

Town of Garfield
TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES Preliminary Draft
Town Hall – January 11, 2017

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Ray McCown called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

ROLL CALL: Mayor Ray McCown, Mark Young, David Jones, Dave Ulrick and Daymon Marple. Staff: Clerk/Treasurer Cody Lord and Public Works Mark Phillips Absent: Neal Leon

GUESTS: Sandra Cavallo, Darrell and Wanda Grossman, Rebecca and Ken Jones and Sonja Hall

- Rebecca and Ken Jones Road Maintenance at 7th and Spokane Street.

Rebecca says she has addressed the town on numerous occasions about the conditions of the road at 7th and Spokane Street in open public meetings and council had made a commitment to address that street last spring, however nothing has been done. Rebecca said the council and mayor are willfully ignoring the issue resulting in her almost hitting a school bus because she was unable to stop on the unmaintained street. Rebecca says there are ice berms that have been left in the road in various places around town and she said instead of maintaining her road so that she could use it she has been told to park off 7th Street. Rebecca said in addition to almost hitting a bus, she has been unable to get heating fuel to her home so it is becoming a safety issue and feels because the town refused to allow her to maintain the road it is their obligation to maintain it.

Ken Jones would like to know what the excuse is for the lack of attention on 7th street, saying that the plow has been down that road once before today. Mayor McCown asked Mark Phillips wasn't that plowed 2 days before the wreck and Mark said he couldn't recall exactly when that was completed. Mayor McCown said they would continue to not maintain Spokane Street between 7th and 8th and said the town brought gravel twice last year to that street and Ken replied that was in 2015. Ken says he has lived in that house 5 years and before this mayor that road was regularly graded and maintained. Mayor McCown asked Dave Ulrick how many times he graded it when he worked for the town and Dave replied lots. Dave also said the bottom of the road where it meets 7th is bedrock and there is not a sidewalk so it is difficult to keep the gravel in place. Rebecca said again the prior administration had maintained it in an acceptable manner.

Daymon said he has been here eight years and he doesn't remember gravel being put up there other than recently but right now the whole town is stuck in snow. Rebecca said she drove by all the council members and the mayor's home and they are all nicely plowed. She said she has heard about people that live out of town getting plowed out and said Reuel was sighted plowing out the Hasenoehrl property which is a county residence. Chief Neumann asked Rebecca to lower her tone. Mayor McCown said he was unable to comment on the Hasenoehrl property that the public works guys come to work at 7 am and the he doesn't usually come down until 10 am so he is doesn't know exactly everything they do. The mayor said 3 years ago they set the agenda for the roads that are done first when snow falls.

Mayor McCown said even Darrell Grossmans place didn't get plowed for the longest time. Rebecca said that is because he wasn't home for a month and Darrell said there was still actually one girl there during that time. Mayor McCown asked the community to recognize that Mark is one man and he is working in town as much as possible to get the streets plowed. Rebecca asked if the council understands that homes are more important than businesses to get cleared.

Daymon suggests if there are issues with complaints on roads that they should call the clerk Cody and he will relay the information onto the mayor. Rebecca said she requested a meeting with the mayor through Cody and the mayor was still unwilling to do anything. Daymon said because of the conditions they will get to the roads as quickly as possible and assures Rebecca and Ken that the mayor and public works is not leaving out their road because of their past differences that they are currently doing the best they can. Rebecca said so you are not going to make any firm commitment to come and service Spokane and 7th to

8th Street and the mayor said no they would not. Ken asked what will be done with the berms around town that are completely blocking out some streets. Rebecca added the council was completely negligent with their answer and the mayor said enough conversation had been had with this matter and it was time to move along.

- Sandra Cavallo Snow Plowing for Alley Access Residents

Sandra Cavallo said she is here with a similar topic dealing with snow and not being able to park at her residence causing her to have to walk 3 blocks to find suitable parking. She has been told in the past the town doesn't maintain alleys but she is unable to park in her front yard do to the county throwing snow from the highway into her yard which would cause damage to her car if she was to park there. Sandra said several roads get done and then repeated but other roads are left untouched. Mayor McCown said some roads have not been plowed because they are unable to get to all of them; the most important and heavily traveled roads get done first. Mark Young said his mother in law lives up on 7th street and it has been so bad this year he privately hired someone to come in and do it because the public works guys have been so busy. Mayor McCown also added that a lot of the businesses you see clearing downtown are done by private people.

Sandra said what she is wishing to challenge is the policy that the town doesn't maintain alleys. Mayor McCown said the clerk's house that just sold has an alley access and the new homeowners bought a snow blower and make about 6 passes up and down the road to get it cleared themselves. Sandra said well that house also has frontage that they can park on and the mayor corrected her saying no they don't because there is a large berm there from all of the snow. Sandra said the folks on Lincoln Street can't even get out of their garages. Mayor McCown said the simple fact is this is a snow year from hell and the town hasn't seen one like this in a very long time. Dave said he even went as far as putting chains on his pickup to get around town that is how bad the snow is this year. The mayor apologized for the snow issues but said unfortunately that is the way it is going to be for a bit. Dave said on top of it being a bad snow year, Mark is just learning how to operate the plow and that will take time and experience. Sandra said she wants to focus on the policy that they town doesn't maintain alleys and would like the council to take up that issue. Mayor McCown asked if the council would like to change that policy and Dave said no.

Sandra asked if the mayor or council knew how many properties with parking in the alley would be affected by such a policy change. Mayor McCown said there are not many in town but maybe a couple more on Cleveland. Mayor McCown said he drove around town and looked at the conditions and noticed Cleveland was plowed and Mark stated it was done privately by a guy with a plow on the front of his truck. Mark said the public works guys are doing the best they can in these conditions and doesn't feel they need to change anything at this time and David Jones agreed. Mark says if the council makes exceptions they will encounter issues and right now they just need the guys to focus on clearing the roads as quick as possible. Mayor McCown said the guys are racking up the overtime hours and just in January so far Reuel has 18 overtime comp hours accrued. Mayor McCown said they have two of the best men they have had in a long time running the public works department, in the past the garbage truck had to be sent to Spokane to be worked on and it cost about \$12,000 and since Mark has been hired it hasn't been up there once. Mayor McCown said in Pullman and Moscow they are closing roads because they aren't able to service them and Sandra stated don't you aspire to be better than them. Daymon said if they get caught up with the other roads possibly they will make a pass through alleys.

Sonja Hall was not on the agenda but asked to talk about the potential for flooding in the coming week with the rains and thawing and wonders what emergency actions are in place. Mayor McCown said when the waters rise there is not much that can be done about it. Sonja said she worked all day chipping ice and creating a small channel next to the sidewalk for the water to drain. The mayor suggested that Sonja may want to get a couple sand bags to protect the entrance to her store. Mark said there are bags available at the recycle shed. Sandra asked if the town will make sure the drains are exposed and free flowing. Mayor McCown said they are covered now with ice but they will need to be located when the water starts flowing.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Daymon Marple **MOVED** to approve the minutes of the Regular Council

Meeting Dec. 14th, 2016. Dave Ulrick seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

There is only one correction in the roll call section with Dave Ulrick's name left out. The minutes were changed to reflect the correction before the approval.

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT: Chief Neumann and Officer Joe Handley present for this meeting.

Chief Neumann explained to council they received some correspondence from Bishop Law Office concerning the removal of firearms from a deceased person's house. Chief Neumann also supplied the council with letters from MRSC and Canfield and Associates, Chief Neumann said they did things the way every other agency in Whitman County and the Coroner's Office would handle it. Chief Neumann also explains that based on two experiences now, he feels there are some conflict of interest issues with Bishop Law Office making this recommendation. Typically the department would look to family members of the deceased to get direction on what to do with the weapons to make sure they were in safe keeping, however this matter was an unattended death with no family to convey a clear plan. Chief Neumann said it is not their intention to keep the firearms for any length of time since the process is a real hassle and keeping them longer than 45 days is a big process. Mark stated so you took them just for safe keeping. Chief Neumann said yes and once they have the paperwork showing they go to someone, they will get the transfer taken care of immediately.

Daymon said he has some opinions on this matter. He said now the police department has language they can read to someone if this issue comes up again. He explains to Chief Neumann that when someone dies unexpectedly it is already a stressful situation and it should be handled as smoothly and caringly as possible. Daymon said he is aware of the situation as a couple of people familiar with the situation came to him to discuss it. Chief Neumann said well if the person who is in attendance at the scene of the death doesn't have a clear right to that property then they are not going to receive the firearm. Daymon said if the situation can't be handled more appropriately in the future they may have to discuss the situation again when the contract comes up for renewal.

Mayor McCown said that Cody reached out to the town's insurance and they basically said they wouldn't comment on the situation since the Garfield/Palouse Police contract is covered under Palouse's insurance company Canfield and Associates. Mayor McCown also said just for security reasons he feels they made the right decision to keep the firearms for safekeeping especially since there so many people living in the hotel and others may be able to gain entrance into that apartment. Dave also said he felt it was handled appropriately and says he still has an issue with registering guns in general but they need to make sure when they take the firearm they make note of the number of the firearm. Chief Neumann said other than this issue they too have been dealing with snow related issues.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT:

Sewer

- Mark said everything is running pretty smoothly and Daymon said this December is the first month violation free.
- There are some things freezing up at the plant and Mark Young asks if they are going to be able to correct that. Mark said yes they are addressing the issues the best they can.
- Mark said they were able to get a wireless system they can use to take measurements at the end of the pond so they will no longer need the building to house the testing items. It was determined a Muskrat was the culprit for destroying some of the equipment out there.
- The Bio-filter did seize at the top of the piece of equipment. The rotator is not spinning any longer but there is still fluid cycling through the equipment. Mayor McCown said they had to buy a new gear box for it and Mark said they purchased what was closest to the original and then Reuel is machining pieces to make it work.
- The SO2 regulators are rebuilt and all the older equipment is now offline. They are going to stay with the gases as they are cheaper and with the new system they are more stable and easier to handle.

Water

- Everything is fine. The new chlorine is mixed to order so it is more stable and seems to be more uniform in the water supply. It is a little more expensive but seems to be worth it since the complaints of the chlorine smell have subsided.

Streets

- Mark said he is starting his snow removal route downtown and then doing the school and then the hills in town. Mark said concerning the berms around town there is so much snow there is no place to put the additional snow. He has been putting the snow in the town's easement and still trying to be mindful of the property when pushing it up there. Mayor McCown said there are a lot of garbage cans in the way at this time and making it harder to clear snow and also there are a lot of cars in the way downtown.

Garbage

- Garbage has been taking up to 3 days to complete because of the snow conditions. Mark has been chaining up the truck but still having issues getting around town. Mark would like to chain all the rear tires with alloy chains. He has thrown all the chains that currently work on the truck. Mayor McCown said he watched him not make the hill on Main Street heading out of town and watched as he was backing up and the truck's breaks kept locking up. Daymon asked what kind of chains were on the snow plow and Mark said they are alloys chains and they are lasting longer and working much better. Dave said if it is still the chains he bought they were an excellent chain purchase.

Mark Young asked where they were on the sewer permit process and Mark replied that the Dept. of Ecology has been very quiet lately. Reuel has been communicating with Diana about the chlorine testing at the end of the pond. The mayor said the meter had been reading wrong and those were equating to violations for the town. Because the parameters are such the town can't effectively test for those low of numbers, Reuel is trying to get DOE to alter the parameter number for the future permit so they would no longer be in violation. Mayor McCown said the biggest obstacle right now is dealing with the sludge. Daymon asked if they were ready for the flooding at the plant next week with the expected thawing. Dave responded there is nothing they can do about that and the only way to avoid it would be to have a large retention pond ahead of the influent to hold material until the volume subsided.

Sandra asked if she was supposed to leave her garbage can out at the highway if they don't come and pick it up the first day. She is apprehensive to do that do to the state plow passing through and she wonders is there any way to post the dates if delayed that the truck will be coming through. Mark said she could put her can on 4th Street and he will collect it there.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Door Lock Box for Secure Night Drops

Dave said they talked about adding a secure night drop last year and didn't settle on what type to get. Cody said because there are several individuals with keys to the office at this time, he thinks they should move forward with getting a secured lock box for payments. Cody also thinks the council should take up the cash utility payments policy for future use. Cody thinks the town should place a sign in the window that says paying with cash in the night drop is done at their own risk or thinks there should be a policy in place that no one should be able to make a cash payment unless the clerk-treasurer is present to write a receipt for the transaction that there are just too many possibilities for issues. Daymon said he would be interested in seeing lock boxes that hold the cash inside the operation and thinks the town should steer away from boxes that allow payments to be made outside and stored outside. Mayor McCown asked Cody to do some more research and see if there was anything that would work.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Surplus of Mini-Ex

Neal Leon wanted this item added to the agenda but was unable to make the meeting tonight since he was called in for snow removal work. Mayor McCown said he feels like they should wait until at least June to make sure the piece of equipment they got is going to work alright for them. Mayor McCown does think they should go ahead and surplus the gator and talk about getting a bigger box for dump truck. The last load of gravel that came in for a truck and trailer was almost \$600. The mayor said they can go to Colfax and get that themselves for \$75 a load plus fuel and time and he thinks them doing it themselves would pay for the bigger box pretty quickly. Mayor McCown said the old garbage truck is not that bad of a truck and Mark said they might want to take it for a stroll around the block before stating that. When doing snow removal they are only able to load the truck with 6 scopes of snow from the backhoe on each load. The mayor said they could discuss it further at the next meeting. The mayor also thinks they could get a golf cart to cut down on time while doing the meter reads. Dave said he is a fan of doing the route by foot and found it took more time to get on and off something as it did to just walk the whole route.

FINANCIAL:

Approval of Checks: Daymon Marple **MOVED** to approve the following bills presented to council for payment. Mark Young seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Check Register #12570-12572 PLUS EFTPS	Payroll: \$7,516.44
Check Register #12573 PLUS EFT Dept of Revenue	Claims: \$30,719.33
Check Register #12574-12580 PLUS EFT Dept of Retirement	Payroll: \$9,501.77
Check Register #12581-12582	Claims: \$2,178.87
Check Register #12583-12586	Claims: \$9,794.07
Check Register #12587-12602 13 th Month Transactions	Claims: \$41,231.36
	Total: \$100,941.84

Mayor McCown said there are some vehicles on 2nd street that need tagged. Officer Joe Handley said he tagged a couple cars but the issue right now is that tow trucks are in tight demand due to all the snow related issues. Mayor McCown said he noticed a suburban that has been parked all winter and there is also the boat on Main Street that has been tagged for half a year. Officer Handley said when the snow disappears he will make sure the vehicles are towed if they are not taken care of. Mayor McCown said there is an ordinance that says a person can't park a vehicle and leave it in one spot for more than 48 hours. Dave said in other states during the winter time you can't park on the streets so that the snow plow can operate efficiently.

Rebecca asked where the town would like those to park who can't access their home parking spaces. Mayor McCown said Mark cleared out a big spot at the town park parking lot off the street that could accommodate about 5 vehicles. Sonja Hall said there is a questionable vehicle parked downtown that is stolen and Officer Handley said he would look into it. Chief Neumann asked what the plan was with the deceased individual's vehicle downtown. Rebecca said that Jerry Love is the executor to his estate so he should take up the matter with him but as far as she knows the estate is still paying his rent so he is eligible to have a parking space on the street. Chief Neumann said it would be nice if it could be moved so the snow plow could plow those spaces downtown.

ADJOURNMENT: Daymon Marple **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 7:54 PM. Dave Ulrick seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Ray McCown, Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Cody Lord, Clerk/Treasurer

