

**Town of Twisp**  
**Special Meeting - Retreat**  
**Council Minutes – 02/10/2023**

Mayor Ing-Moody called the special meeting/retreat to order on Friday, February 10th, 2023 at 12:08 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Council Member Studen.

Retreat Theme: “Focus on Sustainability”

Council Members present: Aaron Studen  
Mark Easton  
Hans Smith  
Alan Caswell  
Katrina Auburn

Department Heads present: Randy Kilmer, Clerk/Treasurer  
Ty Sheehan, Chief of Police  
Kurt Danison, Town Planner  
Andrew Denham, Public Works Director  
Dan Higbee, Building Official - Remote

**Consent Agenda**

Council Member Smith motioned to approve the consent agenda with a minor change in the 8-23-22 minutes to reflect the correct funding requested by the Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation. Council Member Easton seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

**Mayor’s Introduction**

Mayor Ing-Moody welcomed everyone and expressed how happy she was to be meeting with the Council at the retreat again. Due to Covid, there hasn’t been a Council Retreat since 2019. She noted that retreats are always a valuable time in which town staff and decision makers come together to discuss their vision and the challenges and opportunities the town may face in planning for a viable future. She stated that a retreat is an opportunity for the group to understand how we have arrived at where we are, what has been accomplished, and what is scheduled for the next year and beyond. The Mayor expressed her thanks and appreciation to staff for their diligent efforts during these difficult past few years during the pandemic, moving, amidst staffing shortages. She recognized that none of the staff or council are immune to outside forces, and that none of the challenges facing the Town have been simple solved by quick fixes. She looks forward to a productive council retreat and thanks all for their attendance and participation.

## **Department Head Reports**

Each Department Head was asked to prepare a report to present at the retreat to inform Council Members of the state of each of their departments, including future objectives.

### **Planning Department – Planner Kurt Danison**

Planner Danison provided the following report to the council.

#### **Planning Department**

##### **Goals and Workplan – 2023 to 2028**

*The mission of the Twisp Planning Department is to implement the vision expressed in the Town of Twisp Comprehensive Plan through the fair, equitable and consistent administration of the Town's land use codes.*

In 2022 and thus far in 2023 the Town's planning team has accomplished the following:

- Reviewed Business License Applications
- Reviewed Building Permits
- Numerous informal and formal pre-application meetings for potential plats/PDs, CUP's, Variances, Shoreline, Floodplain, BLA,s and Administrative Permits with potential applicants
- Numerous phone calls responding to questions related to zoning and other codes and how they affect specific properties
- Prepared reports and letters about specific land use issues/questions
- Meetings and discussion regarding TwispWorks and impacts on neighbors
- Learned more details about building code items that impact certain aspects of our land use codes
- Worked with new Deputy Clerk on processes and procedures for land use permitting
- Processed Short Plats:
  - Processed 2 preliminary PD's (Orchard Hills and Twisp Townhomes) in 2022
  - No final approvals for long plats/PDs in 2022
  - Processed Boundary Line Adjustments: 1 to date in 2023

- Processed 0 Shoreline Exemptions
- Issued Administrative Permits
- Processed 0 floodplain/shoreline/critical areas permits
- Reviewed Impact Assessment checklists
- Attended Department Head Meetings
- Attended Planning Commission Meetings
- Attended Economic Development District Meetings
- Attended Economic Alliance Meetings
- Completed DRAFT update of Sign Code 2022

For the remainder of 2023 and beyond, as your contract planner I will strive to:

- Maintain open communications with the Mayor, Town Council, Planning Commission and Department Heads in order to facilitate interpretation and implementation of the community's various plans and codes
- Advise the Mayor, Town Council and Planning Commission of activities and issues that may warrant review and revision of plans and codes
- Keep abreast of issues related to community development, land use planning and regulatory requirements at the local, county, state and federal level and potential sources of funding to address or implement in Twisp
- Respond to questions, concerns and comments in a timely manner
- Assist in preparation of grant/loan applications and related materials as requested
- Process land use permits in a timely manner
- Follow through on Planned Developments and other development projects
- Complete update of Sign Code
- Initiate update of Land Use Element and preparation of Housing Element for Comprehensive Plan

- Review business licenses and building permits

#### Short Term Planning Goals (2023-2024):

- Attend Department Head Meetings
- Continue providing advice and assistance to the Public Works on projects
- Complete work on updates to Comprehensive Plan
- Initiate work on updating of Zoning Code to reflect updated Comprehensive Plan
- Continue to coordinate with Building Official, Public Works Director and Deputy Clerk on review, approval and any follow up on building permits, business licenses and administrative permits
- Identify and implement improvements to permit applications and review processes
- Follow up on pending applications for BLA's, Administrative Permits and PD's.
- Participate as a board member on the Economic Alliance and North Central Economic Development District (representing Tonasket and other consortium communities – cost split 6 ways)

#### Medium Term Planning Goals (2024-2025):

- Refine and continue short term goals
- Train appropriate staff on planning process and procedures
- Update development regulations as needed

#### Long Term Planning Goals (2025-2028)

- Refine and continue short and medium-term goals

#### **Building Department – Dan Higbee**

Dan Higbee joined the meeting remotely and gave a verbal report to the council. Twenty-one building permits were issued in 2022, and thirty were issued in 2021. These permits vary in type, including: solar panels, garages, carports, remodels, new residential construction, and town capital projects. Dan would like to note that due to upcoming staffing concerns at the county, the Town of Twisp might start looking at options for a building official outside of

contracting with the County. Larry Surface, a current county employee who's planning to retire, may be interested in contracting with the Town in the future.

### **Clerk's Department – Clerk/Treasurer Randy Kilmer**

Clerk Kilmer provided the following report to the council.

*The Twisp Clerk's Office staff works hard to stay in compliance and to avoid any liability issues or judgements against the Town and to support other departments to facilitate and collaborate for the overall good of the town in a professional manner.*

#### **Finances – How are we doing?**

We ended 2022 with \$585,466.11 in reserves in the General Fund, this includes \$240,000, approximately a two-month cushion for maintenance and operations. Additional reserves comprise of: \$8,196 Fire Hall Loan, \$157,212 ARPA Funds, \$289 Tree Board, \$35,114 Pool, \$1,877 Drug Investigation, \$1,639 Arts, and \$69228 Unreserved ending balance.

In 2023, per the adopted budget, we will draw the unreserved balance down to \$12,000 to help cover increased expenses in the General Fund but will retain the two-month operating reserve.

The Town ended 2022 with Water O&M Reserves of \$305,856, Water Capital Project Reserves of \$127,420, Sewer Reserves O&M Reserves of \$182,150, and Sewer Capital Project Reserves of \$239,034.85

For 2022 with the support of the Finance Committee, the Street and Transportation Benefit District (TBD) funds were separated for more transparent accounting and reporting. This split helped us to discover a more accurate state of affairs for our Street fund. In 2022 the Street fund ended \$30,719 in the red, and TBD ended \$1,590 in the red. Increased expenditures in snow removal and equipment maintenance accounted for the losses in the streets funds in 2022. The 2023 budget aims to address this deficit by updating public works' employee wage splits, and reduced spending. The budget should cut the deficit for the street fund to \$9,000 in the red by the end of 2023, and projected to ultimately back into the black by 2024. The TBD will be back in the black early in 2023 and ultimately end the year with \$40,000 in reserves. Director Denham will discuss strategies for more effective use of the Streets and TBD funds which could potentially address the Streets fund deficit.

**Audit** – The Town of Twisp was audited in 2021 for the period of 2018-2019. The results of the audit were successful with no findings. Given that this audit period encompassed three Clerk/Treasurer's work, including my own as a rookie to the position, this was a fantastic outcome. As in the previous audit, the Town did receive a Management Letter in regards to cash receipting practices at the pool. These recommendations were implemented in the 2022 pool season and the expectation is that the matter will be a non-issue in the next audit. Due to staffing issues at the State Auditor's office, the Town's next audit for the period of 2020-2022

will take place in the fall of 2023. I anticipate no issues as reporting and processes have only become stronger for that period.

**Council, Commissions and Boards** – Deputy Clerk Davis currently supports the following groups: Town Council, Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation Commission, Airport Advisory Board, Tree Board, Civil Service Commission, the Board of Adjustments and TERC. She attends each of their meetings to take minutes and make sure correct Open Public Meeting Act procedures are followed. Communication between council and the boards has become even more of a priority as each board is busier than ever with large projects. Staff aims to keep the lines of communication open and assist with keeping projects progressing as much as possible.

**Staffing –**

As of late 2022 the Clerk’s office is now fully staffed. This consists of myself as the full-time Clerk/Treasurer (CT), Heather Davis as the full-time Deputy Clerk (DC), and Kelli Chase as the part-time Admin Assistant (AA).

Late in 2021 per council approval, the Admin assistant position increased from 20 to 32 hours per week. This has been fantastic for departmental coverage and allows the DC and myself to focus on larger projects without constant interruption during Town Hall’s open hours.

In the summer of 2022 both the DC and AA positions were vacant, leaving just me. We took this time to restructure the organizational chart of the department, again placing the CT as supervisor to the DC and AA positions. This change has been very helpful in creating workflows with open lines of communication. Although it was very difficult and not sustainable for the long term, covering all three positions by myself gave me the opportunity to learn each of the jobs in a way that will help me to manage them better moving forward. New staff are learning quickly and becoming valued members of staff across our organization. I’ve received many comments from the community about how well they’re doing and how helpful and friendly the front office is compared to previous years. I’m looking forward to continuing their training and building an even more efficient department to support Town functions.

**Grant Administration-**

Significant progress has been made in this area, as I’ve spent years working to tidy up old grants and project funds. As a part of the 2021 end of year budget amendment, the Council approved the closeout of multiple old projects that were still on the books. Cleaning these reports up has given staff and management an extremely clearer picture of town funds and project statuses. No longer will capital project funds sit unattended with questions as to their status or if funds have been fully reimbursed.

In my time here I’ve implemented new processes to track spending, reimbursement, and reporting on capital projects, working closely with the Mayor and Director Denham to ensure all of this happens in a timely matter so decisions can be made with the best information available. Even more of my time will be spent with grant administration as the new admin staff continues to learn their roles and become less reliant on me for support.

***Support of other departments:***

- ✓ Public Works - Field/manage citizen complaints and emergencies, water/sewer billing and payments; support projects with grant management, agreements etc., support administrative work.
- ✓ Building/Planning – set appointments, take messages and payments, work on front-line questions, public notices etc.
- ✓ Police Department – Provide coverage, fielding questions, contact officers (in the absence of the police clerk).
- ✓ Airport – Field calls, send and collect hangar lease fees, grant administration.

***Status of Last Retreat's Goals:***

- ✓ Try to provide a level of record keeping that will complement the grants/projects we have going and those that are coming up.

Achieved: Each capital project has a spreadsheet constantly maintained for agreements, due dates, expenditures, reimbursement, and reporting.

- ✓ Cross train staff and re-distribute workload.

In Progress: With new staff comprising 2/3rds of the department, it has been a perfect time to redistribute responsibilities with the guidance of the Mayor to align with efficiency and natural talents of the staff we currently have.

- ✓ I would like to look at options to make the Administrative Assistant's position more attractive to long-term talent.

Achieved: The AA position was increased to 80% of full-time, including benefits. I expect current staff will remain in the position for quite a while, but in the case it needs to be filled again it is a significantly more attractive of a position.

- ✓ Sustain the level of professionalism and customer service that we currently give our citizens.

Achieved: By my observations, positive communication with the public has increased significantly. This is due to the friendly and helpful attitude of staff members, as well as implementing new processes and technology to effectively reach and communicate with the public. We strive for a level of professionalism beyond expectations in our small rural setting.

- ✓ Develop a long-term vision for adaptive change and progress within the department, and a "team spirit" that prides itself on measurable success.

Achieved: Morale in the Admin office has never been higher. The right mix of staff and leadership has turned the environment from a toxic and pessimistic mood into a warm, friendly,

funny, and helpful place. Staff enjoy the work they do here for the community and feel part of a supportive team where they have opportunities to grow and achieve.

- ✓ Research viable options for transitioning agenda, minute, and meeting docs to a digital format.

Achieved: Covid forced our hand here with digitizing many things we used to do by hand. Increased efficiencies in sharing information and a reduction of paper being used have been significant. Staff and Council have adapted well to new forms of communication and processes.

**Goals:**

- ✓ Continue to cross train staff to fill gaps in case of turnover/extended absences
- ✓ Focus on record keeping and organization
- ✓ Clean Audits
- ✓ Implement process across town staff for required trainings and record keeping of trainings
- ✓ Increase use of technology to aid efficiencies and communication both internal and external
- ✓ Provide advanced financial reporting to decision makers beyond current expectations for long term planning
- ✓ Implement improvements to Town purchasing policies and procedures

**Police Department – Interim Police Chief Ty Sheehan**

Officer Sheehan presented a verbal summary loosely based on his written submission (below).

2022- Present Summary

**Operations:**

- Finished TPD full Lexipol Policy Manual
  - Three Lexipol Updates (Legislative, 2 major, one minor)
  - AWC/RMSA? May reimburse ½ cost Lexipol yearly subscription fee for 2023
  - 2023 is the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup>? year of paying Lexipol subscription without implementation
- Completed move into new building (Office, Evidence, Armory, Storage)



- BAC Room moved back to TPD, outside Agency access
- Completed Evidence Room Audit
  - One current case left to finish
  - Adjudicated Case property dispositions (in process)
    - When completed will clear out more than 50% of Evidence Items
    - Will recover minor amount for Equipment Budget from sale of evidence/seized items
- Substantial Legislative Changes (last year and ongoing)
  - Some changes rolled out in 2021, were rolled back in 2022
  - Pursuit, Use of Force, De-escalation,, Detention, Juveniles
  - Has caused significant confusion and uncertainty in LE
  - Substantial amount of mandated compliance training
  - No real change in day-to-day operations for TPD (already operated similar to what mandated/legislative changes have been rolled out)
  - Climate for LE similar to last two+ years (locally supportive, very negative outside immediate area)
- Good working relationship with WMO
- Good working relationship with Admin and individual OCSO Deputies, but overall OCSO has serious morale/staffing issues, probably not capable of providing any real assistance in the immediate future
- Continuing challenges with Jail/Booking and Prosecutor
  - Prosecutor now re-staffed, 4-5 month period not taking cases
  - Jail booking restrictions ongoing
  - Not helpful to morale or overall LE climate
- Call Volume/Type is still off from prior typical years – Post Covid “New Normal”?
  - Overall Volume down 40%? from prior typical years

- Increase in mental health/ITA calls
- Increase in civil issues
- Call Volume numbers disguised/low – due to Dispatch Fee on all logged incidents

**Personnel:**

- Vicki retired – Vacant Clerk position for 4+ months
- Theresa hired as Clerk (Police and Court) – good fit for Agency
  - Large amount of training for Clerk position
  - Large amount of time at Omak/Brewster with their Clerks, training mostly completed now
  - Bulk of any remaining training mostly online classes
- Paul – left TPD 12/31/22, elected Sheriff
- TPD joined Teamsters Union Local 860 (Officer and Clerk positions)

**Equipment:**

- Finished transition to Tan Uniforms (including Vests)
  - Went to Tans for Summers few years back, now Winters match
  - Timed it with Body Armor replacement to save on cost
- Portable Radio Update
  - County moving to new system (eventually)
  - Overcame radio issues with new antenna vs. new radio (\$5K saving)
  - Will need all new equipment when County makes full changeover
  - Communications Tax may offset equipment cost
- New Patrol Vehicle (Tahoe)
- Duty Weapons Update
  - Went to G19 Duty Pistol several years ago

- In process of adding Weapon Lights/Optics (have most parts)

### TPD 2023 Council Retreat – 2023 Expectations

#### **Operations:**

- Substantial number of “Housekeeping” issues discovered and working on
  - Details as authorized by Mayor
  - Will take a substantial amount of time/effort
- Currently operating with one vacant position until Chief position is filled
  - Slow time of year/low call volume/significant gaps in coverage
  - Expect a short term increase in OT
  - Reserve Officers will be used sparingly as needed
  - Coordinating with WMO for gaps in coverage
  - OCSO not capable or providing much assistance at this point
- Continuing Jail Issues (as prior)
  - Prosecutor is re-staffed
- Possible WASPC Grant (\$10K/compliance training) – in process
- Prescription Drug Drop Box Program (Inmar / Drug Take Back)
  - DEA training completed by Clerk
  - New Drop Box ordered (Lobby install, similar to Voter Drop Box)
  - Inmar supplies all supplies/shipping/advertising/etc
- Teamsters Contract Negotiations coming up (May/June?)
- TPD has been assigned a Town Hall Key Fob/Key Inventory
  - Need all Council Member Key/Fob info

#### **Personnel:**

- Town has advertised for Chief position

- Theresa has a week long Evidence Room Management class in March
- Career Level First Level Supervisor Certification for Sheehan (Jan 2023)
  - 21 CPL Class (3 weeks/3 months) meets mandated CJTC training requirements for Chief (Jan/Feb/March)
  - Joined WASPC
- Purtell Certified FTO (Field Training Officer) Jan 2023
  - Update TPD FTO Manual

**Equipment:**

- New Laptops (later in the year, old ones wearing out)
- Old Town Hall Cameras to be repurposed elsewhere on Town property
- New Tahoe is at Soap Lake having equipment installed
  - All equipment ordered/shipped (some supply chain issues)
- Reserve Tahoe (old 801) needs minor repairs (scheduled)
  - \$1100 estimate, then will be a Spare/Reserve Vehicle
- Return Authorization for the Humvee
  - Never used, in the way for Public Works, does not run
  - Will have to return to Ft. Lewis, will be a tow/expense
- Duty Weapons Update (Ongoing)
  - Few/Some components/parts still needed (minor)

**Considerations Affecting the Viability of Small LE Agencies (and TPD Specifically)**

- Challenges to Hiring/Retention are expected to continue
- Much smaller pool of potential candidates nationwide (no one want to work in LE)
- Large agencies not uncommon to offer \$10K-\$50K signing bonus
- Large Agencies offering Retention Bonuses to keep personnel

- Housing and cost of living may compound local issues
- Six plus month delay for Academy dates for new hires
- CJTC no longer offering Small Agency Waiver, no more “cutting in line”
- CJTC no longer offering free tuition for small Agencies (\$5K+ additional expense)
- OCSO current example (3 new hires, all 6 months+ out to Academy, plus 5 months at Academy, even after hired 12+ months before they are on their own on patrol, easily \$100K spent before a single day of independent work)
- Hiring for any vacant position is likely to take a long time, and be very expensive
- TPD is unlikely to retain any of it’s current staff past May/June 2023, TPD will likely have all Sworn positions vacant as well as a vacant Clerk position
- Town is likely on a fairly short time-line before they are forced to a Contract type option

**Public Works Department –Public Works Director Andrew Denham**

**Public Works Mission Statement: Provide quality Public Works operation and maintenance in a compliant, proactive and proficient manner**

I’m pleased to report that because of the commitment by you, the Town Council and Mayor, Twisp is poised for significant commercial, industrial, and residential growth. Extensive infrastructure improvements to the Town’s sewer, water, and transportation systems along with economic revitalization elements have been completed over the past several years. While there is more hard work ahead to complete some of these critical improvements, we can be confident that the timeliness of these improvements are creating exciting opportunities for Twisp.

All of this work has been accomplished while keeping the Utility rates at an average rate when compared to Okanogan County and surrounding area. There has been much effort in balancing project funding, prioritizing, timing, and planning of these improvements to find a sweet spot for Twisp. I am thankful for your leadership and vision, but also for your support to see it through.

I have included some of the highlighted projects by year below for review and discussion of what we’ve recently accomplished, what we’re up to now, and what some of the priorities are in the near future.

## **2021**

Sports Complex construction

Twisp Ave Water, Sewer and street improvements

SR20/Canyon St crossing improvements and bus stop

Town wide water meter replacement

Well 2 VFD installation

Town wide remote SCADA system installation

Reservoir cleaning

Construction of Civic Building

## **2022**

Biosolids equipment upgrade at WWTP

Lift Station 2 upgrade

Lift Station 3 upgrade

Street improvements, May, June, Marie, Harrison, Bigelow, Lookout Mtn Rd, Lookout Mtn Pl.

Civic Building construction completion

3<sup>rd</sup> Ave/Glover St intersection improvements

Cascade Dr overlay

Drilling of new well 5

Twisp playground improvements

## **2023**

GIS mapping and asset management

Sewer collection system improvements

WWTP drain well upgrade

WWTP construction phase 1

Well 3 VFD installation

Street overlay project on 5<sup>th</sup> Ave, Lincoln St, 4<sup>th</sup> Ave

Twisp Ave parking lot improvements

SR20 sidewalk bank stabilization from bus garage to Carlton Rd

Complete well 5 construction and commission

Crack seal all streets and new striping

Crack seal airport runway and north taxiway

Repair Twisp trail by river

Raise valve boxes and manholes

Replace reservoir access hatches

**2-5 year goals;**

Update the Town's water system plan

Construct phase 2 of WWTP improvements

Construct sidewalk bikepath on north end of SR20

Construct sidewalk bikepath from Bluestar to Wagner St

Reconstruct and chip seal surface treatment on Alder St, Bridge St, Webb Ln, Methow St, 4<sup>th</sup> Ave, Twisp airport access Rd

Train and certify all operators to level 2 in wastewater and water.

Continue chip seal surface treatment maintenance to most streets Town wide

Construct phase two of the Sports Complex

Construct round-a-bout at Glover and SR20

Construct wetland east of SR20 north of Twisp River

Resurface airport runway

Extend water and sewer to sports complex / airport

Replace band shell at Twisp Park

Replace the pool

Construct 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave corridor and Twisp Ave corridor

**Staff to A team level.** The most important aspect of the Director's job is developing a properly trained efficient team. Infrastructure is tremendously important, but without trained staff, the wheels come off the bus very quickly.

The Public Works team is fully staffed with quality individuals that truly want to provide a high level of service to the public, which I am very grateful for. We do, however, have several years to invest in their training. The team currently does not have a certified operator in wastewater or water, which are both required by Washington State to be level 2 in both. Training and certification preparation is one of the highest priorities for the department now that we are fully staffed.

Other discussion items for team development;

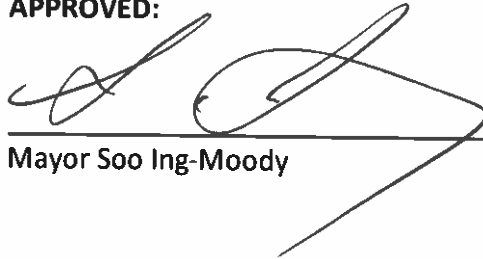
- CDL training and licensing.
- Certification preparation classes.
- Commitment to annual COLA at first of the year.
- Family health insurance.

**Council feedback and questions**

The Council spent time asking questions of each department head after their reports.

There being no further business to come before the Council the meeting was adjourned at 6:45 pm.

**APPROVED:**



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Mayor Soo Ing-Moody

**ATTEST:**



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Clerk/Treasurer Randy Kilmer