost for the value of the property. Andrew Flodin **MOVED** to vacate the property adjacent to Tim Southern's house and the state highway. Sharon Schnebly seconded the motion and the motion carried. Tim Southern did not participate in this vote. Mayor Pfaff noted this was the first step in this process, and an ordinance would have to be prepared.

FINANCIAL

1. APPROVAL OF CHECKS: Daymon Marple **MOVED** the following bills presented to council for payment. Larry Hunt seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Check Register #10141-#10147 plus EFTPS EFT Payroll: \$7,903.32

Check Register #10148-#10150 Claims: \$11,935.37 TOTAL: \$19,838.69

ADJOURNMENT: Andrew Flodin **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 pm. Larry Hunt seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Jarrold Pfaff, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Annie Pillers, Clerk/Treasurer