



TOWN OF St. JOHN
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MEETING OF OCTOBER 11, 2021

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Webb. Councilmembers Bezdicek, Hinds, Smick, Smith and Watson, Public Works Chris Canaday and Steven Engles, community member Dan Wardwell, Guest from Commerce, Cynthia Wall Fuller, and the Town Clerk were in Attendance.

The minutes of the September 27, 2021 meeting were read and approved as read.

The payables were presented to the Council for their review and discussion. The payables were moved by Watson and seconded by Smick. Motion carried by vote of the Council.

CL# 14207-14255	\$37,705.16
PR#	

Cynthia Wall introduced herself and explained her new role in the Department of Commerce's Small Communities Initiative (SCI) program. SCI staff will work with the town on an on-going basis to assist with infrastructure needs.

Cynthia initiated conversations about:

- The Approved Facility Plan
- Procurement of Engineering Consultant
- Income Survey
- Treatment Plant Violations
- Infiltration and Inflow (I/I)
- Short-term WWTP Improvements
- Funding

See attached notes

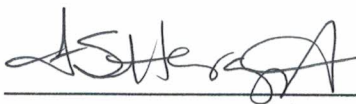
Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board sent notification of the Rialto's application for addition of Spirits to their current liquor license. Motion to approve the application was given by Watson and seconded by Smick.

Summary of Fall Clean up day was given. Garbage bin was full and scrap metal was about ¾ full. 3 high school girls were there as volunteers from 8:30 to 12:30, two additional girls volunteered for a couple hours as did 4 Boy Scouts and the Scout Leader. Public Works Chris Canaday and the Scouts even drove around town and knocked on doors with little success.

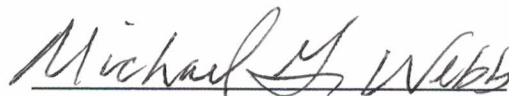
The purchase of new flags for Front Street for Veteran's Day was discussed. Motion to purchase new flags was given by Smick and seconded by Hinds.

Clerk brought up Past Due accounts. With the Governor's moratorium of utility shutoffs ending on Sept 30th 2021, the town can once again send shut off notices for non-payment. A good faith effort to prevent shut off is required. For the past 4+ months the clerk has been including information in past due bills about utility payment help by Whitman Co. Community Action. A letter will be sent out to those with past due accounts. The council was in agreement that a 3-month repayment plan would be offered with a motion by Smick and seconded by Bezdicek.

No request for additional comments were stated and it was moved by Mayor Webb, seconded, and unanimously agreed to adjourn. The Meeting was adjourned at 8:07 PM.



F. Shani Hergert
CLERK – TREASURER



Michael G. Webb
MAYOR

Town of St. John
Council Work Session
October 11, 2021

Mike Webb, Mayor
Lydia Smith, Council
Jeff Smick, Council
Chris Canaday, Public Works
Shani Hergert, Clerk
Cynthia Wall, Commerce

Bryan Bezdicek, Council
Denny Hinds, Council
Frank Watson, Council
Steven Engles, Public Works
Dan Wardwell, Community Member

Introduction

Cynthia Wall introduced herself and explained her new role in the Department of Commerce's Small Communities Initiative (SCI) program. SCI staff will work with the town on an on-going basis to assist them with infrastructure needs. At this time, the pressing need is for construction of a new wastewater treatment plant and collection system improvements.

Approved Facility Plan

The town has a wastewater facility plan approved by Ecology. This allows the town to move forward to seek design and construction funds of a new wastewater treatment facility, identified in the plan as the preferred alternative. The plan also recommends some improvements the town can make to their collection and treatment system to improve plant performance until a new treatment plant is constructed.

Procurement of Engineering Consultant

Town has received proposals from several engineering firms in response to their recent Request for Proposals. A short list will be developed and interviews will be scheduled.

Income Survey

The town median household income (MHI) as reported by American Community Survey (ACS) data is very close to the eligibility threshold for hardship (aka grant or forgivable loan) consideration from Ecology. The town is interested in conducting an income survey and would like to begin one as soon as possible. It will be important to advertise the income survey beforehand so that residents understand the reason for it and the importance of everyone responding. There are several options for conducting an income survey:

- Evergreen Rural Water Association (ERWOW)
 - Town is a member and may be able to contract with ERWOW to conduct an income survey.

- Ecology
 - Ecology contracts each year with Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC) to provide limited services such as income surveys,

asset management plans, rate studies, etc. The town has requested to be considered for a rate study funded by Ecology and RCAC. Ecology is still negotiating the new contract so not funding new requests until the contract is finalized.

- Self-funded Survey
 - The town can hire someone to conduct an income survey and pay out-of-pocket.
- Town-conducted Survey
 - The town could work with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and conduct their own income survey to determine eligibility for CDBG grant funding only. The town would need to conduct a separate survey for Ecology or other funding. Council wants to conduct one survey that will include information for all funding agencies.

Once the income survey is complete, the town can submit the results to Ecology and ask for a re-evaluation of their hardship status. The status can be re-evaluated while the offer list is still in draft (up to June 2022).

Treatment Plant Violations

The treatment plant continues to struggle with fecal coliform violations. Violations were reported 7 out of 8 months in 2021. The operator has installed a system to pump out solids that accumulate in area where chlorination occurs, but solids are built up in the chlorine contact chamber and the current chlorination system is not adequately treating the water before it leaves the plant. Violations of this nature leave the town open to third-party lawsuits under the Clean Water Act.

Infiltration and Inflow (I/I)

The town's collection system has several significant sources of I/I that are identified in the facility plan. Manholes and the school roof drain appear to be major contributors to excessive flow to the treatment plant. The facility plan has a comprehensive list of the manholes that are contributing to I/I and the recommended type of repair or replacement for each one. The town has started to address the manhole deficiencies by raising the height on four manholes. The town should aggressively address the remaining manholes identified in the facility plan, using town funds to procure inserts, rims, or lids, and using the small works roster to procure help with the construction of improvements. In addition to cost savings, self-repair will allow the town to correct I/I much more quickly than if they went through the application/design/construction process and sought public funds.

The school roof drain is a more complicated issue and the town should continue to work with school officials to find a solution. The roof drain should be disconnected from the municipal collection system and the stormwater collected at a separate location. The cost for this project is estimated in the facility plan at about \$200,000. It is possible that the Office of Superintendent of Public School (OSPI) could assist in funding rerouting the existing flows. Cynthia will follow up with OSPI.