



## CATHLAMET TOWN COUNCIL

### Regular Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 21, 2025

View recordings online: <https://www.youtube.com/@TownofCathlamet>

David Olson, Mayor

Robert Stowe

Kermit Chamberlin

Joe Baker

Jeanne Hendrickson

Laurel Waller

**NEXT ORDINANCE NO: 685 | NEXT RESOLUTION NO: 458**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE:** Mayor David Olson called this Regular Meeting to order at 6:00 pm on Tuesday, January 21, 2025, at Town Hall located at 25 Broadway Street, Cathlamet, WA & via Zoom Meeting ID 789 428 4989.
- 2. ROLL CALL:** *Present:* Mayor David Olson, Councilmembers Robert Stowe (Zoom), Joe Baker, Kermit Chamberlin, Jeanne Hendrickson & Laurel Waller; *Also present:* CT Sarah Clark, Project Manager Jacquelyn Gribble, PW Superintendent Jason Tibbitt, TA Fred Johnson & members of the public in-person and on Zoom. *CM Chamberlin arrived at 6:02pm.*
- 3. AGENDA APPROVAL:** Motion **passed** to approve the agenda as amended removing item 6A-Youth Mentor Presentation and adding 6B- Sheriff's Report. **M/S/V:** Baker/Waller/5-0
- 4. CONSENT AGENDA:** Motion **passed** to approve Minutes 12/16/2024, Claims Checks/EFTs 67953-68035: \$268,403.96, Payroll Checks/EFTs 42230-42251: \$73,732.07, and a Library Board appointment: Carillon Nicol. **M/S/V:** Waller/Baker/5-0
- 5. PUBLIC COMMENT:** *Dan Turner provided comments regarding the library and the appointment to its board. Crystal Baker, James Radliff, and Ruby Hansen-Murray all spoke about the Strong Park tree; Bill Wainwright expressed hope that the Town could work collaboratively to address the matter outside of litigation. TA Johnson reported that the Museum has retained a new Seattle-based law firm.*
- 6. SPECIAL BUSINESS:**
  - A.** Sheriff Mason presented the report on services covering the period from October 2024 to January 2025. He noted that 17% of all calls occurred within town limits, and 43% of vehicle stops took place on Columbia Street.
- 7. REGULAR BUSINESS:**
  - A.** Motion **passed** to authorize the mayor to sign the Chamber of Commerce Technical Service Agreement for 2025 tourism support services. **M/S/V:** Waller/Baker/5-0 (RCV: All ayes)
  - B.** Motion **passed** to authorize the mayor to sign the Consultant Agreement with Gray & Osborne for the South 3<sup>rd</sup> Street project. **M/S/V:** Waller/Baker/5-0 (RCV: All ayes)
  - C.** Motion **passed** to authorize the mayor to sign an Interlocal Funding Agreement with Wahkiakum County for the library. **M/S/V:** Waller/Hendrickson/5-0 (RCV: All ayes) Several councilmembers expressed concerns that \$2,000 was insufficient but acknowledged the limitations posed by the current budget constraints.
  - D.** Motion **passed** to authorize the mayor to sign an Interlocal Funding Agreement with Wahkiakum County for the pool. **M/S/V:** Waller/Hendrickson/4-1 (RCV: Ayes - Chamberlin, Baker, Hendrickson, Waller; Nays - Stowe) *Public Comment:* Gabriel Stevens and Megan Blackburn-Friend spoke in support of the pool. Councilmember Stowe suggested that the Town consider pursuing a countywide ballot measure to secure funding for the pool.
  - E.** Attorney Johnson and Mayor Olson provided an administrative update on the potential consolidation with the PUD. TA Johnson reported that he followed the same procedure used by Ridgefield's attorney during their consolidation process. He noted that he sent a letter outlining 13 key items to the PUD a month ago but has yet to receive a response. Additionally, the original bond counsel has offered to review bond issues at no cost. Mayor Olson highlighted that the PUD has publicly committed to "keeping the Town whole," which would require an annual contribution of at least \$500,000 from the PUD to the Town. He also suggested bringing the transaction to a public vote and establishing a formal procedure for reviewing the process going forward. The mayor inquired whether the Department of Health's questions were addressed in the final consolidation study, which the PUD has received but has not yet shared with the Town. Councilmembers expressed concerns about the lack of sufficient information to make a decision but agreed that they wanted to move forward with the process. Commissioner Healy remarked that a willing buyer and seller are necessary for the process, which is currently

lacking. Chamberlin argued that the matter should not proceed without input from every voter, while TA Johnson recommended waiting for a written agreement before putting the issue to a public vote.

*At 7:00 pm, a 7-minute recess was called and at 7:07 pm the meeting resumed.*

- F. Motion **passed** to proceed with negotiating toward consolidation of the Town of Cathlamet's utilities with the Wahkiakum Public Utilities District with the understanding that there are still negotiating issues and final acceptance of the consolidation between the Town and PUD which includes successful application and acceptance by the PUD and/or the Town to DOH consolidation funding. **M/S/V:** Waller/Baker/5-0 (RCV: All ayes) M Waller expressed concern about the funds running out and emphasized the importance of moving forward with consolidation and negotiations at a quicker pace. The council deliberated for a considerable amount of time.
- G. Motion **passed** to move that further negotiations proceed toward consolidation of utilities between the Town of Cathlamet and Wahkiakum Public Utilities District with appropriate experts (as approved by the Town Council, with the exception of attorneys) who have a history of successful experience in similar situations; and proceeding with intention to make reasonable progress in negotiations; and agreeing that updates to the council and public on progress are provided at minimum twice monthly; and that negotiation status be listed as an agenda item at each council meeting until negotiations are complete and a decision has been reached by the council as to the immediate path forward. **M/S/V:** Waller/Baker/5-0 (RCV: All ayes) The council deliberated extensively on the matter. TA Johnson clarified that the Town Council does not have the authority to hire outside counsel except under special circumstances, which this is not, as the Mayor holds the authority to hire the Town Attorney. Chamberlin expressed concern, stating that the committee approach could shift negotiations out of public view; CM Waller noted that while she was not committed to the idea of forming a subcommittee, she strongly supported the involvement of an outside consultant.

## 8. ORDINANCE:

- A. Motion **passed** to approve the first reading of Ordinance 685-25 amending employee salaries and the 2025 budget ordinance. **M/S/V:** Chamberlin/Baker/5-0 (RCV: All Ayes) CT noted that the librarian substitute was mistakenly classified as a pay class 5 instead of class 1. This error will be corrected in time for the second reading.

## 9. RESOLUTIONS:

- A. Motion **passed** to approve Resolution 458-25 declaring a 1982 Ford Flatbed Truck as surplus. **M/S/V:** Baker/Waller/5-0 (RCV: All ayes)

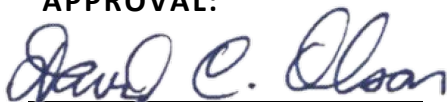
## 10. PUBLIC COMMENT: *Bill Wainwright provided comments regarding the PUD negotiation process.*

## 11. REPORTS/DISCUSSION: Written reports were submitted by the Clerk-Treasurer, Project Manager, PW Superintendent, Librarian, and Fire Chief. PWS reported issues with the telemetry system, which is not functioning properly and currently requires the crew to manually operate the system. The Librarian noted that while the majority of library cardholders reside outside town limits, most active users live within town limits.

## 12. EXECUTIVE SESSION: 30 minutes - Pursuant to RCW 42.30.110 (1)(i) To discuss with legal counsel representing the agency matters relating to agency enforcement actions, or to discuss with legal counsel representing the agency litigation or potential litigation to which the agency, the governing body, or a member acting in an official capacity is, or is likely to become, a party, when public knowledge regarding the discussion is likely to result in an adverse legal or financial consequence to the agency. It was announced that there would be no action taken following the executive sessions, and at 10:04 pm the regular meeting was adjourned into an Executive Session; at 10:34 pm the executive session was extended for an additional 10 minutes; and at 10:44 pm the regular session was called back to order.

## 13. ADJOURNMENT: *This meeting was adjourned at 10:45 p.m. on January 21, 2025.*

### APPROVAL:



David Olson, Mayor



Sarah Clark, Clerk-Treasurer