

Mayor Darrell Kerby called the special council meeting of May 10, 2005 to order at 7:00 p.m. Present for the meeting were Mayor Kerby, Council President Mick Mellett, Council Members Russ Docherty, Leslie Falcon, and Jim Burkholder, Clerk Kris Larson, and City Administrator Stephen Boorman. Also present were Herb and Claudia Thornton, Earl VanDyke, Gene Neumayer, LeRoy Vogl, David Sims, Don Morice, Ruth and Gene Perry, and Karrell Siver.

The purpose of the special meeting was to discuss water issues and hold a hearing on the proposed consolidation of the City of Bonners Ferry with the North Water and Sewer District and the South Hill Water and Sewer District. Mayor Kerby opened the hearing. There was no public comment so the hearing was recessed.

Discussion of the water bond and upcoming water issues took place. Mayor Kerby said the City has deficiencies in water pressure in the system particularly in the area near the water tank. A new tank with gravity feed would alleviate this problem. New water standards have been mandated affecting the City of Bonners Ferry. One of the standards dealt with the turbidity levels and the City had to slow down the output of the water from the water plant due to the new processes that have made the water filtration process slower. We are not able to filter the water fast enough to meet the demand of the customers particularly in the summer. The new tank would alleviate this problem. Another standard is chlorine contact time requiring the City to let the water sit chlorinated longer prior to delivery. The new tank would allow for this contact time and dissipation of the chlorine before it reaches the customer. The water tank is the least costly solution to the water quality issues, pressure issues, and treatment issues. There are also some delivery issues in the water system that need to be addressed. The amount of indebtedness requested by the bond will be offset by federal agencies providing financial assistance. Some of the other deficiencies and repairs may be delayed until later in time. Part of the reasoning for the bond election is to provide the funding agencies with guarantee of a match for the water projects. Mayor Kerby said this will be a revenue bond and is not a tax issue. The bond will be repaid from the rates paid by the water customers. He said some of the funding agencies willing to work with the City resulted from the fire that occurred at Myrtle Creek. One of the agencies was Rural Development that offered assistance when the deficiencies were identified. The sooner the applications are acted on the better chance of funding sources for the City.

The Mayor said the land has been purchased for the location of the new water tank. This was done several years ago. LeRoy Vogl asked what the code was for water pressure in the City. Stephen Boorman said 30 pounds per square inch is usually the standard. LeRoy said there is only 10 to 12 pounds of pressure where he lives and he does not see this changing. Stephen said the system will be zoned when the new tank is built and his problem should be fixed. David Sims inquired what the pressure would be. Stephen said it should be about 30 pounds per square inch. David said he is not opposed to the water issues but said the City needs to look at their own water usage particularly at the swimming pool. He said the water is left on 24 hours per day and water is being wasted. He commented that the water needs to be shut off when the employees go home. Mayor Kerby said this will be done.

The hearing reopened. Herb Thornton inquired about the funding from the reserves of the North Water and Sewer District if consolidation occurs. Mayor Kerby said the Boards of the respective water districts will have to decide how the funding is spent. The system will have to operate as a whole but the customers would not be refunded the reserves. Herb said he understood that but knows the system needs updates. Mayor Kerby said the benefits will be that all systems will be merged into one and the costs will be spread equally among the users. Mayor Kerby is hopeful that the timing is right for consolidation. Russ Docherty said the City is planning to meter all its customers so all customers will be on the same playing field. Mayor Kerby commented that metering is not part of the bond or election process as this decision has already been made. David Sims inquired about the vote of the people on the consolidation issue. Mayor Kerby said the vote of the people will determine the outcome as each taxing district will vote.

Gene Neumayer commented about metering causing brown lawns in the City. Mayor Kerby said the former Mayor always worried about this issue as a well kept town was always a concern. Today the small water user is being surcharged and pays for supplementing the large water user. The flat rate for the small water user will be less than what they are currently paying. It is hoped that the system will be equitable. LeRoy asked if there will be winter and summer rates. Mayor Kerby said it is planned to have the meters read twelve months per year. Dave Sims said most customers will go over the amount of water allowed in the summer. Stephen said City customers pay \$348 per year under the current rates and it is anticipated that the average customer will not go over this cost under the proposed rates. Mayor Kerby said the act of metering will cause conservation efforts from the customers just by the installation of meters. Mick Mellett compared his water use with that of an elderly lady in his neighborhood. Mayor Kerby said the election has no bearing on metering. He said the election will be whether the residents want to consolidate with the water districts and whether they will approve the water revenue bond. Mayor Kerby said the community benefits from consolidation. Russ Docherty said both of the maintenance people for North and South Districts want to retire so new people will have to be trained. Gene Neumayer asked about the area near Hemlock and said there is no water pressure. Stephen said that area has been identified as a problem area and there are a couple issues proposed that will be worked on. He said that area is a tough area.

Don Morice inquired about the meters being installed and how they will be paid for. Mayor Kerby said the rate that has been paid by the District's has been less than what the City customers have been paying. The City meters will be paid through a grant due to the fire at Myrtle Creek and the use of the Kootenai River for the water source. The Corps of Engineers has mitigated this and agreed to provide a grant for 75 percent of the cost of the meters. The City will provide the 25 percent match that will come out of the City reserves. Metering has been a problem in the Districts and City consolidating but this will now be resolved. Russ Docherty said if consolidation occurs all consumers will pay the same rate. Mayor Kerby said consolidation will alleviate the problem of they and us. Gene Neumayer inquired about customers outside the city or district boundaries being served. Mayor Kerby explained that was correct but those customers would not be allowed to vote in the election. You can only vote in the district you reside.

Mick Mellett told the public to call with questions. Mayor Kerby said the polls are open for absentee voting at this time at City Hall. LeRoy Vogl inquired about the amount of grant funding that is anticipated. Mayor Kerby responded. Leslie Falcon moved to close the hearing. Mick Mellett seconded the motion. The motion passed, all in favor.

Consideration of a special use permit for Gene and Ruth Perry to operate a bed and breakfast at the old Northside School was the next item on the agenda. Gary Falcon stated the Planning and Zoning Committee met on the special use permit hearing for the bed and breakfast. He said most were in favor. The Committee approved a three foot by eight foot sign near the highway for the bed and breakfast advertisement as well as the usual two foot by three foot sign attached to the building. Russ Docherty inquired about the parking spaces. Mr. Perry said asphalt is planned on. Mick Mellett inquired about the signage. Gary said he recommends they check with the State Transportation Department before they put up the signs. Russ Docherty moved to approve the special use permit at 6497 Comanche street for establishment of a bed and breakfast with the special conditions and facts and conclusions recommended by the Planning and Zoning Committee. Leslie Falcon seconded the motion. Jim Burkholder excused himself from the discussion due to a conflict of interest. The motion passed – Mick Mellett “yes”, Russ Docherty “yes”, Leslie Falcon “yes”, Jim Burkholder “abstained”.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

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Darrell Kerby, Mayor

Attest:

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Kris Larson, City Clerk