

City of Cle Elum  
Regular City Council Meeting  
January 9, 2023, 6:00 pm

**Call to Order – Roll Call of Membership**

The Regular meeting of the City Council was called to order by Mayor McGowan at 6:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. The Roll was called. Members present were Mayor McGowan, Matthew Lundh, John Glondo, Sarah Lackey, Steven Harper, Siw Bay-Hansen, Beth Williams and Ken Ratliff. Other members present were City Administrator Rob Omans, Acting Police Chief Rich Albo, Fire Chief Ed Mills, Veolia Water/Sewer Treatment Plants Supervisor William LaRue, Public Works Director Mike Engelhart and City Clerk Kathi Swanson.

**Public Comment – Limited to 5-Minutes**

**Deputy Chief Christopher Hutsell – Kittitas County Fire District 7:** Publicly recognized the good efforts of the Cle Elum Fire Department, as well as the other mutual aid agencies, that responded to the recent fire at the Chalet Motel in Cle Elum. Individuals affected by the fire were assisted in finding shelter.

*Councilmember Lundh asked for a moment of silence for the young Cle Elum High School student who was killed in an accident on 01/08/2023.*

**Approval of the Meeting Agenda**

*A motion was made by Matthew Lundh and seconded by John Glondo to approve the meeting agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.*

**Announcements, Appointments, Awards & Recognition**

- a. Mayor McGowan appointed the new fire department officers: Chief Ed Mills, First Assistant Chief Nathan Henderson, Second Assistant Chief Casey Orndorff, and Secretary Treasurer Cole Lowenstein. These individuals were re-elected by the members of the Department and hold the same positions as last year.
- b. Mayor McGowan called the council's attention to a letter from the Yakima Basin Fish and Wildlife Recovery Board, announcing their annual meeting. Alex Conley, director of the Yakama Basin Fish and Wildlife Recovery Board will be invited to attend a future council meeting to give a report on the Board's work, as much work is being done by this organization.
- c. Mayor McGowan announced there will be a joint study session with the Kittitas County Board of County Commissioners and the Cle Elum City Council on Monday 01/30/2023 at 5:30 at the Senior Center. This study session will consist of a round table discussion with a moderator and will include discussions about working toward a unified UGA and Building Codes, as well as other issues. Additional meetings will be held in the future.

**Consent Agenda**

*A motion was made by Matthew Lundh and seconded by Sarah Lackey to accept the consent agenda as presented. The consent agenda included the Supplemental Engagement letter for Perkins Coie; the minutes to the 12/27/2022 Special City Council meeting; ; 12/31/2022 Accounts Payable EFTs and Vouchers #45115 - 45146 in the amount of \$220,705.17; 12/31 2022 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Taxes EFT Voucher; 01/05/2023 Payroll EFTs and Vouchers #45108– 45114 in the amount of \$209,733.65. The motion carried unanimously.*

**Officer Reports**

**City Administrator, Building Official, Network Administrator – Robert Omans - Reported:**

- There was a power outage on 12/29/2022 at City Hall caused by a piece of ice falling on the power meter. The power was temporarily fixed on 01/03/2023.
- 2022 year-end building department report included 69 total permits, for \$72,000. In comparison, 2021 permits totaled 88 at \$88,000.

- The State will adopt the 2021 state building code on 07/01/2023. Currently the building department is using the 2018 code. The state will be mandating some portions of the Wildland Urban Interface Code with the new code update. Omans will be attending a week-long training on the updated code at the end of March.
- The City is now undergoing a state accountability audit for 2019, 2020 and 2021. Also, a financial audit is being conducted for 2021, which is concentrating on lodging tax applications, public works projects and the procurement process.
- Colleda Monick of HLA continues to work as the City Planner in a consultant capacity, which is working well. She is on-site at City Hall one day a week. However, the position for fulltime city planner remains open.
- Encouraged the citizens of Cle Elum to sign up for TextMyGove; information on any issues within the city can quickly be sent out to those who have signed up, including garbage, snow removal, water interruptions, etc.
- *Councilmember Lundh asked if there is thought to make the alley behind the post office one way and grading it. Mike Engelhart responded the City has graded the alley several times; however, vehicles accessing the alley are causing the potholes and ice issues and grading only causes more mud. The City has offered other places for the Post Office to temporarily relocate, but the offers have not been accepted. City crews will continue to try to work out a solution.*
- *Councilmember Ratliff asked how the Wildland Urban Interface Code came to be added to the new building code. Rob Omans responded lobbyists met with the legislature to mandate it.*
- *Councilmember Lundh asked how the search for the police chief is going. Mayor McGowan responded this will be addressed later.*

**Public Works Director – Mike Engelhart – Reported:**

- Encouraged residents to let their faucets drip and open cabinets during cold weather. Over 12 reports of frozen residential lines occurred during the Christmas holiday weekend, which required water shut offs. The city has made every effort to educate the citizens on winter care of water pipes.
- Mechanic Eric Giaudrone has left the city to take a job with the County. The mechanic position is open and has been advertised.

**Acting Police Chief Rich Albo – Reported:**

- The police department building experienced ice dam accumulation on the exterior walls causing some water damage. De-humidifiers and fans have been brought in to help dry the area. Insurance does not cover this damage, so there needs to be a long-term solution to fix the problem, which will cost a significant amount of money.
- The position for a police officer has been posted on the City website, the CJTC website (Washington Academy), WSPC website (Chiefs and Sheriffs), Facebook, the local newspaper and Public Safety. Acting Chief Albo will be speaking with a lateral candidate on 01/10/2023. The goal is to hire 2 or 3 officers.
- There have been difficulties in finding a new car. He has located surplus vehicles, which will be a Band-Aid until new cars can be located.

**Fire Chief – Ed Mills - Reported:**

- Introduced Cole Lowenstein to the council; Lowenstein is the elected 2023 Secretary-Treasurer for the Fire Department.
- The Department had 56 toned calls in December, including 33 EMS calls, 7 fires, 1 hazardous condition, no fire, 9 false alarms and others.
- Year-end report: 29 fires at 4.5%, 437 aid calls at 69.25%, making 194 fire department responses without aid at 30.74%
- The Chalet Motel caught fire on 01/05/2023 at 2:55 am. Mutual aid responded from Roslyn and District 7. The hospital district and 4 personnel came with 2 aid units. No injuries were reported; one individual was transported for a psychological evaluation. The Red Cross was

notified to find shelter for 9 persons who were displaced. The fire is still under investigation. Chief Mills thanked the mutual aid partners for their assistance.

- Reported the mutual aid agreements for aid personnel have been very beneficial, including with the Chalet Motel fire.
- The department is currently taking Knox Box orders online. Businesses and residences can now go to [knoxbox.com](http://knoxbox.com), select Cle Elum Fire, and they can then order a box to bolt or screw to the building. Chief Mills receives a notification of approval and will come out to inspect, install and lock the keys securely in the box.
- *Councilmember Lundh asked for clarification on the mutual aid agreements regarding District 7. Chief Mills responded District 7 dissolved the mutual agreement years ago but is available to help and will respond after the second page is sent out. The working agreement with Roslyn, Ronald and South Cle Elum works well. District 7 is available when the City Department needs help, but resources vary. Councilmember Harper commented there has been a lot of tradition that has guided the agreements and there were times when there was a tighter collaboration between departments. Chief Mills reported all working agreements have been gone through by council.*

#### **Veolia - William LaRue Reported:**

- Graphs of Water Plant Flows, Run Times, Precipitation, Wastewater Flows and Water Plant versus Wastewater Plant Flows for 12/2022 were provided in council packets, and included a peak flow graph for 2022.
- Recap for 2022: 4 operators running 2 plants, worked 8,000 hours with no reportable injuries and no lost time due to injuries.
- Recap for 2022 Water treatment plant: the plant produced 446.8 million gallons, maximum day was 08/18/2022 at 3.0 million gallons; operational hours were 4,966, or 13.6 hours per day; maximum day was 23.8 hours; staff completed 328 work orders.
- Recap for 2022 Wastewater treatment plant: Treated 351.3 million gallons; operations hours were 8,760; maximum day was 3.1 million gallons; and staff completed 362 work orders.
- *Mayor McGowan asked if the alarm system is still down. Rob Omans responded that it is down, due to CenturyLink issues. Repairs are scheduled for 01/11/2023.*

#### **Unfinished Business**

None

#### **New Business**

- Added Agenda Item: Mayor McGowan announced he would like to set a time and date for a study session for the council to discuss what council goals are for the city. The councilmembers' devices will be set up with a City Council Calendar with all dates pertaining to council decisions. After discussion, the time and date of the study session was set for 01/23/2023 at 4:00 pm. Mayor McGowan would like to set alternate Mondays aside for future study sessions.*
- Park & Ride – HLA Recommendation of Award to Pacific Civil & Infrastructure, Inc. of Tacoma:** Ben Annen reported 13 bids were received for this project, all of which were over the engineers' estimate. No supplemental funding was available. Also, TIB funds could not be moved from the Complete Streets funding to this project because they want to keep that funding on First Street. Mike Engelhart suggested moving the \$50,000 needed from the budgeted seal coat funding to this project since the seal coat project was funded through a grant. With this funding source available, Ben Annen recommended awarding the bid to Pacific Civil & Infrastructure in the amount of \$493,003. *Councilmember Harper reminded council the city has been promising to fix the streets and he does not want to take money away from that fund. Mike Engelhart explained the approved streets for seal coating are the only streets that can be done*

*this year. Improving more streets than what this grant is going to pay for will not happen unless the City brings in sub-contractors at a higher rate. A motion was made by Matthew Lundh and seconded by John Glondo to award the Park & Ride Project #21164 contract to Pacific Civil & Infrastructure in the amount of \$493,003. The motion carried unanimously.*

c. **Cle Elum RAISE Funding Task Order #2023-01:** Mayor McGowan reported the City received a notice from the federal government about this funding source and feel it is a good source of funding for the Downtown project. Ben Annen reported the City has secured \$7.3 million towards the First Street project, but there remains a deficit of \$10 million in funding to finish the project. There is \$2.3 Billion available nationwide from USDOT; the process is very competitive. This Task Order can be paid by the TIB money for the First Street project. The match requirement in rural areas is zero percent. Support letters will be solicited from elected state and local officials and agencies. Councilmember Harper asked if the pending litigation would be a factor in this application. Ben Annen, HLA, responded that, because this is a zero percent matching fund requirement, litigation should not disqualify the City from receiving funding. *A motion was made by Ken Ratliff and seconded by Matthew Lundh to authorize the Mayor to sign Task Order 2023-001 for the RAISE funding application for the Downtown Revitalization Final Phase. The motion carried unanimously.*

d. **SOS Audit Engagement Letter – 2019 through 2021:** Mayor McGowan shared the letter presented to the City from the Office of the Washington state Auditor’s office. Staff will send councilmembers a handout provided by the State Auditor’s Office. No action is required by council at this time.

e. **2023 Kittitas County EMS & Trauma Care Council Payment Agreement:** Robert Omans explained this agreement is brought to council every year to sign. This year, the City’s payment will be \$10,823 and is allocated by population. *A motion was made by Ken Ratliff and seconded by Steven Harper to authorize the Mayor to sign the Payment Agreement with the Emergency Medical Service and Trauma Care Council in the amount of \$10,823 or less. The motion carried unanimously.*

f. **2023 Kittitas County/City of Cle Elum Library Services Agreement:** Rob Omans explained this agreement is a City/County agreement for the County to subsidize unincorporated residents in the amount of \$28,000. Councilmember Lundh asked who is on the Library Board. Mayor McGowan responded the Library Board was disbanded by the previous administration and the Friends of the Library have been helping the library. Councilmembers Lundh and Harper reminded the Mayor there needs to be, by law, a Library Board appointed by the Mayor and the City cannot sign this agreement without a Library Board in place. Councilmember Ratliff recommended bringing this agreement back to council at the next meeting; in the meantime, a Library Board will be appointed. This item was tabled until the 01/23/2023 City Council meeting.

g. **Letter to the Postmaster General & Government Relations Director – In Support of the Cle Elum Post Office:** Councilmember Lundh presented the letter stating he believes it is important to support the local Post Office and let the Postmaster General know about the inhumane conditions the employees are working in. Councilmember Harper recommended tempering the work “inhumane” and suggested using a different word, such as extreme, severe or untenable. Councilmember Lundh stated he borrowed the word from the letter submitted by the County Commissioners and believes it is fitting to the situation. Mayor McGowan recommended having the letter amended to include our State Representatives. Councilmember Harper commented he stands in substantial support of the letter but would like to have his name stricken from the document. *A motion was made by Ken Ratliff and seconded by Beth Williams to send the letter, as presented, to the Postmaster General and Government Relations Director, with copies sent to the Congressional Representatives. The motion carried unanimously.*

**Committee Reports**

1. Councilmember Ratliff reported the Budget Committee will need to meet to readjust the Police Department wages. Mayor McGowan explained the police department should receive the same 5% pay increase for 2023 as the other employees and not the 3% they have been given per the Police Union contract. An MOU to the contract will be required. The budget committee will meet and it will be brought back to council at the next meeting. The increase will be retroactive to 01/01/2023.

2. Councilmember Harper reported the Lodging Tax Advisory committee met; some applicants have disputed what they were reimbursed. There will be an appeal meeting before a dispute board, which includes the City Lodging Tax Advisory Committee, on 01/12/2023. A full report will be brought to another meeting.

3. Councilmember Harper also reported some LTAC money was not used in the Consolidated process and has effectively been returned, which will allow more money to be awarded to another application.

**Motion to Adjourn**

*A motion was made by John Glondo to adjourn. The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 7:30 pm.*

*The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday January 23, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.*

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Mayor

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Attest