

**Fort Jones Town Council
Regular Meeting Minutes
September 9, 2024**

CERTIFICATION OF POSTING AGENDA

I, JenniferJoy Cox, Town Clerk for the Town of Fort Jones, hereby certify that the agenda for the September 9, 2024 regular meeting of the Town Council was posted at the Town Hall, near the door of the Town Council Chambers, Ray's Food Place, Ace Hardware, on the front window of the Fort Jones Post Office and on the Town's website www.fortjonesca.org on September 6, 2024.

I declare under the penalty of perjury that the forgoing is true and correct.


JenniferJoy Cox, Town Clerk

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL:

The regular meeting of the Fort Jones Town Council was called to order in person by Mayor Mercedes Garcia at 6:02 p.m. In addition to the mayor, council members present were Kathye Banks, Mark Eayrs, Alex LaRiviere, and Julia Collie-Mason.

Staff present: Cherie Stephen – Town Administrator, JenniferJoy Cox – Town Clerk, Everett Hullquist – Public Works, Joseph Hess – Fire Department, Josh Short – Etna Police Department.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Mayor Garcia

PUBLIC COMMENTS: M. DeAndreis expressed that her group had to move their meeting from Town Hall to another location due to being charged fees, and that she thinks her group is under the Town Council so the use of the hall should be free, and that the room is often empty anyway.

DISCUSSION/REPORTS CORRESPONDENCE: NON-ACTION ITEMS

A. Police Department Monthly Report

Written report appears in the agenda packet. Chief Short said they obtained a new patrol truck. He said to reach out to him with any questions.

B. Fire Department Monthly Report

Written report appears in the agenda packet. No comments.

C. Public Works Monthly Report

Written report appears in the agenda packet. Councilmember Eayres asked if E. Hullquist would be taking time off for paternity leave, and how long he would be gone. E. Hullquist said he would, and it would be for six weeks.

D. Administrator/Accounting Monthly Report

Written report appears in the agenda packet. A citizen asked how the audits are going. Administrator Stephen that the pre-phase had been completed and she was awaiting an email back for the next step.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

1. a) Approval of Minutes

- i. Regular Meeting August 12, 2024
- ii. Special Meeting August 26, 2024

b.) Ratification of Disbursements: August 01 through 31, 2024

c.) Review Budget vs Actual July 1, 2024, through August 31, 2024

Public Comments: None

Discussion: Mayor Garcia requested to add to the minutes of the Special Meeting August 26, 2024, that there was discussion surrounding the need for a public works vehicle.

Motion: J. Collie-Mason moves to approve the consent calendar with the addition of the public works vehicle discussion to the minutes of the Special Meeting August 26, 2024.

Second: M. Eayrs

Ayes: M. Garcia, M. Eayrs, A. LaRiviere, J. Collie-Mason

Abstain: K. Banks

Motion: Passes

DISCUSSION / REPORTS: ACTION ITEMS:

2. Review, discuss, and possibly take action to renew the MOU with Siskiyou County and local cities for Economic Development Services.

Public Comments: Representatives from the Siskiyou Economic Development Council spoke regarding what contributions have been made to the town so far under previous MOUs. A citizen asked what are we getting for the \$6,000. SEDC responded that 11 businesses utilized their services last year. It also gives the town access to SBDC and Discover Siskiyou services, as well as unlimited access to SEDC staff.

Discussion: Council engagement with SEDC asking about more benefits. SEDC responded that all the local cities meet together, and that the county makes an additional investment of \$130,000 annually that benefits everyone.

Motion: A. LaRiviere moves to renew the MOU with Siskiyou County and local cities for Economic Development Services.

Second: M. Eayrs

Ayes: M. Garcia, K. Banks, M. Eayrs, A. LaRiviere, J. Collie-Mason

Nays: None

Motion: Passes

3. Review, discuss, and possibly take action to approve the job description for the Recruitment and Retention Coordinator.

Public Comments: None

Discussion: Councilmember Banks asked who wrote the job description. Chief Hess responded that he used a compilation from different sources and then tailored them to the town's needs. Councilmember Eayrs asked if there had been any interest. Chief Hess replied that it had to be approved by council first then he would fly it.

Motion: A. LaRiviere moves to approve the job description for the Recruitment and Retention Coordinator.

Second: J. Collie-Mason

Ayes: M. Garcia, K. Banks, M. Eayrs, A. LaRiviere, J. Collie-Mason

Nays: None

Motion: Passes

4. Discuss possible action to hire Cherie Stephen to the part-time Town Administrator position.

Public Comments: A citizen expressed concern about potentially losing momentum if turnover continues to happen. Also asked who was monitoring administrator, and if giving one person both administrator and accounting roles wasn't too much power or responsibility.

Discussion: Town Clerk Cox said that given the current standing of what the administrator has been able to accomplish, not only is it doable, but it is integral that one person has those roles at least until back issues have been resolved, additionally, it was part of a previous council decision to have one person fulfill both roles. Interim Administrator Stephen discussed her history in law enforcement and some of her previous accomplishments. Councilmember Banks said that Administrator Stephen was doing a fabulous job and very capable. Councilmember Collie-Mason made the remark that Administrator Stephen has done more in the last three months than most have done in a year.

Motion: K. Banks moves to hire Cherie Stephen to the part-time Town Administrator position.

Second: J. Collie-Mason

Ayes: M. Garcia, K. Banks, M. Eayrs, A. LaRiviere, J. Collie-Mason

Nays: None

Motion: Passes

5. Discuss possible action to approve the salary for the Town Administrator position.

Public Comments: None.

Discussion: None.

Motion: A. LaRiviere moves to approve the salary for the Town Administrator position.

Second: M. Eayrs

Ayes: M. Garcia, K. Banks, M. Eayrs, A. LaRiviere, J. Collie-Mason

Nays: None

Motion: Passes

6. Review, discuss, and possibly take action to approve the low bid from Whitehawk Construction to replace the out of service fire hydrants on the streets of Sterling and Newton.

Public Comments: None.

Discussion: Councilmember Banks asks if they are repairable or if they are too decrepit. E. Hullquist responds that one won't shut off and it could theoretically be rebuilt, but that the other is too old. Parts are no longer made for these. Chief Hess said they can't be used and that they have a lower water flow. E. Hullquist said that he thinks Whitehawk's bid is lower because there is an agreement to use the city dump truck to lower costs.

Motion: K. Banks moves to approve the low bid from Whitehawk Construction to replace the out of service fire hydrants on the streets of Sterling and Newton.

Second: A. LaRiviere

Ayes: M. Garcia, K. Banks, M. Eayrs, A. LaRiviere, J. Collie-Mason

Nays: None

Motion: Passes

7. Review, discuss, and possibly take action to approve the proposal for the Cowan Street Sewer and Storm Drainage Project.

Public Comments: None.

Discussion: Council and staff discussed the location of Cowan Street. E. Hullquist said that the sewer has had issues for decades, but that new pipes could last one hundred years.

Motion: A. LaRiviere moves to approve the proposal for the Cowan Street Sewer and Storm Drain Project.

Second: M. Eayrs

Ayes: M. Garcia, K. Banks, M. Eayrs, A. LaRiviere, J. Collie-Mason

Nays: None

Motion: Passes

8. Discuss possible action to send out RFPs for new legal counsel.

Public Comments: A citizen asked if there are any attorneys that do this. Another citizen commented that Etna has the same attorney as Yreka and that they are better than their previous attorney, their previous attorney being the town's current legal counsel.

Discussion: Administrator Stephen said ours has not been very responsive, that there is one she favors but wants to check into multiple. Chief Short said the one she favors is also the representation of Etna and that they are very responsive. Councilmember Banks asked for the time frame for the RFPs, the response was 30 days.

Motion: M. Eayrs moves to approve the action to send out RFPs for new legal counsel.

Second: K. Banks

Ayes: M. Garcia, K. Banks, M. Eayrs, A. LaRiviere, J. Collie-Mason

Nays: None

Motion: Passes

9. Review, discuss and possibly take action to purchase a new public works utility truck.

Public Comments: A citizen asked how this would be paid for, if it would be by a grant. It was answered that it would be from the bulk water sales.

Discussion: E. Hullquist requested to table this until next month as all the previous options were diesel, and that it is preferred to purchase a Ford due to dealership location. Councilmember LaRiviere remarked that Ford has better and more easily obtainable parts. E. Hullquist said that it is possible to have it hand built to order, and that some things they are looking for is a single cab, dually with four-wheel drive and utility boxes. Councilmember Eayrs suggested Corning Ford.

Motion: A. LaRiviere moves to table the action to purchase a new public works utility truck until October.

Second: K. Banks

Ayes: M. Garcia, K. Banks, M. Eayrs, A. LaRiviere, J. Collie-Mason

Nays: None

Motion: Passes

10. Review, discuss and possibly take action to adopt Resolution 1132 approving the Volunteer Fire Capacity Grant agreement.

Public Comments: None.

Discussion: Councilmember Banks asked if it was a matching grant. Chief Hess responded affirmatively, and that the amount had been reduced slightly due to CalFire removing a couple of the items listed. He said we submit and they reimburse us. Councilmember Banks asked if the purchase of this equipment would bring the fire department up to speed. Chief Hess said it would with the radios, and it would go a long way towards PPE.

Motion: K. Banks moves to adopt Resolution 1132 approving the Volunteer Fire Capacity Grant Agreement.

Second: A. LaRiviere

Ayes: M. Garcia, K. Banks, M. Eayrs, A. LaRiviere, J. Collie-Mason

Nays: None

Motion: Passes

STAFF COMMENTS: None.

COUNCIL COMMENTS: None.

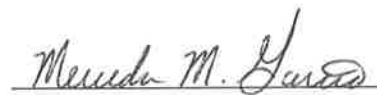
ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m. The next regular town council meeting is scheduled to be held on October 14, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.

Attest:


Cherie Stephen, Interim Town Administrator

Approved:


Mercedes M. Garcia, Mayor