

City of Forks
Council Meeting Minutes Regular Session
City Council Chambers
September 27, 2021 7:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, AND CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Hillcar led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Fletcher then called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

On behalf of himself and the City, Mayor Fletcher offered his sincere condolences to the families of Shaiyann Cummins, Jaden Lohrengel, and Tyler Ellis, all of whom recently died as a result of a tragic automobile accident. He also offered prayers and encouragement to the families of Ariel Morales and Gyovanna Morales, who were critically injured in the same accident and are now recovering in Seattle area hospitals.

ROLL CALL

Council members present (meeting conducted via Zoom): Gilstrap, Gingell, Hillcar, Weissenfels [joined at 7:36 p.m.], and Mayor Fletcher. Staff present: Clerk/Treasurer Grafstrom, Attorney/Planner Fleck, Public Works Director Hampton, and Police Chief Rowley. Absent: Council Member Soha.

MODIFICATIONS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion to approve the agenda as presented by Gingell, second Gilstrap, motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Lissy Andros, Executive Director, Forks Chamber of Commerce reported that the Forever Twilight in Forks Festival held September 9–12 was a success, as were the safety measures they implemented. They have had no reports of attendees contracting COVID-19 as a result of participating in the Festival.

She then spoke as a private citizen, requesting that a four-way stop be installed at Calawah Way and Merchant Road. She stated that it would slow people down and could help prevent accidents and loss of life.

PROCLAMATION

Minnie Whalen, representing United Way of Clallam County, expressed her appreciation to the Mayor and Council for recognizing Resilience Awareness Month again this year. Clerk/Treasurer Grafstrom and Mayor Fletcher read the proclamation designating October 2021 as the second annual Resilience Awareness Month in Forks, urging all residents to learn about Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and to create a community conversant in resilience strategies. Ms. Whalen then explained that the Clallam Resilience Project she represents would be holding a variety of free seminars throughout October for the community to develop a common knowledge and language around neuro-biological responses to adversity.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Motion to approve minutes of the Regular Meeting held September 13, 2021 by Hillcar, second Gingell, motion carried.

2. Motion to approve payroll checks numbered 39854 through 39867 for \$71,831.80, and claim checks numbered 39868 through 39905 and EFTs as included in the total amount of \$57,891.80 Gingell, second Gilstrap, motion carried.

3. August 2021 Treasurer's Report

Motion to approve the August 2021 Treasurer's Report by Gingell, second Hillcar, motion carried 3-0 with Council Member Weissenfels' connection lost.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Request from Bicycle Rides Northwest, Inc. for Use of City Property

Attorney/Planner Fleck directed Council to information included in the packet regarding a request from Bicycle Rides Northwest to camp overnight (two nights) with a large group at Tillicum Park in mid-July, 2022. The group is prepared to pay a \$1,200 license fee to camp in the Park, a minimum of \$250 to a local group that would help move their equipment, and to offer a donation to a local charity or non-profit. He noted that if allowed, it would not be the first time the City had permitted an activity like this.

Council Member Hillcar expressed concern that allowing this activity could set a precedent for overnight camping in Tillicum Park. He then asked whether community members would still have access to the Park while the group was there, or if the Park would be closed to anyone not part of Bicycle Rides Northwest, to which Attorney/Planner Fleck responded that would be decided by Council as part of any proposed agreement.

Mayor Fletcher suggested the group move their camping area to the ballfields, so that the front, and most used, portion of the Park could be left open for community use. It was also noted that doing so would give the group more privacy.

Council Member Weissenfels said that she is in favor of granting the license.

2. State Auditor's Office 2020 Audit Exit Conference

Clerk/Treasurer Grafstrom said the State Auditor's Office 2020 Audit Exit Conference was held via e-mail. The Exit Conference report is included in the Council packet. There were no findings for the 2020 financial audit or the federal single audit. She thanked City staff for their assistance with the audit. The full audit report has been e-mailed to council members and department heads.

3. Council Member Reports

Council Member Hillcar referred to an article about Moab, Utah on the NPR website that says Moab, as a national park gateway city, is able to use a portion of revenue from Utah's equivalent of Washington's lodging tax for things not directly related to tourism, but impacted by tourism, such as grants to their police department and medical facilities. He suggests that the City begin having discussions, both internally and with lawmakers, to one day make this possible for gateway towns and cities in Washington State.

Council Member Weissenfels reported attending the Clallam Transit System board meeting. Three new coaches are to be delivered in April of next year, a possible Hurricane

Ridge route is still being negotiated, fuel-cell buses are still being investigated, and all paratransit vehicles are now propane powered.

4. Staff Reports

Police Chief Rowley reported six motor vehicle accidents in the past two weeks and several fatalities in our area. He said that police are monitoring traffic and speeds on Calawah Way, Bogachiel Way, and other main roads. However, recent social media posts refer to achieving “high scores” from the radar trailers on Calawah Way. He will be enhancing traffic enforcement in that area.

Attorney/Planner Fleck directed Council to a letter that went out to a group of landowners regarding field surveys being conducted by the federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in an effort to better identify flood risk in the City and the Forks Urban Growth Area (FUGA). The surveying should be completed in November, and preliminary data sets and maps should be available by Memorial Day of next year.

He reported having attended the Clallam County Districting Commission meeting, and noted that redistricting will have a significant impact on the City of Forks. He made a presentation on drought impacts in relation to Forks and the City’s experience working with the Department of Ecology on a recent grant before the Joint Legislative Taskforce on Water Resource Mitigation. Finally, he said that Council would begin hearing talk of a proposal for an ocean-based wind energy project associated with the Quinault Nation and a multi-national firm. Wind energy would be generated several miles off the coast to power the Quinault Reservation and then be distributed through the grid.

5. Mayor’s Report


Mayor Fletcher reported that the family and friends of Brett Partridge thanked Officer Ponton for the professionalism and empathy he showed after their loss. He then asked that the Council publicly show their support for freedom and local businesses. He stated that he has never supported the Governor’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, especially the mandates that have caused such divisiveness in our state and created unemployment during these financially unstable times. Nor does he support the Governor’s encouragement of individuals to report persons or businesses not complying with his mandates. He does support our local businesses, and encourages community members to do the same with their continued patronage. He supports the freedom of choice: to choose our individual responses to the pandemic, and to respect each other’s freedom to make their own choice.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Gilstrap, second Gingell, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.



Audrey Grafstrom, Clerk/Treasurer



Tim Fletcher, Mayor