

KETTLE FALLS CITY COUNCIL MEETING
AUGUST 19, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Jesse Garrett called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Jesse Garrett, Chris Shurrum, John Ridlington, Shellee Haynes, and Cliff King. Michael Weatherman was absent.

Council Member John Ridlington moved to excuse Council Member Michael Weatherman. Council Member Cliff King Seconded the Motion. Motion carried by all. Council Member John Ridlington - yes, Council Member Chris Shurrum - yes, Council Member Shellee Haynes - yes and Council Member Cliff King - yes.

STAFF

Staff - Dave Willey, Logan Worley, Phil Adams, Brandon Hoover and Raena Hallam.

Guests - Jody Emra, Zophia Olson, Lloyd Ward, Debbie Gaskin and Joe Owens.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND MAIL RECEIVED

Clerk/Treasurer Raena Hallam distributed a letter from Mr. Garman regarding Water Rates. She provided copies of letters Mr. Garman had sent to Sheriff Manke and the Stevens County Commissioners regarding EMS services.

July 24, 2025

Raena Hallam
Clerk/Treasurer
City of Kettle Falls
509-738-6821

RE: Town of Kettle Falls Water Rates.

Dear Raena,

Please convey this to members of the Town Council, Kettle Falls.

After review of the water rate study by RCAC, 2024, I find the results less than encouraging to the senior citizens of the Kettle Falls Water District. The favored "option 2" does not take into account the COLA amount to seniors by the United States Government which is roughly 2-2.5%, yearly. Most of this COLA is taken up by Medicare increases. Along with other utilities wanting their cut from senior citizens, you are faced with a dilemma. How to provide essential services while providing for the people who have done their part to move this country ahead. In my case, this was working in a 140f. bake oven, Cessna Aircraft, ten hours a day, six days per week. Yes, you didn't misread that. 140f., ten hours per day, six days per week. I had a wife and step-daughter to support and so I did it. I have done some research. The percentage of senior citizens in Kettle Falls, Washington, is about sixteen percent. The annual COLA adjustment through Social Security for the past few years is nowhere near the annual rate of four % the water rate proposes under the favored plan, of option two, for water rates. Retirement benefits increases of a senior citizen are about 2-2.5% annually. As the rate water

rates/sewer have increased in Kettle Falls in the past few years you may very well be pricing the local senior citizens out their homes. Basically, we are seniors now. We have done our part for the country, worked hard, made livings, supported families. In other words, helped keep America great. We as seniors simply cannot support these percentages of rate increases. I am not sorry, it is just facts. Yes, Kettle Falls is no different than many other small towns in America. I cannot speak for other towns in America, I can only speak to the situation in Kettle Falls. The fact is we are heading for a train wreck if Kettle Falls, like other towns in America ignores senior citizens! We simply cannot go to the boss and ask for a raise! Our time working is over! We have done our part. Like it or not, it IS reality. The water rate study was extremely flawed in the fact it excluded ANY particular group of citizens! Seniors, are dealing with extremely uncertain times. We do not know from month to month if we will get our retirement check WE WERE PROMISED, medical cost cutting, prescriptions going up almost monthly, grocery prices, etc.. WE cannot sustain this. If you put in an annual cost of 4% across the board annual rate increase without considering realities, we as the town of Kettle Falls are in severe trouble.

Respectfully,

Charles I Garman

Tuesday, August 12, 2025

Brad Manke
Sheriff/Fire Chief
Stevens County Courthouse
215 S Oak St
Colville, WA 99114

Dear Sheriff / Fire Chief Manke,

It has been reported that you are seeking a levy on a proposed fund for ambulance services in Stevens County, Washington. I am writing to you to encourage you to make a provision in this proposed levy for senior citizens. Senior citizens comprise a significant portion of the county's population. As a senior citizen myself, I have to contend with increasing costs almost monthly for medicine, medical, homeowners insurance, property taxes, state taxes, etc. Our COLAs are not keeping up with the overall rate of increases. Since the 2020 pandemic, we as seniors have seen a significant increase in expenses. We have reached a breaking point. Can you give me an idea of the percentage of levy you are proposing for taxpayers? I would appreciate your response to this matter. Again, we have reached a breaking point with our money, no matter how good the cause may be. Kettle Falls just recently made a significant increase to the water/sewer rate. All of these tax entities combined have made it hard for seniors to decide which bills to pay from month to month.

Thank you in advance for your reply to this matter.

Respectfully,

Charles I Garman

Friday, August 15, 2025

Stevens County Washington Board of County Commissioners
215 S Oak St
Colville, WA 99114

RE: Stevens County Washington, EMS Levy.

Dear Board Members,

I am writing to you concerning the proposed new property tax levy in Stevens County, Washington. Also, please see my copy of the letter to Sheriff/Fire Chief Manke.

As a member of the senior citizen community in Stevens County, I am deeply concerned about this proposal to increase taxes, particularly for senior citizens. We as a community, make up about twenty-five percent of the population. Our income is fixed. We cannot sustain these continued increases in spending. Our COLAs simply do not cover the demands placed on us by local levies, state taxes, increases in property valuations, Medicare Insurance, and overall total demands by all sorts of entities. Unless you can show either an exemption for limited-income seniors on a fixed budget, I will oppose this levy. We simply cannot pay anymore, no matter how well-intentioned.

Sheriff/Fire Chief Manke sent me a message laying the responsibility on the BOCC. Yet he continues to visit various town councils advocating for the levy and the newly proposed EMS district. He is basically, and in my opinion, playing a blame game and trying to pass off his responsibility. The senior citizen community will not play charades.

Unless the board can come up with some sort of exemption for this levy, I feel that it will be heavily opposed. Also, your position on the Board at election time.

In closing, I will not be voting against this levy because I want to, but because I have to. An ambulance with a red light and siren is better than nothing at all. Get back to the basics for which the Sheriff's Ambulance was created. Respectfully,

Charles I Garman

PUBLIC COMMENT

NOISE VARIANCE – DEBBIE GASKIN

Mrs. Debbie Gaskin, 375 E. 8th Avenue, explained she would be hosting a party at her home on September 19th, and a live band

will be playing. She asked City Council for a noise variance to play music until 11:00 p.m.

Council Member John Ridlington moved to approve a noise variance for 375 E. 8th Avenue to play music until 11:00 p.m. on September 19, 2025. Council Member Chris Shurrum seconded the motion. Motion carried by all. Council Member John Ridlington - yes, Council Member Chris Shurrum - yes, Council Member Shellee Haynes - yes and Council Member Cliff King - yes.

KETTLE FALLS YOUTH CENTER

Mr. Lloyd Ward, Executive Director, Stevens County Youth Outreach, discussed with City Council needed support for the Kettle Falls Youth Center.

Stevens County Youth Outreach P.O. Box 534, 315 South Cedar Colville, WA 99114

Date: August 19, 2025

To: Kettle Falls City Council

Subject: City Support to The Center – A Place for Youth, 435 Myers Street

Our mission is to give purpose and hope to tomorrow's leaders (our youth) by investing in their lives today. We have worked to encourage Kettle Falls youth for the past 32 years through the ***all-volunteer*** KF Center – A Place for Youth.

Background: Mr. Dennis Roberts attended a meeting just like this one in 1993 where he heard the proposed city responses to the emerging gang-like activity among Kettle Falls youth. Some at the meeting encouraged local citizens to take matters into their own hands with violence. Dennis felt there needed to be positive activities for young people as an alternative to the time many youths spent walking the streets. From his own money, he rented the storefront that still stands across the street from the current Center – next to the Food Bank. The Center moved to its current donated location a few years later. ***Currently, rising insurance and operating costs leave us \$600/month short of meeting costs.***

Activities Provided: Each night during the school year, the Center is open – twice a week, one for elementary youth, one for middle school youth. On those nights we provide a hot meal. Each year, we provide **70 meals** for city youth, at no charge, ever. Food opens the door to relationships – with volunteers and among youth. **Indoor games** of all sorts are provided, and an **outdoor basketball court** was added a few years ago. Sometime each evening, the volunteer leader provides a brief **encouraging challenge** to the youth about a topic relating to integrity and positive life choices. We rent the Center for **birthday parties and events** to support families.

Additional opportunities: Stevens County Youth Outreach, the parent non-profit, operates **All Season Home and Landscape Services** – a business opened in 2018 to hire youth and introduce them to the world of work. Over the years All Season has hired youth from Kettle Falls and has served many homes and Kettle Falls businesses. Our goal is to work with youth to enable them to gain life and job skills as they enter the adult world – led and supervised by experienced and skilled adult supervisors. **We want to help provide the workforce for the future of our communities** by encouraging and training interested youth.

Respectfully,

Lloyd J. Ward, Executive Director SCYO

After discussion Mr. Lloyd reviewed ways, the city could help the Youth Center:

- Consider providing reduced city utility rates.
- Consider providing financial support to the Youth Center.
- Share the services provided by the Center through city notices.
- Encourage others to view our Facebook posts asking for community support.

Mayor Jesse Garrett and the City Council thanked Mr. Lloyd Ward and Ms. Zophia Olson for attending and stated they will consider ways they can help.

CONSENT AGENDA

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES FOR JULY 15, 2025 AND JULY VOUCHERS AND PAYROLL

Council Member John Ridlington made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Council Member Cliff King seconded the motion. Motion carried by all. Council Member John Ridlington – yes, Council Member Chris Shurrun – yes, Council Member Shellee Haynes – yes and Council Member Cliff King – yes.

STAFF REPORTS

PUBLIC WORKS

Public Works Superintendent Dave Willey stated Stevens County is getting ready to paint our streets. The Public Works department will paint the crosswalk and parking lines. Dave stated he purchased a small striper and will also use it to paint sealer on the top of the Grey Eagle Tank.

Public Works Superintendent Dave Willey reported they installed a gate limiting access at the Grey Eagle Tank.

Public Works Superintendent Dave Willey stated he hopes to have the new playground equipment installed near the spray park this fall.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fire Chief Phil Adams reported 24 calls including a vehicle fire and a structure fire. Currently there are 4 state modes.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Police Chief Brandon Hoover reviewed the police call log with City Council.

Council Member Chris Shurrum explained he witnessed an emergency in Ferry County. He stated they drove past a Kettle Falls Officer who was not responding. He asked at what point the Kettle Falls department would respond.

Police Chief Brandon Hoover stated other agencies must ask for assistance before the Kettle Falls department responds.

PLANNING COMMISSION

Planning Commission Chair Jody Emra reported the Planning Commission discussed the meeting Commissioner Nick Gourlie and Contract Planner Mike Manning attended regarding changing the UGA on the East side of the City. It was a consensus at the meeting that this would have to be done as part of the City's update.

Planning Commission Chair, Jody Emra stated there was further discussion regarding the Stevens County Wide Planning meeting. The next meeting will be held on August 21, 2025.

BUDGET/AUDIT

Clerk/Treasurer Raena Hallam stated it is budget time and asked City Council to plan for extra meetings in September and October. Raena further stated the city will have an audit for fiscal years 2023 and 2024 this year. She has already sent some files to the auditors in preparation.

COMMITTEE REPORTS**CHAMBER - HOT AUGUST NIGHTS**

Council Member John Ridlington reported the Chamber of Commerce's Hot August Nights events at Happy Dell Park have been very successful.

KETTLE FALLS SWIMMING POOL TEEN NIGHTS

Council Member John Ridlington reported that the Kettle Falls Swimming Pool has held several Teen Nights as fund raisers for a pool slide.

NEW BUSINESS**SPOKANE TEACHERS CREDIT UNION**

Clerk/Treasurer Raena Hallam stated Spokane Teachers Credit Union met with the Mayor and Finance Committee to discuss banking options. STCU will give a presentation to the City Council on September 16th during the regular meeting.

Clerk/Treasurer Raena Hallam explained the Finance Committee would like to use STCU for the City's primary checking account. To make this transition it will take time to order checks, paperwork etc., probably two to three weeks. Clerk/Treasurer Raena Hallam asked City Council to authorize opening a checking account, so she can move forward with ordering checks and paperwork. Clerk/Treasurer Raena Hallam stated no money would be spent from the account until City Council authorizes it.

Council Member John Ridlington made a motion to authorize Clerk/Treasurer Raena Hallam to open a checking account with STCU and transfer \$250,000 into the account. Council Member Shellee Haynes seconded the motion. Motion carried by all. Council Member John Ridlington - yes, Council Member Chris Shurrum - no, Council Member Shellee Haynes - yes and Council Member Cliff King - yes.

SCJ ALLIANCE AGREEMENT

Clerk/Treasurer Raena Hallam stated the Agreement with SCJ Alliance is ready for the mayor to sign. The agreement for the Climate Resiliency Grant is in the final draft stages.

Council Member Chris Shurrum asked why the city would pay \$100,000 for paperwork we won't need?

Mayor Garrett explained the state requires the Climate Element as part of the Comp Plan update. The research does not set things in stone. It is like a guideline.

After discussion, Council Member John Ridlington made a motion to authorize the mayor to sign the agreement with SCJ Alliance and the agreement for the Climate Resiliency Grant after review from the City Attorney. Motion carried. Council Member John Ridlington - yes, Council Member Chris Shurrum - no, Council Member Shellee Haynes - no, Council Member Cliff King - yes. Tie vote, Mayor Garrett voted yes.

OLD BUSINESS

ORDINANCE NO. 1844 - AN ORDINANCE AMENDING KETTLE FALLS MUNICIPAL CODE (KFMC) CHAPTER 2.12.010, 2.12.030, 2.12.090, AND 2.12.100, RELATED TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Council Member John Ridlington made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 1844 by title only. Council Member Cliff King seconded the motion. Motion carried by all. Council Member John Ridlington - yes, Council Member Chris Shurrum - yes, Council Member Shellee Haynes - yes and Council Member Cliff King - yes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

As there was no Public Comment presented, City Council moved on to Adjournment.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Jesse Garrett adjourned the meeting at 8:02 p.m.

Approved:

Jesse Garrett, Mayor

Attest: _____
Raena Hallam, Clerk/Treasurer