

WEST YELLOWSTONE TOWN COUNCIL
Town Council Meeting
January 3, 2013

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Jerry Johnson, Mary Phillips, Brad Schmier, and Doc Stewart, Pierre Martineau

OTHERS PRESENT: Chief of Police Gordon Berger, Social Services Director Jack Dittmann, Finance Director Lanie Gospodarek, Public Services Superintendent James Patterson

The meeting is called to order by Mayor Jerry Johnson at 7:00 PM in the Povah Community Center

Portions of the meeting are being recorded.

The Treasurer's Report with corresponding banking transactions is on file at the Town Offices for public review during regular business hours.

ACTION TAKEN

- 1) Motion carried to elect Mayor Johnson to the office of Mayor for 2013 calendar year. (Stewart, Martineau)
- 2) Motion carried to elect Pierre Martineau to serve as the Deputy Mayor for 2013 calendar year. (Johnson, Phillips)
- 3) Motion carried to approve payment of the claims which total \$158,788.88. (Phillips, Stewart)
- 4) Motion carried to approve the Consent Agenda which includes the minutes of the December 4, 2012 Town Council Meeting and the December 18, 2012 Town Council Meeting. (Stewart, Martineau)
- 5) Motion carried to deny the Application to Maintain an Encroachment made by Two Seasons Recycling to place a 20-yard roll off container on public property in Block 32. (Martineau, Phillips)
- 6) Motion carried to approve the recommendation from the Marketing and Promotions Fund Advisory Board to award \$7500 to the West Yellowstone Chamber Snowmobile Events Committee for SnowShoot 2014 (held in February 2013). (Martineau, Schmier)
- 7) Motion carried to reappoint Barbara Klesel and Kay Matthews to the Marketing and Promotions Fund Advisory Board for three-year terms. (Phillips, Martineau)
- 8) Motion carried to reappoint Mayor Jerry Johnson to serve as the Town Council Representative on the Marketing and Promotions Fund Advisory Board. (Phillips, Martineau)
- 9) Motion carried to appoint Cole Parker to the Planning Board as the Gallatin County Commissioners designee for a term of two years. (Stewart, Phillips)
- 10) Motion carried to reappoint Pierre Martineau to serve on the Planning Board as the Town Council Representative for a term of two years. (Johnson, Phillips)
- 11) Motion carried to appoint Public Services Superintendent James Patterson to serve on the Planning Board as a town employee for a term of two years. (Martineau, Phillips)

Council Comments

Council Member Schmier comments that it was good to see people in town this past week, a good thing for everyone. Mayor Johnson adds that they didn't have any Search & Rescue calls, which is also a good thing.

Public Comment Period

WY News editor Abbie Tumbleson mentions that the paper received a letter this week from some visitors that expressed how much they enjoyed their winter vacation in West Yellowstone and cited multiple businesses that provided great service. Martineau adds that the downtown area looks beautiful right now with the holiday lights.

DISCUSSION

- 1) The first order of business is the election of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor for 2013. Stewart says that in his humble opinion, Mayor Johnson has done an excellent job this past year. The remainder of the Council agrees.
 - 2) Mayor Johnson nominates Pierre Martineau to serve as Deputy Mayor for another year. He says he really appreciates the backup Pierre provides.
 - 3) Stewart asks about the gas (vehicle fuel) bill as it is not on the claims list. Town Clerk Liz Roos explains that the bill comes by email around the 5th day of the month so it will be on the next claims list.
 - 5) The Council discusses the Application to Maintain an Encroachment made by Two Seasons Recycling to place a 20 yard roll off container that is used for glass recycling on public property. The application was tabled at the previous meeting. Public Services Superintendent James Patterson explains that he has talked to Gus Tureman, owner of Two Seasons, about selecting a more appropriate location. Patterson suggests that they allow placement of the container behind his business location in Block 20 or adjacent to the Public Works shops. Tureman would prefer to put it in the interior park behind his business because it would be more convenient. The Council recommends that Tureman reapply to place the container on the interior park of Block 20. Johnson says that they should also send letters to the adjacent property owners to notify them of what is being considered.
- A) **Operations Manager/Department Head Reports:** Operations Manager Becky Guay reports on current issues: **Water Meter Installation** – Staff continues to install water meters, focusing on residential customers. **Town Hall Project** – Contractor is setting roof trusses. The schedule calls for truss work to be completed by January 16. **Town Hall Bonds** – The \$1.6 million Resort Tax bond issued to the Montana Board of Investments closed on December 21. The first payment to Dick Anderson was issued the same day. **Police Sergeant Hiring Process** – Applications are due tomorrow, January 3, 2013. **Website Development** – Work on the website is proceeding and the new website is looking good. The site is up and running in the beta location and Dep. Clerk Munger and Big Fork Web Development are working on content development. Mandy also is beginning training on adding content to the site and site maintenance. We still need a brief biography and a photo from each council member as soon as possible for the website. **Legal Opinion** – We received a legal opinion from the Town Attorney that indicates that in the case of the resignation of a council member, the outgoing council member should be allowed to participate in and vote on the selection of a replacement (please see attached). **DNC Hotel Development Proposal** – Public Services Superintendent Patterson and I met with representatives from Delaware North to discuss the possible development of a new 4-star, cabin-style hotel off of Grizzly Avenue east of Yellowstone Basin Bank. DNC is hoping to have a least some of the units ready for occupancy early this upcoming summer. **Snowplowing** – Town crews have been focusing on plowing and hauling snow. We've had positive comments from the public on the Town's efforts and would like to hear any concerns that council members may have about this new approach to plowing. **Certified Annual Financial Report** – Finance Director Gospoderek has submitted the Town CAFR to the State as required by law. Kudos to Lanie for her outstanding effort to get this report completed on time, correctly, and with a minimum of contracted assistance from an outside accountant. The Town's financial position remains strong. **Work Session Scheduling** – Council

discussed scheduling two work sessions sometime in January to discuss: 1) Request from West Yellowstone Community Aquatic Center to provide land for the proposed Center; and 2) Request from Community Health Partners to discuss options for continued provision of health care services in West Yellowstone.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dated December 4, 2012, Rachel Sang, Chair for the West Yellowstone Public Library Board of Trustees, writes to request the following capital improvements to the Library Building: a deck with railing under the former bank drive-through and a door that opens from the Library to the deck. Guay explains that the Library Board thinks they can come up with enough money in this year's budget or through donations to cover the cost. Patterson says he will discuss a cost estimate with Head Librarian Bruce McPherson. Chief of Police Gordon Berger adds that he does not like the idea of French doors in that building. He says the police department still stores evidence in the vault in the basement and even though it is secure, they would have all night to work on it.

The meeting is adjourned. (8:15 PM)

Mayor

ATTEST:

Town Clerk

WEST YELLOWSTONE TOWN COUNCIL
Town Council Member Interviews & Appointment
January 8, 2013
6:00 PM in the Povah Community Center

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Jerry Johnson, Brad Schmier, Mary Phillips, Pierre Martineau and Blaize “Doc” Stewart

OTHERS PRESENT: Operations Manager Becky Guay, Finance Director Lanie Gospodarek, WY News Editor Abbie Tumbleson, Kyle Burden, Rocky Hermanson, Jerry Schmier

The meeting is called to order by Mayor Jerry Johnson at 6:00 PM in the Povah Community Center

Portions of the meeting are being recorded.

Public Comment Period

Mayor Johnson calls the meeting to order and invites the members of the public to comment. No public comment is received.

Mayor Johnson announces that they are going to interview three candidates for the Town Council seat that is being vacated by Mary Phillips. He explains that they have a list of twelve questions that they will ask each candidate, Tom Cherhoniak, Greg Forsythe, and Alexander Mitic. He says that each interview will last approximately a half hour. Following the interviews he will entertain a motion for appointment. In the case of a tie, they will caucus, two council members at a time, until they come to a resolution.

The first interview is with Tom Cherhoniak. Cherhoniak starts out by briefly describing his history in the community, which he has lived in for about ten years. He explains that he is employed as a “firefighter” at the Yellowstone Airport, but he doubts there is a floor or wall in the facility he hasn’t cleaned. He also mentions that he has served on multiple committees including the Downtown Improvement District, Health Services Advisory Board, and Town Hall Construction Committee. He has also volunteered for multiple events including the dog sled races, at the Social Services Department, and is planning to volunteer for the bike tour that is coming through town next summer. He indicates that he will not have any trouble devoting the time required to serve on the Council. He says that he does not know yet if he will run for the Town Council later this year, it will depend on how this goes. If he gets appointed, he will most likely consider it, but he does not know if he will run if he is not appointed. Cherhoniak says that he agrees that Council Members are held to the same if not higher laws and rules as the general public. He says that he has rarely missed a meeting for the other committees he serves on so he is reliable and he is a participant. He also indicates that he will support actions that he doesn’t vote for. He cites the example of the blue holiday lights in the downtown area the Downtown Improvement District put up this year. He says he wanted white lights and got out-voted, but the blue lights look great. He says that he doesn’t have a great answer for encouraging economic stability in the community. When asked about projects or programs that he would champion, Cherhoniak says he thinks there is a real need for a medical center. He says CHP (Community Health Partners) does not necessarily need to operate it, but he thinks it should be a priority. He says that CHP is losing money in West Yellowstone and they don’t want to leave. He says he would also like to see a more diverse representation on the Town Council. The Council asks him to elaborate. Cherhoniak says that there are multiple other people groups in the community that are not well represented and they would like to see change, but names no specifics other than the Hispanic population. Cherhoniak says he would also like to expand the shoulder seasons but admits he does not have any ideas to make that happen. The Council asks if he recognizes the tie between Yellowstone National Park and the town’s economy. He says that he does, but also feels like YNP has an agenda and has done little with the public comment it has received over the years. He says that he does think it is good public policy to allow use of public lands by non-profit organizations or local businesses. He says that the more activities and services they can offer, the stronger they are. The Council asks for more specifics. Cherhoniak says they would have to consider each request on a case by case basis and consider whether the use is good for the community. He also indicates he would support use of public land by local businesses, too. The last question pertains to current issues. Cherhoniak says he has already addressed healthcare. He thinks the proposed aquatic center would be great but is concerned

about the liability that would come with it. He thinks the 80 acres they may acquire from the USFS is a great idea and he is not sure how he feels about increasing the resort tax to fund historic preservation. The Council asks Cherhoniak if he has any questions. He asks the Council Members how they have enjoyed their time on the Council. Each Council member describes their experiences and frustrations as Council Members.

The second interview is with Greg Forsythe. Forsythe briefly describes his background and history in the community. He was born and raised in Colorado and moved with his wife to West Yellowstone 33 years ago to own and operate the Westmart Building Center. It was -62 degrees outside, his wife had just discovered she was pregnant, and he nearly burned down the lumber yard the first night they were here. He also mentions that he has been active in the Chamber of Commerce, the School Board, and currently serves on the Town's Parks & Recreation Committees and Police Commission. Schmier asks Forsythe about his answers on the application, specifically how he answered a couple of the questions as "not important." Forsythe answers that he is not really talking about himself or his accomplishments and doesn't think that is relevant in this situation. Stewart follows by stating that they do think those questions were important and felt they should have been answered. Forsythe maintains that he has been active in the community for many years but has never been comfortable citing his accomplishments. He says that he believes that he can bring a new perspective to the Town Council. He says that when he moved here, every business in town was privately owned. Today, there are three large corporations that own the majority of the property in town and it is a different economy. He has a degree in business and finance and has operated his own business for 33 years, so he feels he can contribute in that area. He recognizes that budgeting public money is very different than private money. Johnson asks if he is willing to make the effort to learn how the budget works. Forsythe responds that if he is asking if he has the patience to learn how the budget works before making changes, that he believes he does. He says that he has several long-term employees that he is confident can keep his business going which enables him to devote time to multiple meetings per month. He says that he cannot answer with an absolute "yes" or "no" as to whether he will run for the Town Council later this year. He says that he is a board member of the Yellowstone West Medical Center and healthcare is important to him, but he does not think that would be a conflict. He is a member of the Police Commission and the Council Members explain that he would have to resign from that committee, per state law. Forsythe says that he has attended multiple Council Meetings over the past couple years, he says that he has not always agreed with actions taken by the Council and shared that publicly, but feels that is his prerogative. Stewart asks Forsythe to explain a letter he sent a couple months ago that accused Council Members and the Operations Manager of manipulating a situation. Forsythe says that he has been able to discuss those issues with those that were involved and he thinks those problems have been resolved. Stewart says that Forsythe's application indicated his desire to represent all people, but asks how he will do that if people have "black" and "white" opinions. Forsythe answers that you have to listen to everyone and says that there really is no black and white, just several shades of gray. Forsythe says that concerning economic stability, they need new ideas. He mentions the influence of the big corporations in town. He feels like the economic stability of town will be determined by the influence of those big corporations and the federal government. Forsythe says he really doesn't have any criticism for projects or programs the Council has not addressed or accomplished. He says he has never been on a Council and doesn't think he can comment on what they have not accomplished. Forsythe says his priorities include improving the winter economy, more funds for special projects, establishing a five or ten-year economic plan, and encouraging families to move here with year-round jobs. He points out that the school superintendent has expressed a need for four new elementary classrooms, but does not need anything for the high school. He says that indicates they need jobs that are year-round so young families will move here and stay. Martineau asks if he thinks that is the Council's responsibility. Forsythe says that he absolutely thinks that this is the Town's responsibility, that they have to make this a year-round community. Phillips says she doesn't think it is the Town's responsibility, that they have to handle the impacts of tourism. He says he doesn't necessarily think it is the Town Manager's job, maybe they need a city planner, but they need new ideas. Guay asks Forsythe if he thinks it is the local government's responsibility to provide affordable housing or subsidized healthcare. Forsythe says that he thinks that it is as far as finding a developer for low-income housing and perhaps providing the land. He says the Town removes

snow now and maybe someday those interior parks will have to be used for housing. Forsythe says that he thinks that is good public policy to allow use of public land by non-profits or businesses only if they provide an essential service. Forsythe briefly comments on current issues facing the Council, he says he does support subsidizing healthcare and feels that is a real problem. He favors the land acquisition from the USFS but recognizes it is difficult to prepare for that not knowing how much money they will need. He does not think increasing the resort tax for historic preservation would pass in this community unless they bundled it with other uses such as healthcare funding and establishing a reserve. The Council asks Forsythe if he has any questions. He acknowledges that there has been some personality conflicts in the past, but feels he they can work past those issues and work together.

The last interview of the evening is with Alexander Mitic. Mitic explains that he moved to the community from Florida. He first visited this area in 2006 and knew they wanted to move here. He was able to purchase a rental property and start planning to relocate. The decline in the economy over the last several years slowed down their plans but they managed to hold on to the property and his family moved here a couple years ago. He says he has been employed by Citibank and recently was afforded the opportunity to do his work remotely, which allowed him to move to West Yellowstone. He explains that he has not lived in the community very long, but he is anxious to get involved. He says he works inside during the workweek, so he would enjoy the opportunity to get out into the community. He mentions community service he has participated in other areas, specifically donating time to rehabilitate a church that raises orphan and troubled children. He indicates that his schedule would allow him to attend necessary meetings, attend training workshops, and he would like to run for the Town Council later this year. He says he is not really involved with committees or groups and therefore no associations that would cause a conflict. He also says he maintains a high standard of living and has no issues with that. He emphasizes that he is a licensed CPA and feels he can offer financial and knowledge and experience. Johnson briefly explains that budget process and asks Mitic if he can commit the time to learn how it works. Mitic indicates that he thinks he can and states that although he is not familiar with municipal budgeting for a community such as West Yellowstone, he is familiar with fund accounting and would look forward to the opportunity. Mitic admits he does not have a lot of economic experience in the community, but he would support projects that encourage and create economic development. He also admits he is not familiar with past projects and programs of past councils. Mitic describes some ideas he has to such as encouraging more community events. He enjoys traveling and has seen multiple examples of such events in other areas and he would support that kind of thing. He mentions the Christmas Stroll and school sporting events that bring people out as good examples. Phillips elaborates on the question about use of public land by non-profits and/or businesses and names examples such as the construction of the Povah Center, the Yellowstone Foundation bus barn, and requests for land for an aquatic center or medical facility. Mitic says he would support such projects if they improved the town. Mitic says that he purchased land here because this area is so beautiful, but he does want to see growth and improvement in the community. He would support projects and causes that would accomplish that. He admits that he did not realize the extent to which the town is land-locked, but would still encourage growth and expansion. He thanks the Council for the opportunity to interview.

- 1) Motion carried to nominate Tom Cherhoniak to the position of Council Member. (Stewart, Martineau) Johnson and Schmier are opposed.
- 1) Stewart says that he thinks Cherhoniak would bring a diversity of ideas to the table, even though he didn't agree with everything he said. Johnson says he was impressed with Cherhoniak's willingness to say "I don't know."

Johnson says Cherhoniak will be sworn in at the next Council Meeting. He asks Cherhoniak to come by the Town Offices to pick up some information to get started.

The meeting is adjourned. (8:35 PM)

Mayor

ATTEST:

Town Clerk

WEST YELLOWSTONE TOWN COUNCIL
Town Council Meeting
January 15, 2013

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Jerry Johnson, Tom Cherhoniak, Brad Schmier, and Doc Stewart, Pierre Martineau

OTHERS PRESENT: Chief of Police Gordon Berger, Social Services Director Jack Dittmann, Finance Director Lanie Gospodarek, Public Services Superintendent James Patterson, WY News Editor Abbie Tumbleson, Scott Clark, John Gospodarek, Yellowstone Historic Center Executive Director Ed Geiger

The meeting is called to order by Mayor Jerry Johnson at 7:00 PM in the Povah Community Center

Portions of the meeting are being recorded.

The Treasurer's Report with corresponding banking transactions is on file at the Town Offices for public review during regular business hours.

WORK SESSION

Mayor Johnson calls the work session to order and explains that the purpose of this meeting is to discuss a proposal for an aquatic center, as presented by Scott Clark. Clark briefly addressed the Council at a meeting in December 2012 and distributed books that describe the proposed project and the Council scheduled this meeting to discuss the project. Clark explains that earlier today he talked to the manager of Fairmont Hot Springs who gave him a lot of insight about who is the clientele is that comes to Fairmont. He stresses that over 80% of Fairmont's clientele are tourists. John Gospodarek briefly shares some thoughts on the project. He says that they have the hotel rooms to support any kind of event held in Montana, they just need the facility. He says that a lot of people think that including a gymnasium and that it should be more than just a swimming pool. He says that the summer economy can carry them through most of the year, but they need something that is a non-controversial, non-motorized attraction to complement the draw of Yellowstone National Park. The group discusses the necessity of a feasibility study. Vickie Barta asks about the events center feasibility study that was prepared a couple years ago. Town Clerk Liz Roos says that they did have a professional feasibility study prepared about five years ago, at the time it did not recommend building the facility but did recommend alterations to the plan. Martineau shares a newspaper clipping from the Bozeman Chronicle about a feasibility study that was recently conducted in Bozeman for an aquatics area. The determination was that the facility would cost between \$4 million and \$33 million, depending on what would be included in the facility, but they voted against building it. Clark says that he talked to the man that conducted the survey and points out that one of the main reasons it was not deemed feasible is because of competition from Bozeman Hot Springs and several municipal pools. He says competition is not a factor here and they have the tourism. Clark answers multiple questions about the size and structure of the proposed facility and the method they would use to heat the water. Clark contrasts the project with Fairmont and explains that at Fairmont they actually have to cool the water they use, which uses a lot of energy. He says that based on the estimates provided by Fall River, it will cost them less to heat the pool than pay for the lights and heat for the building. The discussion turns to the land along Yellowstone Avenue and potential for leasing public land for the facility. Schmier asks if Clark would prefer a lease or a land donation. Clark says they would be satisfied with a lease arrangement. Abbie Tumbleson of the West Yellowstone News asks why they are now pursuing public land instead of one of the private lots in town. Clark answers that there are only three lots in town that are large enough for the facility and the owners are not interested in donating or contributing to the facility but only in selling their lots for cash. Guay asks Clark a couple questions about operating the facility, wages, and benefits for employees. Clark answers that they do intend to provide benefits and operate the facility full-time, year round. Stewart says that he keeps coming back to a feasibility study. He questions what will happen if the facility fails. Clark explains that he has researched that and there are options including seeking a benefactor or selling it outright. He says he has also established that virtually every aquatics center in the region that is affiliated with a school is subsidized by state and local government grants. Johnson says that if the Town were to agree to this, he thinks they must require a feasibility study. He says that when they attend municipal

meetings with other cities around the state, there are a lot of cities that would give their public pool away if they could. He says that the City of Forsythe spends $\frac{3}{4}$ of their budget on their pool. Clark acknowledges that is a problem in more residential locations, but West Yellowstone is different and has a unique draw. Martineau says he has concerns because there are multiple hotels that have pools in town and he doesn't know why someone would rent a room in a hotel with a pool and then go down to an aquatics center. Clark responds that there are still a lot of people in town that come in RVs or stay in the smaller hotels that would still be money ahead to rent the cheaper space and take their family to the aquatics center. Gospodarek summarizes that it sounds like a feasibility study is necessary and they should start looking for funding for that. The Council agrees and encourages Clark to keep working on it. The work session is adjourned at 7:05 PM.

ACTION TAKEN

The oath of office is administered for newly appointed Town Council Member, Tom Cherhoniak. Cherhoniak has been appointed to fill the remainder of Mary Phillips' term, which will end 12/31/13.

- 1) Motion carried to pay the claims, which total \$75,547.45. (Stewart, Schmier) See next motion.
- 2) Secondary motion carried to pay the claims, which total \$75,947.45. (Stewart, Schmier)
- 3) Motion carried to approve the Consent agenda, which includes the minutes of the January 2, 2013 Town Council Meeting and January 8, 2013 Town Council Member Interviews & Selection Meeting. (Stewart, Schmier)
- 4) Motion carried to approve the new business license application for Eagle Rock Fur. (Schmier, Stewart)
- 5) Motion carried to approve the new business license application for the West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce to sell "Get Lost" retail items. (Schmier, Martineau)
- 6) Motion carried to approve the Application to Maintain an Encroachment made by Two Seasons Recycling to place a 20-yard roll-off container to be used as a storage container for a glass cullet on the interior park of Block 20. (Stewart, Martineau) Johnson is opposed.

Council Comments

Tom Cherhoniak thanks the Council for the opportunity to serve on the Town Council.

Public Comment Period

West Yellowstone News Editor Abbie Tumbleson requests that the Council Members make an effort to speak into their microphones so the audience can hear what is being said.

DISCUSSION

- 2) Town Clerk Liz Roos points out that there is a second claims list with one claim for \$400 that should also needs approval. Stewart asks if the gas bill for the UPDL has a base fee of \$151 as the gas in the building is supposed to be completely off. Patterson says he will look into that since there should not be any gas used in that building. The Council asks brief questions about other claims.
- 3) Stewart clarifies that the question he asked about the gas bill at the last meeting was in reference to the natural gas bill, not the vehicle gas bill. Roos indicates she will correct that in the minutes.

- 4) There is brief discussion about the site plan for the lot, which is owned by Tim Daley on Canyon Street.
 - 5) Johnson clarifies that the Chamber has never had a business license before and they already modified the lease to allow this use. Executive Director Marysue Costello explains that the items they will sell are unique and will not compete with local business.
 - 6) Stewart says that he drove by the location today and it appears to be out of the way. Johnson says he still thinks private enterprise should seek a location that is on private property to operate. He says that he understands that many feel this is an important use, but it is still private business. Guay says that in speaking to the owner, Gus Tureman, he maintained that the Town approached him several years ago about adding glass recycling to his operation. He did not feel he had the space for the glass cullet and it was offered to him that he could put it on public property. Guay notes that was a previous administration and that discussion was not recorded.
- A) **Operations Manager/Department Head Reports:** Operations Manager Becky Guay reports on current issues: **Water Meter Installation** – Staff continues to install water meters, focusing on residential customers. **Town Hall Project** – Contractor completed setting roof trusses and is beginning to sheet the roof. **Police Sergeant Hiring Process** – Five (5) applications were received and are being reviewed by members of the Police Commission. **Website Development** – We still need a brief biography and a photo from each council member as soon as possible for the website. **DNC Hotel Development Proposal** – Architects for DNC have requested information about the process the Town uses to vacate a right-of-way. Staff is researching options. It may be desirable to hire a planning consultant to ensure the Town complies with the Montana Subdivision and Platting Act as well as its own Municipal Code. **Planning Board Training** – Staff has contacted the Montana Association of Planners to inquire about training provided for planning board members. We are working to schedule training jointly with Madison County board members. **Annual Audit** – The auditors were scheduled to be in town yesterday, but have rescheduled due to winter road conditions. The finance department is prepared for the audit and is providing information to the auditors as requested. **Participant Recreation** – It's the season for indoor recreation and Parks and Recreation are providing a number of activities for both kids and adults including:
- Youth basketball at the West Yellowstone School.
 - Dance classes for all ages at the Povah Center.
 - Water Fitness (just about killed me today!) at the Holiday Inn pool.
 - Kids movement and tumbling at the Povah Center.
 - Yoga class for all at the Povah Center.
- Amend the Sign Ordinance** – Staff has prepared an ordinance to extend the date of the program to partially reimburse reader board sign owners for upgrading these signs. The draft ordinance is being reviewed by the Town Attorney. **Fogarty Lawsuit** – Mediation scheduled for January 22, 2012 with the Mayor and Operations Manager representing the Town. Since MMIA pays any settlement, it is not necessary for the Town Council to establish negotiating instructions and authorize settlement limits.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dated December 24, 2012, Manager of the Yellowstone Historic Center (YHC) Ed Geiger writes to request a work session with the Town Council to discuss the YHC's future presence and management of the Union Pacific Dining Lodge. Dated January 11, 2013, Buck Taylor of Community Health Partners (CHP) writes to request a work session with the Town Council to discuss future sustainable funding of primary care health services.

The meeting is adjourned. (8:15 PM)

Mayor

ATTEST:

Town Clerk

WEST YELLOWSTONE TOWN COUNCIL

Work Session January 29, 2013

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Jerry Johnson, Pierre Martineau, Tom Cherhoniak, Brad Schmier, Doc Stewart

OTHERS PRESENT: Operations Manager Becky Guay, Finance Director Lanie Gospodarek, Public Services Superintendent James Patterson, Social Services Director Jack Dittmann, Ed Geiger Yellowstone Historic Center Manager, Carol Leisure, Yellowstone Historic Center, Finance Secretary, Kathy Arnado Social Services Assistant, Glen Loomis Yellowstone Historic Center Board Member

The meeting was held at 6:30 PM in the Povah Community Center.

Public Comment Period

Jerry gives an update on the 80 Acres and says we won't be on the docket for discussion until the fall with the Forest Service about those 80 acres. Jerry has had conversations with Cavan Fitzimmons and asked if the same parcels are the only thing that can be considered. Cavan responded that he would have to ask Bob Dennee and get back to us with that answer. Glen Loomis asks if it needs to be appraised again and Jerry said it has been appraised many times but it might benefit us if we end up doing it again.

DISCUSSION

Mayor Jerry Johnson opens the discussion by stating that the town's social services department and court will be moving out of the Dining Lodge and that we are here to discuss what will happen with building. He then turns it over to Ed Geiger of the Yellowstone Historic Center (YHC) to present their thoughts on what could happen as the remaining residents of the building. Geiger states that they think it would be their preference to stay in the building Geiger believes that if it costs the town to have them occupy another space it would make sense to stay there. Geiger mentions that the fiscal year for the town ends in June and the Historic Center's is a calendar year so that 2014 is probably the earliest that any agreement can start. Ed explains that they started to look at how they would begin to market the building and that they were expecting to dedicate a person for 1000 hours probably at a lower wage than the blended wage of \$26.00/hour that was presented in the data from the town. An issue that came up from their assessment was that while they thought they could grow the business, the expenses that need to be maintained make it so that it will take a long time to reconcile the revenue versus expenses. Glen Loomis thinks we need to consider the big picture and that our primary function for the dining lodge should be that we protect the building and use it. He presents the idea that it is better to have someone in the building rather than keeping it vacant and to start using the historic district for what it can be. Johnson states that \$17,000 wouldn't even come close to covering the costs if they turned over to the YHC tomorrow. Geiger suggests that maybe we set the goal that might be long-term and then transition into it over time. Johnson cites that even on previous councils on which both he and Loomis have served it was the goal that the town transition out of the building and have the YHC take it over. He also states the intent was that we use it and take care of it enough to eventually be able to use the building year-round while still allowing the local population to afford to use building. Loomis points out that the whole town benefits when the building is being used (properly) because the businesses flourish etc. Gospodarek asks if the building can maintain its historic status if we modify the building to be able to use it year-round. Johnson says yes that has been cleared with the historic preservation folks in Denver. Operations Manager Becky Guay asks Jack Dittmann, Social Services Director to expound on some of the issues of administering the building that he has the experience in facing. Dittmann says that the advantage the town has enjoyed is actually having staff present in the building. But that they have to come back sometimes on a Saturday or a Sunday and that those hours as Geiger points out continue to increase. Dittmann also observes that now that the rental rates have increased it seems to have made renting the building more popular. Johnson asks Geiger what the YHC would do differently than advertising on their website and word of mouth to increase the number of rentals and Geiger acknowledges that there are a finite number of days that are available to rent. Working with wedding planners and working on marketing to events that would encompass a weekly rental rather than a weekend are some of the ways that Geiger suggests that they could increase the revenue. Geiger also wonders why someone

from out of town gets to pay the same rate as someone who lives here in town. Johnson mentions that this issue has been discussed at length over the course of many meetings. Johnson says that there is definitely the dilemma of making it available to the people versus making it pay for itself. Guay asks how we can bring more hotel room revenue if it is only really available at a time of year that is already booked up around town. Councilman Brad Schmier says that he doesn't really see that as a problem and that more rooms will be created to accommodate. He goes on to ask Jack about the true function of his department and how this administration (of the building) has negatively impacted his department's function. Dittmann responds that most definitely his time would be better served in social services activities and that the food bank in particular has been taking the hit. Schmier points out that the public services' time won't be relieved by much if the YHC takes it over. Jack mentions that he has done quite a bit of actual maintenance because the public services guys were too busy. Patterson thinks that his department's time will increase. Dittmann also mentions that community service employees can't be supervised to do some of the tasks that they have overseen as they will no longer be there to oversee it. Discussion moves to YHC using the building in the winter and whether or not to have YHC keep their offices there. Geiger argues that sometimes people do come in and want to see the facility and or they have on occasion held exhibits in the winter. YHC Finance Secretary, Carol Leisure asks Dittmann and Kathy Arnado, Social Services Assistant if they show the building in the winter to potential renters. Dittmann and Arnado confirm that this happens at all times of the year. Johnson wants the staff to do an actual number analysis of what costs to run it as a business and to establish how many people we need to run it, clean it etc. and to summarize other actual expenses associated with running the building. Johnson clarifies that they want to see the comparison of what it would cost if it is taken over by YHC and what it would cost if they don't. Everyone agrees that the town will not be spared some costs of running it no matter who is administering it. Guay asks YHC staff to sum up what the benefit of taking over the administration of the Dining Lodge would be to the YHC besides getting to stay in the building year-round. Geiger states that preservation is their mission and the historic district is meant to be accessible. Councilman PierreMartineau asks why then aren't they trying to keep the museum open all year round. Johnson states that he would like to see the building be maintained and used. Loomis reiterates that all benefit from the use of the building. Geiger mentions that different marketing strategies that would change the mix of who is renting the building and this could be a way to increase revenues. In summary, Johnson directs the staff to do an analysis of costs so that the YHC can decide whether they can afford to do it. Johnson encourages the group to try to be long term with what we come up with and not just merely put a Bandaid on it.

Glen Loomis asks to speak about historic preservation and the proposed 1% of resort tax for historic preservation. Freshman Cary White said that there will be no action on this in this session of the legislature. He hopes that in this session, Cary will propose it to legislative services (the writing committee) so that there could be something to propose in the next legislative session. Mayor Jerry Johnson clarifies that the Town has to be the one that carries the ball and the town would still have to vote for it. But that they can't do that unless there is an amendment to vote on. Johnson also says that if it does get supported then we are bound to do it. Johnson also points out that it will probably take a lobbyist to move it through and that costs money. It is decided that a resolution should be drafted and presented at the next council meeting.

The meeting is adjourned. (8:35 PM)

Mayor

ATTEST

Finance Director