



**Town of Coulee Dam**  
*Green Oasis at the Foot of Grand Coulee Dam*

**Minutes**  
**1276<sup>th</sup> Regular Council Meeting**  
**December 9, 2015**

**6:00 p.m. Regular Council Meeting**

Mayor Wilder called the 1276<sup>th</sup> regular meeting of the Coulee Dam Town Council to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Swearing in of Councilmember**

Clerk Stefani Bowden administered the Oath of Office to David Schmidt who was elected to fill the unexpired council position #1.

**Roll Call**

Council members present: David Schmidt, Gayle Swagerty, Duane Johnson, Ben Alling and Ken Miles.

Staff Present: Public Works Acting Superintendent Mike Steffens, Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Tim Lynch and Clerk/Treasurer Stefani Bowden. Attorney Michael Howe was also present.

**Public Input**

Bruce Bartoo wanted the council to have a reminder sent to the public to not feed deer and squirrels. The squirrels are causing damage to the trees in the park.

Bruce Bartoo provided the town council with information regarding a sewer line issue he has caused by Town trees. The town crew scoped his lines and he had Coulee Dam Plumbing auger the lines for tree roots. Mr. Bartoo had previously submitted to the town for reimbursement copies of his costs to auger the lines which were turned over to the town's insurance provider. The insurance denied the claim stating that property owners are responsible for the maintenance of their own lines. Mr. Bartoo stated that he may have to use poison to kill the roots in his sewer line and questioned the council as to what would be the ramifications if he ended up killing the trees by doing so. Council indicated that they didn't feel that method would kill the trees.

Gina Brueske was present to request the use of space within the Town Hall building to hold an exercise class for senior citizens that is a free class, open to the public and provided by the state. The clerk reviewed the information she had obtained from Municipal Research regarding the amount that should be charged for the space. The space in question is the town employee fitness room which is currently an un-rentable space. It is possible to grant the group the use of the space as a partnership with the town's wellness program. An agreement would need to be drafted to state that the town would grant them the use of the space and in turn they would allow

the town employee wellness program use of all of their equipment and access to their program. Council requested this item be readdressed during the Discussion Agenda section.

**Agenda updates & modifications**

None

**Consent Agenda**

Ken Miles moved and Duane Johnson seconded to accept the Consent Agenda. Motion carried.

Minutes                      Regular Council Meeting – November 30, 2015

Vouchers:                      Claim Vouchers and Checks:

Claim Voucher No.'s 35458 through 35490, 35452 and EFT's dated December 9, 2015 in the total amount of \$38,073.85.

Payroll Vouchers:              Payroll Vouchers and Checks:

Claim Voucher No.'s 35395, 35448 through 35451, 35454 through 35457 along with direct deposit funds and EFT's dated November 13 and 30, 2015 in the total amount of \$74,984.36.

**Action Agenda**

None

**Discussion Agenda**

A. Wastewater Treatment Plant

Mayor Wilder provided a brief overview of the meeting he attended with Indian Health Services (IHS), which included Elmer City Mayor Gail Morin and Public Works Superintendent Jimmer Tillman. IHS stated that the procedure for Elmer City will take time, as much as 1 to 2 years, before they reach a decision on the direction for Elmer City. Waiting, for the Town of Coulee Dam, will cost time and money.

The current agreement between Coulee Dam and Elmer City states that Coulee Dam has ownership in the system and do not need permission to move forward.

Attorney Mick Howe was present and reviewed the initial agreement which runs through 2024. He stated that the agreement was clear regarding improvements to the system and the responsibility that Elmer City has in the share of the costs. At this time Elmer City has refused to pay their portion. Questions have arisen regarding what actions Coulee Dam needs to take in collecting Elmer City's share. The practicality of termination of the agreement needs to be considered.

Councilman David Schmidt questioned the practicality of Elmer City funding a plant after the fact.

Councilman Ben Alling asked the attorney if he had reviewed the proposed engineering agreement. Mr. Howe indicated that he had and it seemed pretty standard. Mr. Alling commented that he feels the lift station repair should be added to the project. Mayor Wilder agreed and stated that was the hope and intention. Alling asked where interim funding would come from before Rural Development releases funding. Private bank loans and interfund loans were mentioned.

Councilwoman Gayle Swagerty passed along information from conferences that she has attended stating that cooperation between towns is highly encouraged. She asked if arbitration by a third party has taken place or if it has been considered. Mayor responded by saying that many attempts have been made. A significant amount of correspondence has taken place between Coulee Dam and Elmer City.

Schmidt voiced his opinion that the town needs to move on the project and remember that it is business, keep the emotions out.

Councilman Duane Johnson agrees that it is necessary to move forward with the project and hopes that Elmer City will come around in the future. He suggested that more communication and cooperation is needed to work together and perhaps a "retreat" between the two councils would help.

Councilman Ken Miles concurred with the others that the town needs to move ahead. Alling made a formal statement that the town needs to move forward with the Wastewater Treatment Plant in a timely manner to meet the goals set.

B. Bowling Alley Lease

Councilmembers Johnson and Swagerty have reviewed the draft temporary agreement for the bowling alley noting that they would like to see the town grant the renter the lesser summer rental rate for this first winter and raise the rate next winter after the business has had time to establish. Since the new owner has done a considerable amount of clean-up to the space, maybe the agreement could include the in-kind hours as the reduction in rate in lieu of the higher winter rates normally charged in the past. Ben Alling asked that the final agreement be drafted and presented the first meeting in January for council approval.

C. Melody Lease

Duane Johnson reviewed the previous Melody Restaurant lease and requested a couple of changes such as removal of the reference to renovations in lieu of rent and signage on roof of building. Council asked if any proof of maintenance has been submitted for air conditioner maintenance, which have not. Changes will be made and turned over to the town attorney for final draft.

D. Rental Space for Exercise Program

Council revisited the request from Gina Brueske held during the Public Input section. Consensus from the council was to allow the usage contingent on an agreement for exchange in equal value of service. Clerk will work with the town attorney. Ms. Brueske would like to begin utilizing the space the first of the year.

## Staff, Council & Committee Reports

### Mayor

The draft agreement from EWU to provide an intern to complete a comprehensive park plan was provided to the council. David Schmidt moved and Gayle Swagerty seconded to authorize the Mayor to sign the agreement. Motion carried.

The search for a Police Chief is still on-going. The candidates had been narrowed down to one, but unfortunately after continued research and discussion with applicant; it has been determined to not be the right fit for the town at this time. There are two more applicants to interview. Ben Alling feels that now is the opportune time to consider consolidation.

### Councilmembers

Gayle Swagerty presented an application that the Parks and Natural Resources Board had prepared for the Community Forestry Assistance Grant. Ben Alling had many questions regarding the in-kind and matching funds and stated he felt there are other areas that are in more need of funding such as streets. Swagerty attempted to explain that there are no new funds being requested, the matching funds would come from money already budgeted for tree care. Mayor Wilder reminded all that it is just an application to see if the town could get funding. It is not obligating the town to accept it. That can be determined if or when grant funding is awarded. The Town could choose to deny the funds if so wished.

Gayle Swagerty contacted Department of Natural Resources about the Tree Inventory data. It should be here within a week. The Department of Archeological and Historical Preservation (DAHP) will attend the Parks and Natural Resources Board meeting tomorrow morning. The Board has partnered with the Chamber of Commerce for a luncheon and presentation regarding historical registry.

Dave Schmidt stated that it is good to be on board and hopes to be of good service to the Town.

Ben Alling thanked Ken Miles for his years of service on the council. All other councilmembers joined in the sentiment.

Duane Johnson asked if the letter received from Bruce Bartoo had been addressed. Mr. Bartoo promptly joined in stating that it had not. Mr. Bartoo reviewed the letter and reminded council of his prior requests to have two trees removed from his property. In a letter dated January 26, 2015, Mr. Bartoo requested permission to remove trees located at 315 Stevens due to trees causing uplifting of sidewalk, making it dangerous for pedestrians and difficult to maintain. In another letter dated April 6, 2015, received from the Parks and Natural Resources Board, Mr. Bartoo had requested removal of trees, by the town maintenance crew, at 310 Stevens, 315 Stevens and 701 Pine. The council had told Mr. Bartoo previously that his issue would be addressed once the tree inventory had been completed. Gayle Swagerty stated that the data from the tree inventory has not yet been received. Mr. Bartoo asked the council to approve the tree removal. David Schmidt agreed that the tree type was a bad choice in that area. Bartoo said that he would plant a tree of the council's choice in its place. After heated discussion between Mr. Bartoo and Councilwoman Swagerty, Ben Alling moved to allow the town maintenance crew to

remove the trees with Duane Johnson seconding. Gayle Swagerty wants to explore other options of sidewalk repair before a final decision is made to remove the trees. Motion carried with 3 (Johnson, Alling, Miles) in favor and 2 (Swagerty, Schmidt) against.

**Executive Session**

None

**Public Input**

Fred Netzel said “why not ask Elmer City to bring us a new contract for review”. Mayor Wilder stated it has already been done. Mr. Netzel also stated that council needs to be aware of deadlines for grants, contracts, etc. so they aren’t up against a wall in making a decision.


**Adjournment**

Councilmember Gayle Swagerty motioned with Councilmember Dave Schmidt seconding to adjourn Council Meeting #1276 at 8:05p.m. Motion carried.

Mayor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
F. Gregory Wilder

Clerk

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Stefani Bowden