

**CLE ELUM CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES
JANUARY 14, 2025
6:00 PM
119 W FIRST STREET
CLE ELUM, WA 98922**

1. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, and Roll Call

Cassidy Buechle - Curtis - present
Kent Ratliff - present via zoom
Beth Williams - present via zoom @ 6:31 p.m.
Steven Harper - present
Jerred Weis - present
Steven Cook - present
Audrey Malek - present

Matthew Lundh - Mayor
Debbie Lee - Clerk
Mathew Bailey - Public Works Director
William LaRue - Veolia
Rich Albo - Police Chief
Ed Mills - Fire Chief
Colleda Monick - HLA
Jacob Michael - HLA

MOTION: Councilmember Cook made a motion to approve the absence of Councilmember Williams; seconded by Councilmember Weis.

MOTION CARRIED: 6 yes 0 no.

a. January 14, 2025 Sign In Sheets

2. Public Comment – Limited to 5 Minutes

Due to the number of people who have signed up to speak during public comment Mayor Lundh would like the Council to consider limiting the speaking time to 3 minutes.

MOTION: Councilmember Harper made a motion to limit the time for public speaking to 3 minutes due to the amount of people that are signed up to speak; seconded by Councilmember Cook.

MOTION CARRIED: 5 yes 1 no. (Councilmember Ratliff)

Brian Tate stated that there are systematic failures in the City of Cle Elum and abuse by the City leaders.

Karl Ohleman would like to see affordable housing and transparency with the City. He would also like to see a list of pros and cons of filing bankruptcy.

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Ingrid Vimont stated that EMS services are important to the community and would like the Council to really think about the affects of filing bankruptcy and the affects it would have on City services.

Greg Larson stated he does not work for City Heights but feels like the taxpayer's money is being wasted.

Kathy Wyborski thinks that the City has been bamboozled by Sean Northrup and that citizen will eventually have to pay him.

Sean Northrup stated that he would be happy to meet with citizens at a later time and would like to move forward and stop the back and forth. He appreciates the movement forward that was just announced after the Executive Session.

Carissa Grzetic stated that this has to be a hard topic with the Mayor and Council and that they have an opportunity to turn this around and move forward with City Heights.

Beth Marker applauds the recent decision to postpone bankruptcy as it would leave a bad perception for the City of Cle Elum. The Council will need to problem solve as a group which is hard but beneficial. She also stated that she thinks receivership would be better than bankruptcy.

Skip Haase has concerns about his hanger at the airport that he has had for 18 months, and he is experience some of the same issues as City Heights.

Michael Nelson listened to an interview of Sean Northrup and stated that Sean Northrup has tried to negotiate with the City and the City has not responded. He sees a lot of money going down the drain on both sides.

Larry Stauffer said that the Council has to make some good common sense decisions regarding Hanson Ponds.

Stacy Groh wants to know how the public has decided to give the Council and the Mayor a pass, she stated they have not been doing their job. People need to be held accountable.

Aubrey Shoemaker informed the public that they are moving back to Cle Elum and had lived near the development in the past and would like to see City Heights and the City come together and work things out.

Jeremy asked Mayor Lundh if he was going to set up a meeting with City Heights, Mayor Lundh stated if he answered one question, he would have to answer all questions, and this time is for public comment only.

Christine Heimbigner Simpson stated the insurance money has been exhausted and spent on legal fees. She asked since this was a new arbitration is there more insurance coverage? She would like to see the insurance agreement and have more information available to the public.

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3. Announcements, Appointments, Awards & Recognition

Mayor Lundh wanted a moment of silence for two important people who have recently passed away. Ben Goldie a long time Cle Elum resident, business owner and someone who had served on the Council in the past, also Scott Sparks the Kittitas County Superior Judge who was well respected and ran his courtroom well.

a. John Glondo - Recognition for Dedicated Service to the City of Cle Elum

Mayor Lundh presented John Glondo with a key to the City for all of his years of service to the City of Cle Elum.

b. Dawn Cameron - 2024 Pangrazi Award Presentation

Mayor Lundh presented Dawn Cameron the 2024 Pangrazi Award for all of her volunteer efforts throughout the City of Cle Elum. She was nominated by Mark Kirkpatrick.

c. Appoint Fire Chief- Ed Mills, 1st Assistant- Chase Stanley, 2nd Assistant- Carl Heimbigner, & Secretary- Kaylee Thompson

Fire Chief Mills introduced the 2025 fire positions:

1st Assistant - Chase Stanley

2nd Assistant - Carl Heimbigner

Secretary - Kaylee Thompson

MOTION: Councilmember Harper made a motion to appoint the 2025 fire positions; seconded by Councilmember Weis.

MOTION CARRIED: 7 yes 0 no.

4. Approval of Meeting Agenda

Councilmember Weis would like the Cle Elum Downtown Association added to the agenda under Public Appearance 7. C. and move item K. Letter of Support Kittitas County BEAD to New Business G.

MOTION: Councilmember Cook made a motion to amend the agenda as stated above; seconded by Councilmember Harper.

MOTION CARRIED: 7 yes 0 no.

5. Consent Agenda

Council was made aware of a typo in the County Library Agreement it had the wrong year as 2024

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needed to be 2025. The County just asked if we could change it in the document.

MOTION: Councilmember Harper made a motion to approve the consent agenda fixing the typo from 2024 to 2025; seconded by Councilmember Weis.

MOTION: 7 yes 0 no.

- a. Approve the Payables Dated December 31, 2024 \$459,218.43
- b. Approve the Payables Dated January 14, 2025 \$582,441.26
- c. Approve the Payroll Vouchers Dated December 31, 2024 - \$89,779.80
- d. Approve the Payroll Vouchers Dated January 3, 2025 - \$245,016.97
- e. Approve the City Council Meeting Minutes Dated December 10, 2024
- f. Approve the Special City of Cle Elum Council Meeting Minutes Dated December 19, 2024
- g. Approve the Special City of Cle Elum Council Meeting Minutes Dated January 6, 2025
- h. Progress Estimate No. 9 First Street Improvements Phase 3 Downtown Revitalization - Active Construction \$241,652.74
- i. Progress Estimate No. 3 & Final Second Street Pathway Safety Stabilization - Ascent Foundation & More \$590.98
- j. City of Cle Elum - 2025 County Library Agreement

6. Department Head Reports

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a. Rob Omans - City Administrator

See attached report.

b. Colleda Monick - Planner HLA

See attached report.

Discussion was had about the public comment period for Bullfrog Apartments, Colleda stated it was extended a few days due to the holidays and the public will have two more chances to comment.

Snowy River's Equipment's CUP was approved. They will need to do some mitigation work, and they are working with WSDOT.

c. Mathew Bailey - Public Works Director

Mathew Bailey introduced himself to the Council. He stated he has 12 years of experience and will make sure the infrastructure is maintained and is sustainable.

See attached report.

d. Ed Mills - Fire Chief

See attached report.

e. Rich Albo - Police Chief

See attached report.

f. William LaRue - Veolia

See attached report.

7. Public Appearances – 15-Minute Limit

a. 2025 Cle Elum School Levy - Gary Berndt

John Belcher the Superintendent of the Cle Elum Roslyn School District informed the Council about the upcoming levy.

See attached handout.

Gary Berndt is the Co-Chair and stated this is a capital levy that will help with updates to the 30-year-old school which is much needed. He would like to have the Council's support

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as the community needs to invest in the kids that are going to the school.

b. Bullfrog Flats Process Overview - Clara Park

Clara Park gave an overview on the Bullfrog Flats Development process to the Council.

c. Cle Elum Downtown Association - 2025-2026 Main Street Economic Vitality Program - Jordan Peterson

Jordan reported that the Cle Elum Downtown Association has a chance to be selected for an Economic Development Vitality program. There are virtual training workshops, and it is a two-year program that does not cost. She will present more on this at the end of the month. Jordan also spoke about the recent comments on Facebook, and she reminded everyone they should be respectful.

See attached handout.

8. Business Requiring Public Hearings

a. Resolution 2025-003 A Resolution of the City of Cle Elum, Washington, in Support of the Cle Elum-Roslyn School District's Proposition No. 1 Capital Levy for Safety, Security, Technology and Facility Improvements - Mayor Lundh

Mayor Lundh opened the Public Hearing at 8:21 p.m. and closed the Public Hearing at 8:22 p.m. with no public comment.

Mayor Lundh would like the Council to consider Resolution 2025-003 and support Proposition No. 1 Capital Levy.

9. Unfinished Business

a. Discuss Decision on Hanson Ponds Option

Councilmember Harper gave the Council a copy of the proposed resolution. They have seen this resolution at previous meetings. The Council has had discussion about the different options that the Kittitas County Conservative Trust have presented in the past. The Council is in agreement that option 3 is the best option to consider as it will cause the least exposure to liability. Councilmember Harper thanked Larry Stauffer for all of his work that he has put into this project.

MOTION: Councilmember Harper made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-004 Hanson Pond Option 3; seconded by Councilmember Weis.

MOTION CARRIED: 7 yes 0 no.

10. New Business

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- a. Resolution 2025-002 Adopting the City of Cle Elum & South Cle Elum Water System Plan - Jacob Michael HLA

Jacob Michael reported to the Council that the Department of Health requires any water system that serves 1,000 customers or more to have an updated water system plan. The plan has to show production capacity, waste treatment capacity and water storage capacity. Jacob Michael recommends that the Council approve this water system plan.

MOTION: Councilmember Harper made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-002 Adopting the City of Cle Elum Water System Plan; seconded by Councilmember Cook.

MOTION : 7 yes 0 no.

- b. Resolution 2025-001 A Resolution Adopting the Distribution of the 2025 Hotel/Motel Tax Fund Grants - Cle Elum - Mayor Lundh

Councilmember Cook reported to the Council that this is a culmination of projects that the County finalized at the November meeting.

MOTION: Councilmember Cook made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-001 Adopting the Distribution of the 2025 Hotel/Motel Tax Fund Grant; seconded by Councilmember Harper.

MOTION CARRIED: 7 yes 0 no.

- c. Resolution 2025-003 A Resolution of the City of Cle Elum, Washington, in Support of the Cle Elum-Roslyn School District's Proposition No. 1 Capital Levy for Safety, Security, Technology, and Facility Improvements - Mayor Lundh

Discussion was had that this is not a new levy, it is replacing an expiring levy with a capital levy.

Councilmember Harper stated he is not in support of the City supporting a ballot if it doesn't directly relate to city operations.

MOTION: Councilmember Cook made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-003 Supporting Cle Elum School District Proposition No. 1 Capital Levy; seconded by Councilmember Malek.

MOTION CARRIED: 6 yes 1 no. (Councilmember Harper)

- d. 2025 Lodging Tax Application City of Cle Elum - Downtown Association & Visitor Center - Rob Omans

Councilmember Cook reported that the Lodging Tax & Event Committee met and reviewed this application, since that time a budget has been presented and the plans of the space were attached. This application will create a new space for the Downtown Association and a Visitor Center. This request is for \$64,000.00.

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MOTION: Councilmember Harper made a motion to approve the 2025 City of Cle Elum Lodging Tax Application in the amount of \$64,000.00; seconded by Councilmember Cook.

MOTION CARRIED: 7 yes 0 no.

- e. Approve Bid and Sign Contract with Pease Piping for City Hall/Visitor Center - Rob Omans

MOTION: Councilmember Harper made a motion to approve the Mayor to sign the contract with Pease Piping for the Downtown Association/Visitor Center in the amount of \$106,400.93; seconded by Councilmember Cook.

MOTION CARRIED: 7 yes 0 no.

- f. Letter of Support Allowing the Creation of a Public Facilities District to Support the Community Recreation Center - Mayor Lundh

Mayor Lundh reported that this is a letter of support for a House Bill and Senate Bill enabling the City of Cle Elum to create a Public Facilities District, this would help fund the proposed Recreation Facility that is being planned.

MOTION: Councilmember Cook made a motion to approve the Mayor to sign the Letter of Support supporting a House and Senate Bill to create a Public Facilities District; seconded by Councilmember Harper.

MOTION CARRIED: 7 yes 0 no.

- g. Letter of Support - Kittitas County BEAD Application

Councilmember Weis had concerns that he may have to recuse himself due to a possible conflict of interest and would like to change the language in the second paragraph of the letter of support. Then Councilmember Weis did recuse himself due to earlier dealings with this company.

Discussion was had about the language and some felt that it wouldn't help the actual citizens within City limits of Cle Elum but more for underserved rural areas.

It was decided to leave the letter as presented.

MOTION: Councilmember Harper made a motion to approve the Mayor to sign the letter of support for Kittitas County BEAD Application; seconded by Councilmember Cook.

MOTION CARRIED: 6 yes 0 no. (1 abstention Councilmember Weis)

11. Report of Committees

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a. Update from COG Council of Governments - Councilmember Cook

Councilmember Cook wanted to get the Council's direction on how they feel about Council of Governments (COG) pooling all entity funds with Kittitas, Cle Elum, Ellensburg and Roslyn. This would enable all entities to hire someone to help with federal funding for projects. This amount would be based on population and determined at a later date. Nothing is set in stone yet just getting all jurisdictions input on this topic.

Councilmember Williams asked what the benefit of this would be. It was explained that it could be helpful for community projects and more regional opportunities for Kittitas County as a whole.

The Council thought this would be a good thing.

b. Public Works & Community Development - Jerred Weis Chair

Councilmember Weis reported that the Public Works & Community Development Committee met and created an updated Ordinance to allow more relief on the sewer side since the sewer rate structure was changed. If a resident has a water leak it will affect their sewer bill also, it was decided to make the amount higher for relief. The new amount is up to \$1,000.00. The customer will still have to meet all the guidelines for requesting relief. The three that are on the agenda today have been paused until this new Ordinance took into effect.

Leak Relief Request - Michael Weiser

MOTION: Councilmember Harper made a motion to approve the leak request for Michael Weiser in the amount of \$385.48; seconded by Councilmember Weis.

MOTION CARRIED: 7 yes 0 no.

Request For Leak Adjustment - Cherie Brumbaugh

MOTION: Councilmember Harper made a motion to approve the leak request for Cherie Brumbaugh in the amount of \$778.95; seconded by Councilmember Weis.

MOTION CARRIED: 7 yes 0 no.

Request for Leak Adjustment - James Staecheli

MOTION: Councilmember Harper made a motion to approve the leak request for James Staecheli in the amount of \$845.29; seconded by Councilmember Weis.

MOTION CARRIED: 7 yes 0 no.

c. Lodging Tax & Events Committee - Steven Cook

This was covered earlier in the agenda.

12. Councilmember Comments - Limited to 5 Minutes

Councilmember Harper is hopeful that the City of Cle Elum and City Heights will reach an

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agreement. He also stated that the City's meetings have to meet all of the open public meeting act requirements and meetings can't be held "behind closed doors" the city also has financial and accountability audits, and the City has good internal controls, and the public funds are handled properly. Councilmember Harper also stated that the new administration is even more transparent and accessible than previous administrations.

a. [FYI - January 2025 City of Cle Elum Project Summary - HLA](#)

13. Mayor's Report

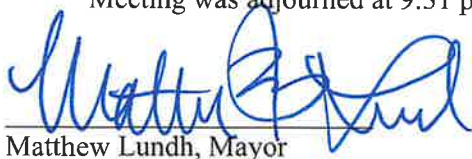
Mathew Bailey Public Works Director informed the Council that the City will be getting a base station reading system for the water meters soon. This will save time for Public Works to read meters and allow a public portal where residents will be able to go in and see if they have leaks, the residents will also be able to set parameters on the amount of water that they want to use and if they were to go over that amount they would receive a text or email letting them know they went over the preset amounts. Utility Billing Clerk Audrey Casassa will be able to monitor leaks closer and hopefully this will cut down on water loss.

Mayor Lundh reported:

- Last Thursday Rob Omans, Mayor Lundh and Matthew Bailey went to Yakima and met with HLA and discussed all of the current projects, it was time well spent.
- Met with the regional manager from Veolia regarding the upcoming contract renewal.
- Waste Management has added optional recycling services to the City of Cle Elum. Interested residents can sign up online. This should be available March or April. Current City Waste Management customers will also get a postcard in the mail with information.
- Mayor Lundh, Mayor Adams and Commissioner Osiadacz attended a leadership class at City Hall presented by the Chamber of Commerce.
- Mayor Lundh wanted to thank everyone who attended the meeting tonight and gave public comment. He appreciates the engagement of citizens and wants a resolution to City Heights, and it is not the City's intent to delay negotiations.

14. Adjournment by Motion

Meeting was adjourned at 9:31 p.m.


Matthew Lundh, Mayor


Debbie Lee, Clerk