

**TOWN OF CUSICK, WA**  
**REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
**FEBRUARY 7, 2023 | 6:00PM**

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The Town Council of the Town of Cusick, WA held a regular monthly council meeting on Tuesday, February 7, 2023, in council chambers, at Cusick Town Hall, 111 S. 1<sup>st</sup> Ave.

All Councilmembers were present and accounted for, constituting a quorum. The meeting called to order at 6:00pm, with Mayor Duane Schofield presiding.

***Roll Call:***

**Present (In-Person)**

Duane Schofield, Mayor  
Everett Alford, Councilmember  
Tina Alford, Councilmember  
Jessamyn Fitzhugh, Councilmember  
Afton Servas, Councilmember  
Luke Servas, Clerk/Councilmember  
Robert Rosencrantz, POC Commissioner  
Maria Town, Librarian

**Present (via Zoom/Phone)**

Kate Hupp, WA. Dept. of Ecology  
Cathi Read, WA. Dept of Commerce  
Nathan Ikehara, WA. Dept of Health  
Cynthia Wall-Fuller, WA. Dept of Commerce  
Brenda Smits, WA Dept. of Health  
Zack Wallin, Keller Associates  
Rustin Rathbun, Cross Connect Operator – Cusick  
Bob Webber, Fire Chief – POC Fire Dist. 4

***Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance:***

This Regular Council Meeting for the Town of Cusick, WA was called to order by Mayor Schofield at 06:00 PM.

***Review & Approve Meeting Minutes – 01/03/2023:***

Council reviewed the regular meeting minutes from January 3rd. Jessamyn motioned to approve the minutes and Tina seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

***Review & Approve Meeting Agenda – 02/07/2023:***

Council reviewed the agenda for this meeting and Tina motioned to approve the agenda as written. Jessamyn seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

## *Reports – POC Sheriff's Office & POC Fire District 4*

Sheriff Blakeslee had notified the clerk that he was not going to be able to attend this Council meeting, but he did send his monthly call report. Luke read these call stats aloud.

Chief Webber shared that Fire District 4 went to 55 calls in January, 6 in Cusick, 4 in Usk, and the rest were agency assists. The department had 374.5 training hours for the month. The Chief shared that his crew was dispatched to a high-stress pediatric call and he was proud to report that his team performed wonderfully. The call unfortunately did not have a happy ending, and as a result Chief Webber ordered some counselling for emergency services personnel. The Chief ordered a couple of cameras for outside the fire house as they've had some incidents of doors being checked, so they determined that the extra security was worth the cost.

The Chief has attended two County Commissioner's meetings to discuss the financial unsustainability of the county's EMS services. As it stands the county's current paramedic services will only be sustainable through the end of the year. Chief Webber assured Council that our area would not go without paramedic services, and he has a number of ideas as to how he can make sure of this going forward. The Chief was elected the President of the Pend Oreille County Fire Chief's Association. Council congratulated the Chief on this achievement.

## *Public Comment*

Duane opened the meeting for public comment at 6:22pm. Maria Town, the librarian from the Cusick Library next door to Town Hall, explained something called a "Story Walk" to Council and then requested that the Town permit her to install one behind Town Hall on the property that makes up the Skatepark, Boat Launch, and Park. Everett expressed concern that these could get in the way of mowing the properties and there is a risk that they could be damaged by the same. Because Maria's request was not on the agenda for this meeting Council could not decide and/or vote on this item until next month.

## *Water/Wastewater Related Business*

### **Water Treatment Plant Renovation – Phase 2 / Community Grants**

Luke asked if everyone has had a chance to review the draft scope of work from Keller Associates for the Water Treatment Plant Phase 2 renovation project, and if anyone had any questions or concerns regarding the scope.

Afton shared that she felt the Town should request a broken-down itemized billing for this project and the lift station project that actually shows how many hours and the costs per hour for each task.

Luke said he had actually requested Zack provide the Town with this on Thursday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, and he would share what comes back from Keller with Council.

Afton expressed her concerns with the overall costs for these projects, a sentiment that Luke also shared. Just performing some basic math on some of the tasks for the WTP project for example, the "predesign" line item breaks down to 4.5 weeks at \$400 an hour. These figures just seem hyperinflated. This combined with the "TBD" tasks just doesn't feel right.



Luke also pointed out that the Town has been receiving 100% support throughout the Community Grants application process from Cathi, Cynthia, Rick, and Liz – not Keller, so what is the “Community Grant/EPA Support” TBD task on the compensation table?

Luke expressed that his gut feeling here is that Keller has “seen dollar signs” and is doing everything they can to maximize their profits and instead of billing based on the broken down services for each task – Keller actually came up with a lump sum fee and then had to figure out how to justify it later.

Duane shared that this is what <sup>3-6-23: “Misspoke”, No objections</sup> Keller did during the first phase of the project and the Town ended up having to get a bridge loan. <sup>the engineers</sup>

Duane asked if the Town is going to contract with RCAC to provide contract management services for the WTP project. Luke explained that Bubba with PUD may or may not be associated with RCAC still, but he is retiring soon, but it was suggested that we reach out to Bubba and ask if he would be interested in providing these services for us. Luke has talked to Bubba and they are going to speak again soon. Luke will update Council at our next meeting.

Luke clarified with Cathi Read as to what can be included in requests for reimbursement for contract management, specifically would this money cover Luke working full-time as needed with the extra hours going toward working on this project.

Everett asked if we had questioned Keller on why so much time is necessary for some of these tasks like predesign.

Luke is going to ask Keller to justify the amount of time they’re claiming to require.

#### **Dept. of Health – Groundwater Well Quality & Quantity Study**

Luke asked Council whether or not we would like to take advantage of money available from WA Dept. of Health that would provide for a study to figure out if using groundwater source wells would be a viable option for the Town as an alternative or additional source of freshwater.

Cathi Read suggested that the Town consider waiting to do this sometime down the road as we have so many projects already ongoing that adding another would just make managing everything that much more difficult.

There was a general consensus that this was sound advice and Council declined to pursue this at this time.

#### **WWLS #1**

Luke presented to Council concerns again with the costs of Keller Associates costs for this project. After doing some research Luke believes that Keller’s costs for main lift station replacement are multiple times more than similar projects, for example Seven Bays has recently put in a similar lift station and their design and engineering costs were \$25,000 compared to Keller’s \$170,000+.

Luke said that he believes he made a mistake in letting Keller talk him into opting for a custom design and engineered lift station vs a premanufactured can – and suggested that Council consider exercising the clause in our contract that allows the Town to switch the project to a “prefabbed” lift station.

Everett recalled that Keller had stressed to the Town that a custom designed solution would be far better for the Town.

Luke asked if Everett remembered what their reasons were, and Everett said he didn’t, but what he did remember was that when he brought up a prefab solution with WA ECY it was shot down pretty hard.

Cathi Read said that Kim Prisock had mentioned that the costs for design would be significantly less with a prefab, but the costs for construction would remain an unknown.

Luke added that Keller also said prefab would mean less design costs but greater construction costs.

Everett suggested that we ask Keller to explain why their costs are what they are.

Luke said that if Council was going to decide to exercise this clause it would need to happen right now because with the administrative order we wouldn't make the final engineering report deadline if we made this decision at a later date.

Everett expressed concern with all the unanswered questions.

Luke attempted to call Zack Wallin with Keller Associates so Council could hopefully get some clarification and answers to some of these questions.

Eventually we reached Zack and via speakerphone Luke asked the questions Council had. Council ultimately decided not to exercise the prefab clause.

### **Groundwater Monitoring Wells**

Luke asked Kate Hupp if there was any chance WA ECY would be flexible on the timeline for installation of these new wells. She said that she would check on this and get back to us.

### *General Business – Old/New*

### **Insurance Claim Update – WSP**

Luke has requested an accident report from WSP so that we can file a claim.

Signed on this 7th day of March, 2023, by 

Duane Schofield, Mayor – Town of Cusick, WA

Attested to by \_\_\_\_\_

