

Town of Lake Santeetlah

Special Meeting Minutes

October 27, 2023

Mayor Connie Gross called the meeting to order at 10:00AM. Councilmembers Diana Simon, Tina Emerson, and Jim Hager were present for the meeting, Town Administrator Kim Matheson and Town Clerk Kala Farley were also present. Councilmember Ralph Mitchell was not present.

Approval of the Agenda: Councilmember Hager made a motion to approve the agenda. Councilmember Emerson seconded. All approved. The motion passed unanimously.

Request for Public Comment

New Business:

1. Discussion of website updates: Mayor Gross explained that the website needs updated and this meeting was to discuss how to do that. Mayor Gross said she had made contact with Western Carolina University in Sylva, NC and was put in touch with Emily Giarette, Content Management System Coordinator for University Communications and Marketing at Western Carolina University. Mayor Gross and Town Administrator Kim Matheson had a meeting with her and did an initial website walkthrough to see what she could do to help update the website. Giarette suggested to go through the website and make notes of what needed to be added or changed. A Zoom meeting was then scheduled on October 16th with Giarette to go over those notes. Giarette set up a Google Drive link and shared it with Mayor Gross and the Town Hall email in order to work together and share or upload any information needed to make the desired changes. Councilmember Simon asked if this link will be shared with everybody and said she would like to know more about Giarette and what exactly would Giarette be doing. Councilmember Simon asked if the whole website was being redone for \$1500 or just making changes. Mayor Gross said Giarette was just making changes and mentioned discussion of adding links on our website that will direct you to another website to view things such as Meeting Videos rather than saving them directly to the Town website, which takes up a lot of memory and space. For example, we could post videos to a Youtube page and put a link on our website to the Youtube page instead of having the videos take up space on the Town's page. Councilmember Simon asked if Giarette can work in Weebly since the Town website is a Weebly website. Mayor

Gross replied yes, that was a question we asked and she is very familiar with it. Mayor Gross stated there had been some pictures taken around Town that can be used and are already uploaded on the Google Drive link. Councilmember Simon suggested there be pictures and information for the Marina and Cheoah Park since those are points of interest for people coming to the Town. Councilmember Hager suggested a Points of Interest tab where things like the Marina, Cheoah Park and other benefits around the town can be added. There was discussion of what should be changed, added, or removed in terms of what would make the website more informational about the Town and how it should be user friendly and easy to navigate. Councilmember Simon asked if the website would be made secure since it is not secure now. Mayor Gross said she would ask that question.

Councilmember Emerson asked if the website will look the same, such as with the tabs across the top, or will the dynamics change. Mayor Gross said Giarette is familiar with government inspired websites and will be using some type of format that she is familiar with for government things. Matheson stated it will still be through Weebly. Mayor Gross said websites should be about contacting information and learning about where you are. Mayor Gross asked if all the different policies and water results and things of that nature should stay on.

Councilmember Emerson replied usually you would find policies, ordinances, and laws and any fees or fines. Councilmember Simon said she has seen an option on another website where you can either download the Minutes or just Preview the minutes as a PDF and just read on the screen rather than having to download them.

Councilmember Emerson asked if there could be something like an Archives tab for old minutes so if somebody wanted to go back to 2015 they could see them there. Councilmember Hager suggested to add a Local Weather link.

Councilmember Simon asked if Giarette was working on the existing pages now. Mayor Gross said No, she is gathering information. Matheson said she thinks Giarette will change it around however we want it to be. Craig Keith asked if we could make sure that the website is mobile-friendly in that it can be accessed and navigated easily on mobile phones. Mayor Gross said Giarette told her web designers usually are about \$35 to \$45 an hour and said she would charge a flat rate of \$1500. Matheson stated she spoke to Miranda Buchanan and she would charge \$50 an hour but she couldn't start until mid-November. Councilmember Simon asked if this was something Giarette could set up and then Buchanan can edit as needed later at an hourly rate since Buchanan is already an admin for the website. Matheson said Buchanan has not be able to find the time to work on the website. Councilmember Simon asked what Giarette's fee for maintaining the

website would be. Mayor Gross said that hasn't been discussed yet. Councilmember Simon asked if she would be doing search engine optimization. Mayor Gross stated she wasn't sure. Councilmember Emerson asked how many hours does Giarette think it will take in order to do a comparison with Miranda. Mayor Gross said Giarette hasn't sent a bill because we have to have the budget amendment to decide whether to hire her or not but she has already put in about 5 hours of her own free time and has agreed to have something for us hopefully by November 9th, not complete, just a draft.

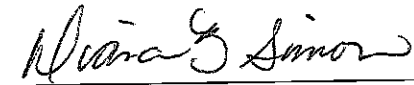
2. Budget Amendment for website update: Matheson stated we do have a line item in Edmunds that is Internet Webpage Service and thought we could add \$1500 to that line item instead of having to create another one. We have money left over in the Office Financial Software and there was over \$2000 there, so we could take \$1500 from there. Councilmember Simon asked what would be done if Giarette's time would run a bit more than included in the Flat rate of \$1500. Councilmember Hager said \$1500 just doesn't seem like enough money to complete all the discussed work on the website. Councilmember Simon agreed saying that would not be enough to cover the amount of work Giarette would be doing. Councilmember Emerson asked if they think it should be a higher dollar amount and stated if Giarette is going to charge a flat fee and she guarantees that she'll complete the website for that amount of money, there could be fees in the future for maintenance. Councilmember Hager asked if Giarette would be charging for the five hours she has already put in. Mayor Gross said No she hasn't, that was basically introduction. I think if she is willing to change, not entirely create a new website, but change what we've got, put on some different pictures, take some things off, add some more important things like Town business things for \$1500, I think that's a fair deal. Councilmember Hager asked if Giarette would be able to come to the next Council meeting. Mayor Gross said we can ask her to attend the November 9th meeting. Councilmember Emerson said we should ask Giarette if she could continue for the \$1500 for a few months following the completion in case we run into any issues. Councilmember Hager asked if we would be able to edit it ourselves. Matheson said we told her we would have to be able to edit the site because that is where we put all the meeting notifications and she said should would help us when it was all over and show us how to navigate around it. Councilmember Simon asked if we were going to have a contract with Giarette and then we can set up in the contract that if there are more edits to be made after that it would be at an hourly rate. Councilmember Emerson said we could at least do the budget amendment to move the money from Office Financial Software to Internet

Webpage Services. There was discussion of increasing the budget amendment to \$2000 because \$1500 didn't seem like it was enough money to do the website update. Councilmember Emerson made a motion to approve the budget amendment to \$2000. Hager seconded. All approved. The motion passed unanimously.

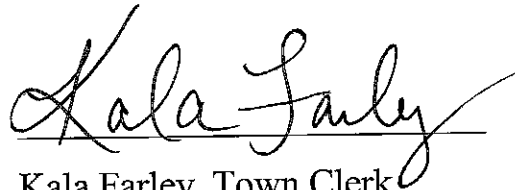
Final Public Comment

Motion to Adjourn.

Councilmember Emerson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Hager seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 10:47AM.



Connie Gross, Mayor



Kala Farley, Town Clerk

Diana Simon