

**CLE ELUM PUBLIC WORKS & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
COMMITTEE**

MINUTES

MAY 5, 2026

9:00 AM

**119 W FIRST STREET
CLE ELUM, WA 98922**

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Committee Members Present:

Ken Ratliff

Steven Cook

Staff Present:

Mathew Bailey - Public Works Director

Shannon Johnson – Planning Director

Chair Steven Cook opened the meeting at 1:01 p.m. and informed Councilmember Cornelius's resignation, which leaves a vacant seat on this committee for the foreseeable future.

2. Unfinished Business

a. Cemetery Rates - Discussion

Chair Cook handed the discussion over to Mathew Bailey, Public Works Director. Director Bailey provided background information from the previous meeting and explained the red-lined document for review in the packet. The redlined information represents a 45% increase in the cost of labor.

Chair Cook and Director Bailey clarified that the old rates were artificially low with the previous one-man grave digger operation for the last fifty years. The operation now includes removing the material from site, providing a tent and chairs, and lowering devices, and returning to the site after the ceremony to finish the burial.

Councilmember Ratliff made a motion to recommend the 2026 Draft Cemetery Rates as proposed to City Council. Chair Cook seconded the motion. Motion passed.

b. Municipal Code – Petition for and Relief from Utility Bill.

Chair Cook and Councilmember Ratliff provided background information and discussed recent petitions for relief. Chair Cook discussed former committee member Cornelius's concerns about language related to crawlspace. Discussion ensued. Chair Cook asked for Public Works Director Mathew Bailey's input. Bailey's response was that the code as written is acceptable and allows enough variance to apply credits accordingly. Chair Cook planned to report the committee's discussion to City Council.

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3. New Business

a. Cle Elum Public Works & Community Development Committee – Meeting Minutes – April 7, 2026

Chair Cook moved to accept the minutes as presented. Councilmember Ratliff seconded the motion. Motion passed.

b. Carpenter Museum – Water/Sewer Rate Discussion

Chair Cook briefed the group with information from his recent MRSC (Municipal Research & Service Center) and legal counsel research efforts. He explained that the city cannot provide a discount to a single person or entity. A new class of rate payer would need to be established, which may pose other concerns. Councilmember Ratliff provided city council background history on previous efforts to make non-profits a class that would have a reduced rate. Further discussion ensued regarding other municipalities procedures, and the importance of non-profits. Councilmember Ratliff suggested either keeping this item on the agenda for the next meeting or mentioning it to the full city council. Chair Cook planned to broadcast the idea to the full council to get their overall take on the idea.

c. Non – Payment Accounts – Water Sewer Discussion

Chair Cook noted discussion with Officer Rogers with the Police Department on this topic. He discussed finding a way to help those with significant financial challenges that have bills which continue to accumulate charges. Discussion ensued about possible ways to look at sets of circumstances and setting criteria for special rates if possible.

4. Other Committee Comments

a. Second Street Inquiry Discussion

Chair Cook briefed the group on discussion he and Deputy Mayor Cassidy Buechle-Curtis had with folks about Second Street at their recent Meet the Mayor forum. He thanked Public Works Director Bailey for his efficient response. Director Bailey gave a brief synopsis of the email response and explained various traffic calming devices. Councilmember Ratliff gave background history on Second Street, discussed morning school time traffic congestion and truck traffic. Chair Cook wrapped up the discussion and thanked the group for the discussion.

5. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.



Steven Cook, Chair



Erica Krum, Clerk