

**CLE ELUM PUBLIC WORKS & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE
MINUTES
OCTOBER 1, 2025
8:30 AM
119 W FIRST STREET
CLE ELUM, WA 98922**

1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Present:

Steven Cook

Absent:

Ken Ratliff

Jerred Weis

Staff Present:

Matthew Lundh - Mayor

Rob Omans - City Administrator

Debbie Lee - Clerk

Mathew Bailey - Public Works Director

Mike Heit - HLA

Steven Cook requested to move Agenda Item 2C to be discussed first, reordering it as Item 2A.

2. Unfinished Business

a. Flag Pole Park Proposal - Gary Berndt, Rotary

Gary Berndt, representing the Upper Kittitas County Rotary Club, addressed the potential renaming of Flag Pole Park to Rotary Flag Pole Park. He shared that he had spoken with both the City of Ellensburg and the Ellensburg Rotary Club regarding any existing formal agreements related to the park in Ellensburg.

City staff confirmed that no formal agreement is currently in place between the City and the Rotary Club. However, the City acknowledged and expressed appreciation for the Rotary Club's continued efforts and contributions in developing and maintaining the park.

Mr. Berndt noted that Rotary does not consider the park fully built out. Additional amenities such as a bicycle rack and park benches are still needed. He expressed Rotary's interest in continuing the conversation with the City and proposed that, in support, the Rotary Club could commit to performing litter pickup between the park and Safeway twice per year.

Rotary will form a committee to develop a formal proposal for future improvements and continued partnership. Mr. Berndt expressed appreciation for the City's patience and

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support.

He also raised a concern about the electrical infrastructure at the park, particularly during the holiday season. Current extension cords are approved for use for 90 days, but a more permanent solution is needed. An estimated \$10,000 in upgrades would be required to address the electrical needs. Rotary does not currently have funding for this project, but Mr. Berndt suggested that Puget Sound Energy (PSE) may be interested in supporting the effort.

Gary Berndt will coordinate with Mathew Bailey, Public Works Director, to explore options for addressing the park's electrical infrastructure.

b. UKC Baseball Further Discussion - UPDATE

An update was provided on the status of the Upper Kittitas County UKC Baseball agreement. The question was raised whether the current version is deemed ready to proceed.

Mathew Bailey, Public Works Director, and Rob Omans, City Administrator, reviewed all edits and incorporated feedback received from stakeholders. Revisions included rewording several paragraphs to better reflect the park's operations and responsibilities. The revisions were made to strengthen protections for the city and to ensure accountability from UKC.

The updated draft is now ready to be forwarded to Inslee Best. City legal staff advised that the agreement be sent to them first, after which they will coordinate with the UKC attorney.

Minor changes may proceed for council consideration without committee review; significant changes will be brought back to the committee for further discussion.

c. Water/Sewer Classification for Churches - Discussion - Mathew Bailey, Public Works Director

Staff explained that the available solution for customers seeking an irrigation credit is to complete necessary system upgrades and install a deduct meter. This is required in order to receive credit for irrigation usage.

d. Stormwater Utility Fund - Mathew Bailey, Public Works Director

Staff provided an overview of funding options for the proposed stormwater utility. Multiple funding approaches were presented, with assistance from HLA Engineering, who developed a preliminary annual budget of \$500,000 for the utility. The method of funding will depend on Council's direction and how much of the cost should be covered by land use categories.

Key funding models discussed include:

- Option 4A:

- The most equitable option is using Equivalent Residential Units (ERUs)

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based on impervious surface area (e.g., pavement, rooftops).

- The ERU is based on an average 3,600 square feet of impervious surface calculated from 40 typical residential lots.
- Shifts more of the cost burden from single-family residential properties to higher-impact commercial and impervious areas.

- Option 4B:

- Includes a 10% allocation for undeveloped areas.
- Recognizes that large undeveloped parcels contribute less to stormwater impact than paved or built-up areas.

Mathew Bailey, Public Works Director, emphasized the need to focus on a single pathway to move forward with the Department of Ecology. Questions were raised about who would measure impervious areas. Public Works has done a preliminary assessment and can conduct a broader study later if needed.

Billing Methods:

- Utility fees could be collected through monthly utility bills or added to property tax statements.
- Staff noted that monthly utility bills may receive more public scrutiny, whereas property tax inclusion may have less visibility.
- HLA will investigate both methods and adjust billing calculations accordingly.

Estimated Monthly Fees:

- Typical Residential Lot (3,600 sq ft):
 - Option 4A: ~\$11/month
 - Option 4B: ~\$9/month
- Commercial Property:

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- Option 4A: ~\$32/month
- Option 4B: ~\$25/month

Mike Heit, HLA, presented a spreadsheet that aligns with current code requirements for stormwater utility billing. He explained that the 60% lot coverage rule from the zoning code would be used to calculate the maximum impervious area for residential properties, which helps avoid the need for frequent recalculations. Additionally, it was noted that some cities implement tiered billing structures based on lot size—for example, applying different rates to properties around 8,000 square feet—to create a more scalable and equitable fee structure.

Steven Cook expressed discomfort in making a final decision on the stormwater utility funding options as a committee of one and recommended that the matter be brought before the City Council for broader discussion and input. The topic will be placed on the agenda for the next Public Works Committee meeting to allow for further review. Once a direction is determined, the final funding approach will be incorporated into the Stormwater Management Plan.

3. New Business

- a. [September 3, 2025, Cle Elum Public Works & Community Development Committee Meeting Minutes](#)

Steven Cook accepted the meeting minutes as presented.

- b. [Request for Leak Adjustment Larissa Zep \\$202.64 - Audrey Casassa, Utility Clerk](#)

Steven Cook inquired about the billing cycle, noting that charges for July and August reflect usage from the previous month, as billing is always one month behind. He also noted that the account in question did not exceed the \$100 threshold or allow sufficient time for the required 15-day notice, due to the billing dates. This occurred at the end of one billing cycle and the beginning of the next billing cycle.

It was acknowledged that the customer repaired the leak promptly upon becoming aware of it.

Steven Cook expressed support for the adjustment and recommended that the City Council approve the leak adjustment in the amount of \$202.64.

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c. Indian John Service Agreement - Mathew Bailey, Public Works Director

Mathew Bailey, Public Works Director, reported ongoing contract negotiations with Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). WSDOT is classified as a Commercial A sewer user and will adhere to the city's standard sewer rate schedule. They will not be grandfathered into any special or reduced rates.

WSDOT has completed initial sewer sampling and remains under the threshold for Commercial A. The city will conduct monthly sewer testing to monitor WSDOT's discharge and verify compliance. Should sewer levels exceed the threshold, the rate will be adjusted accordingly.

A primary concern is the sewer discharge from recreational vehicles (RVs) at the site. Upon commencement of pumping activities, the city will establish a regular schedule for sampling and testing.

Discussion included the testing protocol, with samples taken from the sewer hole at the treatment plant where WSDOT discharges. Previously, WSDOT pulled samples from the current site. The city's sewer sampler is designed for industrial use and will collect small, periodic samples from the sewer line.

Scheduled monthly sampling was recommended to develop a consistent baseline, as opposed to sporadic testing which yields inconsistent data. The most recent agreement was reviewed by Rob Omans, City Administrator, and Mathew Bailey, Public Works Director.

The city's legal team will review the contract before it is presented to council. It was suggested that testing be conducted around high-travel periods such as Memorial Day or Labor Day to assess potential variations in discharge.

Pending legal review, the contract will be submitted to the City Council for approval.

d. Transportation Benefit District (TBD) Discussion - Mike Heit, HLA

Mike Heit from HLA provided an overview of funding approaches that have been under consideration for the past 6–8 months. He noted that, without further direction from committee members, it is unclear how much progress the group wishes to make at this time.

A public hearing will be required to establish a Transportation Benefit District (TBD) for funding purposes. He explained that implementing a 0.1% sales tax could be approved by council in an ordinance without needing a public vote. However, any rate increase above 0.1% would require voter approval.

Another funding option discussed is the use of car tabs, though the majority of cities prefer the sales tax route.

Steven Cook expressed preference in forwarding this matter to council, noting that it aligns

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with addressing bankruptcy-related financial obligations and represents a proactive step toward generating revenue to satisfy the city's judgment.

Questions were raised regarding deadlines for collections and submission to the state. It was noted that collection could begin once all approvals and resolutions are finalized. The goal is to have everything prepared by December for collection to start at the beginning of 2026.

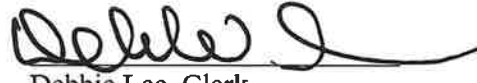
A public hearing is tentatively scheduled for November. Mike Heit with HLA, will explore options to combine related hearings and ensure all processes are properly coordinated. HLA will organize and prepare all necessary procedural steps.

4. Other Committee Comments

5. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 9:21 a.m.


Ken Ratliff, Chair


Debbie Lee, Clerk