

Index Town Council
Monthly Meeting Minutes
October 1, 2007

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Index Town Council was called to order at 7:00 PM by Mayor Bruce Albert.

COUNCILMEMBERS AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT

Bruce Albert	Karen Sample	Lisa Stowe, Clerk/Treasurer
Bob Hubbard	Patrick Woods	Bill Cross, Maintenance Supervisor
Dean Johnson	Sean Horst	

Minutes from the September meeting were read and Hubbard moved to accept them with one amendment. Barbara Tacher requested that the phrase “resident” be changed to “part time resident”. With a second by Woods the motion carried.

Stowe read the September warrants, numbered 2232 – 2251. Payroll and tax warrants totaled \$4472.12 and all others were \$7160.96 for a grand total of \$11633.08. Johnson moved to pay the warrants as presented, and with a second by Hubbard the motion carried. The warrant to Western Sand and Gravel was to replace a previous check Western lost. This payment is minus the stop payment fee for the lost check, which is why the amount is different from the original warrant from February.

During public comments Steve Higgins asked about FEMA and flood protection. Specifically he was asking if time had run out for the final rip rap repair. Albert told him permits are good through October 15th. FEMA paperwork hasn’t gone through yet and is still in the process but the Council authorized the repairs anyway. These should be done by the deadline. Higgins asked if there was an overall plan to do anything beyond repairing existing riprap. Albert said any plans or intents are hampered by what we are allowed to do and what we can afford to do. He also explained a lot of the work is expensive and can’t be done in house. Hubbard said the berm idea was shut down but he hates to abandon it completely, and maybe plantings should be considered. These are good ideas and would be something a Council member could take on.

During Council comments, Horst said the Friends of Heybrook will be holding a fund raiser at Forest Park in Everett on October 28th. The cost will be \$25 for adults, \$10 for kids, with all the proceeds going to Friends. The ticket also purchases raffle tickets.

The Planning Commission had no business and did not meet. Albert requested that members start looking at land use ordinances. Specifically, many are lacking information on violations and enforcement.

Cross said vandalism seemed to be down this past summer, possibly because of the North Fork washout.

The Sportsmen’s Club will be back in business before the end of the year.

Albert talked to a sheriff deputy about fireworks, and the deputies are willing to assist when we decide what we want. Albert is collecting ordinances from other towns in order to come up with one for Index.

In following up on previous complaints about noise, Albert read through Snohomish County code. He would like the Council to give this issue further thought so that the Town can respond. Sample would like to propose a ten pm timeline. John Rubish said fireworks could easily be rolled into a noise ordinance. Ed Bures pointed out that there are two different ordinances from the County, with one being for general noise and one for noise that interrupts within a household.

The work facing the Town is getting more and more complex. When Albert was first on the Council years ago each Council member had a committee or area where they took responsibility. He would like to propose returning to that method. One reason is that Albert is seriously buried in work and he can't continue at that level on top of a full time job. Sample wondered how the previous committees ended, but it appears they just faded away. Albert suggested public works, public safety, environmental, land use and building, and ways and means. These committees would do the legwork and bring proposals to the Council. Sample would be interested in public safety and willing to take on the fireworks ordinance. She volunteered Hubbard for environmental work. Johnson is willing to take on public safety or land use. Horst says that with some mentoring he could take on public works since he deals with that in his job. Albert would prefer not to end up being the one to give assignments. Woods is willing to help out but has to have some direction.

Whenever an issue comes up Albert comes back with more than enough information and Horst says it is obvious the amount of time and legwork Albert is putting in. He says it is clear that a lot is required of a volunteer position.

Woods will take on organizing a flood drill for sometime this month.

Rubish suggested a work list where people in town could pitch in, and that for example he has good computer skills and that if jobs were listed people could pitch in. Stowe said rather than continuously revising a list of jobs it would be simpler to have a list of volunteers and skills to call when a job came up.

Regarding land use inspection and enforcement, there is a tremendous amount of work going on which is good, but at the same time if the laws are read and followed there is a lot of needs, like updating the interlocal, that should take place. Albert feels building and environmental inspections and enforcement should be done by qualified professionals and that the work should be done by someone who does not live in Town. One of the things he hates about his job is how difficult it is to get away from in a small town. It's impossible to have a social life, to simply walk down the street, without bumping into some issue, and this is an untenable position to be in.

Relating to land use, a stop work order was issued but the required paperwork was brought in before the meeting. At the west end of Town earthwork was done that violates Fish and Wildlife and the Town is working with homeowners to get that worked out.

The fees for animal licenses have not been raised since 1997 and do not cover one month's salary for the animal control officer. While Stowe says it is nice to have such low rates compared to other cities, it might be time to consider raising the rates. Hubbard will meet with Stowe to see about coming up with a proposal for the Council.

The public hearing regarding the proposed street vacation of portions of 3rd Street was held. No written public comments were received during the comment period. The Vanepps were unable to attend and so Susan Williamson spoke for them. They have the downstream side of the proposed vacation area. The portion bordering Williamson's property has been used by her for ten years, and was fenced when she bought the place. The Vanepps would like the vacation in order to build a small house.

Cross had concerns that if a flood ever took Avenue A, that portion of 3rd might be needed. Williamson wondered if the Town would ever put a road in because on the Index Avenue side there is a house on 3rd. There was further discussion around access in the event of a flood but it seems unlikely that 3rd would have any affect on Reiter road as far as connecting to the Town in a flood event.

Assessed value was discussed as the Town can require the applicants to pay half the assessed market value. Joel Zimmerman asked if the property would be assessed as he feels the property would be valuable if it made a buildable lot. He feels the value would also mean more if the Town was in a financial burden. Albert said the

adjacent properties would be used to assess value and that Zimmerman had valid points. Horst agreed with Zimmerman and would not want to see the land just given away.

Sample asked for clarification about definitions, if the value was based on land only or on the total value including buildings. The value is land only. Sample likes the idea of more revenue for the Town and felt if Avenue A was lost there would still be access through the alley, which the Town would have to open.

Hubbard feels the Town should be conservative when it comes to vacations and see this is a valuable asset that should be held on to. Not only because of possible flood damage to Avenue A but also because the land could be used as something for the public as a whole, such as a neighborhood garden. He also said parking in Town is limited, and it could even be used for that.

Woods pointed out that the Town isn't making much money on it as it is right now, and if it was vacated there would be ongoing tax revenue.

Johnson agreed that revenue is needed.

Albert said there is nothing wrong with the land just sitting there. Revenue is needed, but governments always need revenue. However, the vacation would give the Vanepps a buildable lot.

Sample moved to table any decisions until next month in order to review input brought up during discussion. With a second by Hubbard the motion carried. Some brief discussion followed about how a proposed vacation ordinance would have to be worded.

Albert thanked audience members for showing up as it is always nice to have people interested in what's going on in Town.

As there was no further business Hubbard moved to adjourn. Johnson seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Adopted by the Index Town Council this 5th day of November, 2007.

Signed: _____
Bruce Albert, Mayor

Attest: _____
Lisa Stowe, Clerk/Treasurer