City of Forks  
Council Meeting Minutes Regular Session  
City Council Chambers  
September 23, 2019 7:30 p.m.

INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, AND CALL TO ORDER  
Pastor Pam Hunter with the Prince of Peace Lutheran Church gave the invocation. Clerk/Treasurer Grafstrom led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Fletcher then called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL  
Council members present: Preston, Brager, Soha, Hillcar, Weissenfels, and Mayor Fletcher. Staff present: Grafstrom, Clerk/Treasurer, Hampton, Public Works Director, Fleck, Attorney/Planner. Absent: Rowley, Police Chief. Attorney/Planner Fleck left for a portion of the meeting as noted below.

MODIFICATIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
Motion to approve the agenda with addition of the August 2019 Treasurer’s Report as action item number three by Weissenfels, second Brager, motion carried.

EMPLOYEE PRESENTATION  
Mayor Fletcher presented Nerissa Davis with a plaque thanking her for 20 years of exemplary service to the City of Forks.

PUBLIC COMMENTS  
George Powers, owner of LGD Properties asked on behalf of The Mobile Home Courts of the Forks Prairie that an open meeting between mobile home park owners and the City Council be scheduled to discuss the new water billing system.

Elizabeth Bartley resides in a trailer park in town. She doesn’t know the details of the new water billing system, but she doesn’t think residents should be forced to pay more. She would like a detailed report explaining why the change is necessary.

Lissy Andros, Chamber of Commerce Executive Director reported that the Forever Twilight in Forks Festival was very fun and successful. The festivities began with a power outage, which served as a good introduction to our lifestyle here in Forks. Power was restored by the following day, and then the rain started. The fans loved the rain, which broke for key events. Quite a few have already booked their lodgings for next year. The special guests were very nice and cosplayers successfully entertained the crowds. Kim Leppell did an excellent job transforming the Rainforest Arts Center into Volterra’s Piazza dei Priori. She thanked Kim and her crew, Rod Fleck for donating many hours helping to decorate, and the City and community for their support, including State Trooper Allen Nelson, who served as Charlie Swan throughout the Festival.

ACTION ITEMS  
1. Motion to approve minutes of the Regular Meeting held September 9, 2019 with deletion of a note regarding statements made during the public comment period by Bill Brager, second Preston, motion carried.
2. **Motion** to approve manual checks 37343 through 37347 and 37362 for $103,666.63, payroll checks 37348 through 37361 for $61,791.73, and claim checks 37364 through 37403 and EFT 091819 for $25,170.62 (excluding approval of claim check 37363 until additional detail is obtained) by Hillcar, second Brager, motion carried.

3. **Motion** to approve the August 2019 Treasurer’s Report by Hillcar, second Brager, motion carried.

4. **License with SITA OnAir for Air Traffic Monitoring**
   Attorney/Planner Fleck explained that there is a federal mandate that certain aircraft be equipped with transponders that allow them to be tracked in a particular manner. There are two companies, each with their own equipment, with the federal contracts to facilitate this mandate. The City has been approached by both regarding placement of Aircraft Communications Addressing and Reporting System (ACARS) devices and antennas at Quillayute Airport. One of the companies, SITA OnAir, a subsidiary of Société Internationale de Télécommunications Aéronautiques (SITA) has decided that a position between the roofs at City Hall is better suited to their equipment. The device itself is roughly the size of a commercial refrigerator, typically draws 48 kWh per month but is rated to a maximum of 108.12 kWh, and would be connected to the generator at City Hall for a flat rate of $150/month that includes leasehold tax and power. Any contract with SITA OnAir would include language making SITA OnAir responsible for removing the equipment and restoring the roof to its original condition should they decide for any reason to discontinue its use at City Hall. The rental fee would cover costs and provide the City with monthly income. The agreement will be renewed on an annual basis, but it is expected to be in place for the long term. Council agrees that the agreement be approved for one year, and a cost comparison performed to ensure that $150 per month is fair to both parties.

   **Motion** to authorize the Mayor and staff to enter into an agreement with SITA OnAir for the placement of VHF radio equipment and antenna at Forks City Hall for the monitoring of air traffic by Soha, second Weissenfels, motion carried.

[Attorney/Planner Fleck left at 7:55 p.m.]

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

1. **Review of the Municipal Water Code**
   In response to requests at previous meetings that time be made to review the City’s water code, Clerk/Treasurer Grafstrom referred to Chapter 13.20 “Water Department” of the Forks Municipal Code. She noted that there are several areas that need to be added to or changed. A methodical process, similar to that used to write the animal code, is needed. To illustrate this point, she compared our “Definitions” section with that of other municipalities’ codes. We have two definitions clearly noted, and while additional definitions may be provided in other sections of the code, Port Angeles lists 24 and Westport 26 definitions in this introductory section of their water service/system codes. Of the Municipal Codes she examined, Westport seems to have the most comprehensive code. It would be an effective reference in the review of our own code.
Discussion on how review of the City’s water code might proceed, and aspects that individuals feel to be important ensued. She asked council members to extract some terms that they feel should be included in our own definitions section so that staff could draft the appropriate language.

Council Member Brager feels that review of the water code should begin with the section relative to main-meter billing of mobile home parks in order to get that issue resolved as quickly as possible. He noted that the discussion held at this meeting was just what was needed. However, it was missing an important element, which is the participation of mobile home park owners and other ratepayers. Any discussion of the code should include input from the community. Perhaps the code will be maintained as is, but a review is necessary to ensure that it is relevant and valid.

Council Member Weissenfels feels that a clear explanation of the switch from individual meter billing to main meter billing at mobile home parks is needed. There is a lot of misinformation being presented, and the facts need to be clarified.

Mayor Fletcher reminded the public that anyone with questions regarding the water system and rates, or anything related to this process, is welcome to come to City Hall to ask their questions. The staff is there to answer those questions.

Council Member Brager suggested that George Powers, as a representative of The Mobile Home Courts of the Forks Prairie, to try to arrange a meeting of mobile home park owners, and even ratepayers if they are so inclined, where they could come to a consensus on their concerns with the current water code and any changes they would like to see. They would then be permitted to present the results during the public comment period at the next meeting. He further asked that this topic be included on the agenda again as a discussion item, giving Council the opportunity to discuss the concerns and requests presented. Clerk/Treasurer Grafstrom asked that any list of concerns and/or requests from mobile home park owners be submitted to her by Thursday, October 10.

2. Council Member Reports
Council Member Preston’s last day with the National Park Service is Thursday, October 26. He reported large numbers of Chinook (king) salmon going up the Elwha River.

Council Member Brager reported that the Olympic Natural Resources Center trail from the Timber Museum has been completely redone. It has always been a nice trail, but it is even better now.

Council Member Soha attended the Washington Rural Broadband Workshop in Olympia with the mayor. The workshop was very informative and well attended by a number of elected officials, their assistants, and anyone concerned with broadband, including Clallam PUD Commissioner Dave Anderson and representatives from the Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB). He would like more information on CERB and their work with broadband. Expanding broadband and high-speed Internet can only help our economy, and funding is available.
He will be working on the Lion’s Club firewood project this weekend. Also, he would like to discuss possible changes to the building code added to an agenda as a discussion item. He thinks our code related to small buildings and roofing should be more in line with the county’s code.

His Twilight guests enjoyed the power outage and inquired about booking for next year.

Council Member Hillcar has been asked by a member of the community about the length of time remaining on Interfor’s lease at the Industrial Park. Clerk/Treasurer Grafstrom answered that three years are remaining on their ten-year extension.

He thinks the speed signs are effective, and would like to see them moved around more frequently.

[Attorney/Planner Fleck returned to the meeting at 9:05.]

Council Member Weissenfels attended the monthly Clallam Transit System meeting. They are currently working on evaluations of the General Manager’s performance. She had a phone call from Cynthia Bork regarding recycling. Recycling is very important to her, so she, Cynthia, Attorney/Planner Fleck, and Brent Gagnon of West Waste & Recycling Inc. will meet on October 12 to discuss possibilities.

3. Staff Reports
Clerk/Treasurer Grafstrom stated that a lot of the information stated as fact during the public comment portion of the last meeting could be refuted, but she wanted to address one comment in particular so that the facts of the matter would be on the record. Darrell Conkling, co-owner of the Castle Rock Mobile Home Park stated that the owner of Forks Mobile Home Park has found third-party billing to be ineffective and will no longer use it. Clerk/Treasurer Grafstrom spoke with the owner of Forks Mobile Home Park the following day (September 10). That park owner said she is in fact “thrilled with the system”, which monitors usage and notifies her of leaks, and that she would not want to go back to the previous billing system.

The City is planning to have a regular section called “The City Scoop” in the Forks Forum. The intent behind this plan is to get information out to the public on what the City is working on at any given time. The average citizen has no idea what is going on at City Hall, and their only source of information on City activities is often negative, and frequently inaccurate, posts on social media. The first article will appear in the October 3 issue, and will cover the Department of Ecology grants we have received for drought relief. That will be followed by one on the water tank project.

Public Works Director Hampton and Clerk/Treasurer Grafstrom have been working on the budget. The 1MG tank is back in service. Mike Hirsch is now a certified residential building inspector. He relayed a recent incident of his crew performing above and beyond. A water customer failed to call for a utilities locate before doing some digging with a backhoe, and broke a six-inch water main. One Public Works employee was on site within twenty minutes, and the leak was repaired in about an hour and a
half. His crew was very professional, and they all worked as quickly as possible to minimize charges to the customer.

**Attorney/Planner Fleck** reported that union negotiations are underway. He will probably try to schedule a closed session, pursuant to the rules, to make Council aware of some of the issues that have arisen. He met with Colleen McAleer from the Clallam County Economic Development Corporation to discuss a variety of issues, including our need for representation in meetings regarding the Emerald Coast Opportunity Zone and its relationship with the West End.

He is also involved in discussions regarding a West End Community Forest. One of the issues being discussed is what a community forest should be. He feels that many involved have grand ideas, but have not considered how it would be funded. The (Department of Natural Resources) Solutions Table met in Forks, but Commissioner Franz did not attend.

He and Police Chief Rowley hosted an Association of Washington Cities staffer who visited to tour the jail and discuss a push in the legislature to require jails to offer medically assisted treatment to those in custody. This is simply not feasible in small communities like Forks for many reasons both medical and financial.

The Rainforest Arts Center is hosting The Nature Conservancy's Emerald Edge Conference today and tomorrow (September 23–24). He gave participants a walking tour of Forks, during which he talked about the roughly $10 to $12 million of government investment visible in our downtown area. The participants were also treated to a Logging and Mill Tour led by Richard (Squatly) Halverson.

4. **Mayor’s Report**
Mayor Fletcher attended the Washington Rural Broadband Workshop in Olympia, where he met with Governor Inslee’s policy advisor, John Flanigan and Monica Babine, a USDA representative with Washington State University. Local governments, hospitals, Mason County PUD, and even a farmer had presentations explaining how they use broadband or how they lost broadband. This workshop provided him the opportunity to speak with representatives from CenturyLink regarding the lack of reliable connectivity on the West End. He was encouraged when a representative from Clallam PUD sought out the representatives from Forks to talk about the problems we are facing.

5. **ADJOURNMENT**
Motion to adjourn by Soha, second Preston, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Tim Fletcher, Mayor

Audrey Graffstrom, Clerk/Treasurer

September 23, 2019