

City of Forks
Council Meeting Minutes Regular Session
City Council Chambers
June 8, 2020 7:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, AND CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Weissenfels led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Fletcher then called the meeting to order at 7:41 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Council members present (meeting conducted via Zoom): Gilstrap, Gingell, Soha, Hillcar, Weissenfels, and Mayor Fletcher. Staff present: Grafstrom, Clerk/Treasurer, Fleck, Attorney/Planner, Rowley, Police Chief, and Hampton, Public Works Director.

MODIFICATIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Fletcher requested that an action item entitled "Mayor's Response and Council's Comments on Events of Wednesday, June 3rd" be added to the top of the agenda before the regular business items and action items already scheduled.

Motion to approve the agenda with the addition as stated by Gingell, second Weissenfels, motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Clerk/Treasurer Grafstrom read comments from Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Lissy Andros, Ann Simpson, Lesley Hoare, and Sasha Folkner regarding the events of Wednesday, June 3. These comments have been incorporated into the June 8, 2020 Council packet.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Mayor's Response and Council's Comments on Events of Wednesday, June 3rd

Mayor Fletcher read the following statement:

As the Mayor of the City of Forks, I want to address the events of last week and I will be asking each of the Council members if they have anything they want to add.

I want to now address the family from Spokane who last Wednesday afternoon left Forks feeling harassed, intimidated and scared. I am very sorry about the treatment you encountered on your visit to Forks.

While the Sheriff and his officers continue to investigate the matter, I want to say that the events you experienced on June 3rd were inappropriate. That behavior does not reflect the Forks community of which I am proud to serve as Mayor. I do not condone racism or discrimination, nor will my government. Our 75th Anniversary slogan is "everyone counts here" and to me that means absolutely everyone.

Again, to the visiting family from Spokane, I apologize for how you were treated last Wednesday. I hope that you and your family can, in time, find a way to forgive our community for what you experienced.

Council Member Weissenfels stated that she was appalled by the events of June 3. She understands that there will be an investigation, and hopes that if any of the individuals involved are identified, they will face appropriate consequences.

Council Member Hillcar said he was troubled by the events of June 3. He was in contact with Forks police officers in an effort to learn the facts of the events. He does not feel that these events are an accurate representation of our community in general.

Council Member Soha was not in Forks when the events took place on June 3. He is waiting for the final investigative report to be issued by the Sheriff before taking a stance on the matter. He said that he understands that tensions are high at this time, but that is no reason to act foolishly.

Council Member Gingell agreed with Council Member Soha, and is waiting for the Sheriff's report. He would like to see apologies to the family by those involved.

Council Member Gilstrap said he went to Forks Outfitters as events were unfolding. He urged everyone to leave the visitors alone, even if they did turn out to be "antifa", until something happened. He claims that no one intimidated the people on the bus, no derogatory language was used, and no one blocked their vehicle. He did not follow them out of town or up the A Road, and does not know what occurred there. He is quite certain that race had nothing to do with the events that occurred, and is very angry about reports in the media implying it did.

Motion to concur with the Mayor's apology as an official statement of the City by Gingell, second Weissenfels, motion carried.

Council Member Gingell said the City will work to educate people that racism is wrong.

Council Member Gilstrap again stated that the events that occurred had nothing to do with racism, but did vote in favor of the motion.

2. Motion to approve minutes of the Regular Meeting held May 26, 2020 by Soha, second Hillcar, motion carried.

3. Motion to approve payroll checks numbered 38285 through 38301 for \$109,701.32, claim checks numbered 38302 through 38331 and EFTs 0620 and 062020 for \$67,174.67, and travel checks numbered 3582 through 3583 for \$92.40 by Weissenfels, second Hillcar, motion carried.

4. Motion to approve the April 2020 Treasurer's Report by Hillcar, second Weissenfels, motion carried.

5. Gagnon/Soloman Annexation

The annexation consists of approximately eleven acres. A map and the ordinance were submitted to Council. The petition was sent to the Boundary Review Board, which approved the action.

Mayor Fletcher opened the public hearing. There were no public comments. Mayor Fletcher closed the public hearing.

Motion to approve the Gagnon-Soloman Annexation Ordinance #648 annexing property belonging to the Gagnons and Lyn Soloman into the City of Forks by Soha, second Weissenfels, motion carried.

6. 2021 to 2026 Six-Year Street Plan

Public Works Director Hampton stated that uncompleted projects from the previous six-year street plan were rolled over to the 2021-2026 Six-Year Street Plan, and encouraged ideas for additional projects.

Mayor Fletcher opened the public hearing. There were no public comments. Mayor Fletcher closed the public hearing.

Motion to approve Resolution #488 adopting the 2021 to 2026 Six-Year Street Plan by Hillcar, second Gingell, motion carried.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. 1st Quarter 2020 YTD Reports: Jail Statistics

Chief Rowley reviewed the 1st quarter 2020 jail statistics. Jail population has been reduced to about half due to COVID-19 concerns as well as short staffing. Arrests are generally being limited to those crimes or individuals that represent a continuing danger to people or property. Contract holds are being limited primarily to Department of Corrections because they put inmates through a strict COVID-19 screening process prior to sending them to Forks.

2. Clallam County Application to the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office for Forks to La Push Olympic Discovery Trail Segment

Attorney/Planner Fleck explained that the County has applied for a grant to the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) for funding assistance to acquire the trail corridor between the SR 110/US 101 intersection and the Olympic National Park boundary as part of the planned Forks to La Push section of the Olympic Discovery Trail.

3. Resolution in Support of Local Law Enforcement Agencies for Protection of Constitutional Rights

Council Member Gingell asked if anyone had any ideas or changes they would like to make to the document he submitted regarding the proposed resolution. Council Member Hillcar suggested taking this on as a discussion item at the next meeting. Attorney/Planner Fleck noted that he had discussed a potential resolution in support of Constitution Week that the Mayor had asked staff to look into with Council Member Gingell.

4. Council Member Reports

Council Member Weissenfels said that she was approached by a member of the community who has an airplane and considers the fading of the numbers on the runway

a safety issue. Public Works Director Hampton said that they are aware that the numbers need to be repainted. They have added it to their list of projects.

Council Member Hillcar read from a prepared statement thanking local law enforcement for their work in keeping employees at Forks Community Hospital safe. He said that FPD officers and sheriff deputies are always very professional in handling issues, but also very compassionate in their dealings with patients.

Council Member Soha would like to remind the community that citizens should never take matters into their own hands, but should contact law enforcement first. He further recommended that people reach out to the appropriate authorities or City Hall when they have questions or concerns rather than getting their information off of social media.

Council Member Gingell praised the four high school boys who reportedly cut the trees that had been felled, blocking the family from Spokane from leaving the A Road, out of the way. He also said that he is excited to see the Olympic Discovery Trail reach Forks.

Council Member Gilstrap said that he feels media coverage of the events of June 3 were completely one-sided, and reporters need to do more fact checking.

5. Staff Reports

Public Works Director Hampton reported that the summer crew is back to work and busy mowing and weed-eating. The public works crew is eager to start work on the water line for the new well project. The 2019 Consumer Confidence Report will be coming out soon.

Police Chief Rowley was away on family business during the events of June 3, but has every confidence that local law enforcement will handle any issue that may come up with integrity and honor. He wants people to know that the title bestowed upon new officers coming out of training academies is "Peace Officer". He said that he knows the priority of officers here on the West End, and likely of the great majority of officers throughout the country, is keeping the peace and saving lives. He encouraged local law enforcement to remember that our community supports them fully.

Attorney/Planner Fleck reported that he would be helping out with the Forks High School drive-through graduation on Saturday, June 13, and that he has been in contact with the governor's office regarding guidelines with regard to the governor's phase system for our 4th of July celebration. He also said there will be a conditional use permit hearing for the Gagnon property in the process of being annexed into the City. He also teleconferenced with the Arcora Foundation, and will connect with Paul tomorrow regarding that meeting.

6. Mayor's Report

Mayor Fletcher said he is looking forward to a more organized opening of our beaches. He will be happy for the tourists to return, and says that they will be completely safe here. He thanked organizers of the Black Lives Matter protest held June 7th, which he attended to show his support for putting an end to racism.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Soha, second Gingell, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:46 p.m.



Tim Fletcher, Mayor



Audrey Grafstrom, Clerk/Treasurer