

Snowden Community Council Meeting Minutes 07.03.2024 (07.11.2024)

Council Members present: Robert Conner (Fire Commissioner), Roger Gadway (Chair), Chuck Kliesh (Treasurer), Jenn Sharp, and Chris Stein. Absent: Tom Montag (Fire Commissioner), Lloyd Olson (Vice Chair). There were 10 additional Snowden Community members present. With thanks for use of the Community Room at the Cherry Lane Fire Station, Roger called the **Meeting to Order** at 7:00pm.

Meeting Minutes for the June 05,2024 meeting were approved as submitted (by email).

Treasurer's Report: Chuck reported that during June there was \$21.00 in donations, and \$0.06 interest accrued. The current balance is \$2,461.36. The Treasurer's report was approved as presented.

Anne Gengler wished to **Add** an update about her Recyclables Collection Project **to the Agenda**.

Old Business: Communications Committee: Bea reported that (thanks to Anne Gengler) the website is being updated promptly, and the Facebook page is announcing updates. The committee is preparing to make a concerted outreach for the Annual Meeting coming up in September

Broad Band Committee: Roger reported that the Washington State Broadband Office public meeting in June, the Office claimed to be ahead of schedule in their efforts to bring affordable state-standard internet service to all rural Washington households. The Office will prioritize using fiber connection wherever possible, and will keep fees around \$50 per month. The Broadband office is currently sorting households into 1,000 unit groups that have a mix of both easy and hard to serve customers, to make the units evenly profitable for service providers. The units are not yet open for bidding. At that time the Office anticipates some reluctance for the large ISP's to bid on contracts where they will be required to share the publicly funded infrastructure they install, and not be allowed to have a monopoly.

Land Use Committee: Eric reported that at their June 17 meeting the Land Use Commission voted to approve the Wilson-Lee Rezone Application, and passed their recommendation on to the BoCC. The BoCC are now in discussion with the Prosecuting Attorney as to how to proceed; and all appear to be making up "the rules" as they go. The LU Committee is meanwhile compiling "findings of fact", on the presumption (?) there will be opportunity to make comments at the (as yet) unscheduled combined Rezone-SEPA checklist Hearing.

Recyclables Collection Project: Anne gave us an update on her project to collect and redeem recyclables along Bates Road, and to also pick up roadside litter. As she hasn't heard back from FD#3 regarding her request to use their parking lot periodically as a manned drop-off site, she has decided to collect recyclables herself, and coordinate with donors through the SCC website, and FB. Deposit money will be donated to WAGAP. Anne wore a safety vest and showed a new "grabber" to help with roadside collecting that she purchased after getting no response from Keaton Curtiss, County Community Projects Coordinator, who had suggested the County may be able to provide supplies for Anne's project. Chuck recounted how in the past, collecting trash with County support involved many complications, including support vehicles with flashing lights, etc.; so maybe it was for the best to work independently. Anne has already received offers to help from some Snowden residents and will keep in touch using the SCC website and FB group.

New Business:

Mailbox Vandalism and Theft: Cara Balogh, who lives off Bristol Rd., reported incidents of bashed in and missing mailboxes, and asked if others were experiencing similar problems. Discussion revealed agreement that most in attendance had either experienced problems themselves, and/or knew someone in Snowden who had. Cara said that when she reported the problems to the Post Office, they told her that they would not take action, and the citizens are on their own. She also reported these incidents to the County Sheriff's Department, and was told they started an on-going investigation into mailbox vandalism and theft for rural areas, such as Snowden and Pucker Huddle. She talked to the Civil Deputy who gave some practical advice, including: 1) keep alert for cars parked suspiciously or people hanging

around clusters of mailboxes. Note if plates are from Washington, or Oregon. 2. Report any incidents immediately to County Dispatch, 509-773-4545. Further discussion offered more actions residents can take to protect themselves and neighbors from mailbox problems including: Post guidelines and Dispatch's phone number on the SCC web and FB sites; use "informed delivery" apps or tracking options from the USPS; set up game cameras; use post office box instead.. Thanks to Cara for bringing this problem to the Council, so we can help work on it together.

Fire Commissioner's Report: Bob reported that our new, 4-wheel drive Fire Engine has arrived and is currently at Husum but will soon be stationed at Cherry Lane. He noted that the FD#3 budget includes savings, and that the new engine was purchased for cash, saving the District additional interest payments. FD#3 continues to meet with White Salmon FD in putting together the new Regional Fire Authority, and everything is proceeding well thanks to the efficient management of the secretaries. Chuck announced that it would greatly reduce response time if 2 more volunteers were available for the Mountain Brook station. Quicker response time translates into lower insurance premiums as well as better protection. He also reminded everyone that if they expect to get fire response, they will need to provide turn-around space for fire equipment on their property.

Bridge Commissioner's Report: The recent Hood River Bridge closure was on everyone's mind. Eric reminded us that the bridge is owned by the Port of Hood River, who are attending to the necessary repairs and testing. The Port was commended for their recent public zoom meeting, their common sense in proceeding with peer reviewed consultation, and their decision to re-open the bridge to passenger vehicles, with monitoring at each end of the bridge. Eric said the most important factor for bridge safety is the weight of vehicles; and hoped repairs will be concluded in time for cherry harvest. The Bridge Authority that works to design and build the new bridge is watching the situation closely, but is not involved, and their funding is not jeopardized by the incident. The Bridge Authority urges citizens on both sides of the River to write to their state legislators and urge them to provide the funding they have committed to build the new bridge.

For the Good of the Order: None.

With no further comments, Roger **Adjourned** the meeting at 7:52PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by

Beatrice Lackaff

(Secretary Pro-tem)