

City of Mabton, Washington  
**City Council**  
**Study Session Minutes**  
Tuesday, November 10, 2015

**Call to Order**

Mayor Mario Martinez called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm

The following were:

**Present:**

Mayor Mario Martinez and Council members - Oping Hutson, Arturo Delafuente, Sophia Sotelo, Vera Zavala and City Attorney James Carmody

**Also Present:**

City Administrator Walt Bratton, Laura Gjovaag (Reporter Sunnyside Daily-News), Carrie Tribble, Finance Director; and Mike Connelly (attorney representing WCIA)

**Old Business:**

None

**New Business:**

- A. WCIA Training – Public Officials Risk Management Fundamentals (Mike Connelly, Attorney):

The Mayor introduced Mike Connelly (past city attorney with the City of Spokane and City of Spokane Valley). Mr. Connelly was sponsored by WCIA (the City of Mabton insurance carrier) to facilitate this training for our City Council/Governing Body. Mr. Connelly opened up his 30 page power point presentation discussing the types of local government in Washington State and the type that the City of Mabton is, (Code City, Non-Charter, Strong Mayor – Council plan of government). Mr. Connelly elaborated on what the Mayor's role & function was and what the City Council member's roles were (and what they were not to be involved in because it would take them outside their scope of duties and not be covered by their liability insurance coverage as a group/governing body).

Mr. Connelly elaborated on the distinct difference between the Mayor's duties and a city council member's duties and referred to the RCW's for reference. He elaborated the role & function and delegation of authority by the Mayor to the City Administrator for administrative, management and daily operations of personnel, financial management and other items. He discussed the Ethics Provisions for City Council members and Mayor's under the RCW's and penalties under municipal ethics laws for City Council members who stray outside of their powers/duties and roles as individual elected public officials. He discussed the City Attorney's role and function in the Mabton plan of government. He discussed motions, voting procedures for the governing body, unanimous consent and call for the question procedure during official city council meetings.

He elaborated on the importance for City Council members to not stray outside of their role & function due to liability concerns, issues and not being covered by their insurance carrier (WCIA); he elaborated on land use items, personnel issues, defamation and gave public works as an example in this regard. He showed them specifically how to avoid being personally liable for their actions and behaviors as elected officials in Mabton. There was a lot of discussion on avoiding liability (as a common council, as well as an individual city council member). He elaborated on the Open Public Meetings Act and its rules and guidelines. He discussed the Public Records Act. He discussed the City's website, the detrimental issues that can arise from FaceBook and other social media postings as well as E-Mail communications, retention, and not using your personal E-Mail address/box for official city council member business and communications.

He closed with points of records management procedures and how to distance the Governing Body with the Mabton Community Days Planning Committee regarding three members on this committee being on the city council and when they meet it is an official quorum of the Mabton City Council.

He closed his presentation and thanked the City of Mabton Elected Officials for allowing him to come to Mabton to give this important presentation.

**Visitor's Comments:**

None

**Executive Session:**

None

The meeting was adjourned by the Mayor at 7:02 pm

---

Walt Bratton, City Administrator

---

Mario Martinez, Mayor