

City of Colstrip

March 2011

Mayor's Message



- Mayor John Williams
- Evan Stewart
- Rick Harbin
- Dan Becker
- Tom Jankowski

City Offices open

9:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.

Monday thru Friday,
except on Holidays

Court is in Session:

Tuesdays and Thursdays

10:00 a.m.

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As we look forward to warmer weather your city will also be looking toward new leadership within our city's government. This new year is an election year for city government. Three positions will become open at the end of this year. The mayor's position and two council positions. With this newsletter I will briefly describe these positions and encourage any resident that is interested apply. The filing date for these positions opens on May 2nd and closes on June 30th. The filing fees for these positions are \$120 for mayor and \$40 for council member.



The city council is the legislative branch and governing body of the city. They are also the policy determining body of the city. The compensation for a city council member is \$400 per month and additionally receive \$35 per meeting outside the regular council meetings. It is important to recognize that the authority of the council is as a governing body and not as an individual. Council members are elected at large and on a non-partisan basis. It is a four year term.

The mayor's position is the chief executive and chief administration officer of the city. The nature and extent of the mayor's executive powers and duties are set forth specifically by law (7-3-703MCA). In this statutory form, the mayor as chief executive is obliged and empowered to enforce state law, local ordinances and has the responsibility of carrying out and administering policies and resolutions adopted by the council. Additionally, the mayor serves as the presiding officer of the council and may take part in council discussion. He/she shall cast a vote on ties or, as our charter states, may make the quorum of three if only two council members are present. The mayor has veto power with respect to ordinances and resolutions adopted by council; however, an executive veto is subject to a two thirds override vote by council.

The procedural role of the mayor in serving as the presiding office of the council is a significant characteristic of the statutorily defined version of the council-mayor form of government. The resulting overlap in executive and legislative functions virtually mandates a cooperative relationship between mayor and council. If the legislative/policy making process is to function smoothly these two parts of city government need to cooperatively work together. Our city government in the past eleven years is a good example. We have been able to concentrate on the services and functions rather than issues between governmental units.

The mayor's term is four years, it is non-partisan and there are no term limits. To run for mayor, you must be 18 years of age and lived in the city for two years. Compensation for the mayor is \$1,200 per month. The mayor also receives \$750 per month for travel allowance and to help off-set health insurance premiums.

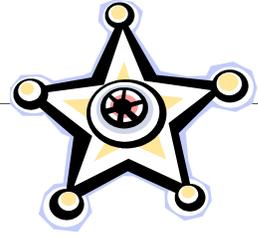
A downside of being your Mayor is the notification to our residents of any increases in services, in particular water and sewer rates. This is the process we are currently



Mayor's Message cont. page 6

Police Department

Larry Reinlasoder, Police Chief



The Importance of Enforcing City Ordinances.

The police department is often called about trailers and abandoned cars left on city streets. We also assist the City of Colstrip's Code Enforcement Officer enforce issues such as junk vehicles, litter, weeds, etc, on private lots. By city ordinance the police are the enforcement authority and write citations for violations. Code issues are important as violations negatively affect the quality of life in entire neighborhoods and the community as a whole. The police department handles the calls of abandoned vehicles and trailers left on the street by first affixing an orange warning sticker giving the owner of the property a minimum of five days to move the trailer or car. We generally do not go to the owner's home or work place to talk with them about the issue. Generally the warning sticker is sufficient to get the owner's attention and get the matter resolved. If the matter is not taken care of by the property owner a police officer may make a personal visit to the violator's home. We ask for cooperation to get the issue taken care of, but if that fails a citation can be issued and the police can call for a wrecker to tow the vehicle or trailer. If the problem is on private property the code enforcement officer will make all the contacts, but when all efforts fail to get the issue taken care of a police officer may be required to issue a citation for the code offense. In the case of junk vehicles the police department can send a notice to the Rosebud County junk vehicle department and they will tow the vehicle to the junk yard. If any Colstrip resident has a vehicle registered to them and the vehicle is not running, or otherwise in an inoperable condition, they can ask the County junk vehicle department to tow the vehicle. There is no charge for this service. You may have to be ready to present a proper title to the vehicle and sign it over to the County. The police department does have these request forms and you can come to the cop shop and pick one up.

The city ordinances dealing with these issues are meant to keep a community litter and junk free and help to present the town as a vibrant and growing place. You and your family do not need or deserve to live in a neighborhood full of trash, filthy lots and junk vehicles. Help keep your town a great place to live and be considerate of your neighbors by maintaining your property.

Serving Tomorrow's Town Today Through Community Policing in Action

Building, Planning, Zoning and Code Enforcement

Jan Morgan



Recently, several home owners and businesses were asked to post their address so that the number was clearly visible from the street. Generic black or white numbers were made available at City Hall at no charge in order to help with this process.

The request was a result of an ordinance passed by the City Council at their February 2010 meeting for the purpose of public safety and well being; to provide emergency response vehicles such as ambulances and fire trucks a uniform numbering system within the City of Colstrip.

Thirteen residents, five businesses and twenty-nine parks were assigned new numbers. A new number was assigned if no number had ever been assigned to the location; or in such cases where the existing number was out of sequence, indicated that the structure should be found on the other side of the street, or identified a house on a corner lot as being on one street when it actually faces the other street.

The main changes to the numbering system were reflected on the original town site maps; specifically along Olive Drive and the downtown business section around Cherry Street.

A list of the numbers assigned to locations within Colstrip has been forwarded to the Rosebud County Rural Addressing System in Forsyth. That office is charged with the responsibility to update the 911 Response Systems in Rosebud County. They also notify the phone and utility providers of the correct number designation for locations throughout the county. For those businesses or residents who were asked to change their address, a copy of that change has been sent to the Rosebud County Treasurer's Office to help in the process of updating their system.

The City would like to thank all residents and businesses for their cooperation in posting their address. It is our hope that this system will be of benefit to all.

Public Works Department

John Bleth, Public Works Supervisor



A notice was placed in the Independent Press regarding the waste oil recycling program. The city has taken over the collection of this product. The waste oil container is located just behind (west side) of City Hall. Montana Department of Environmental Quality requires the city maintain a ledger of the oil dumped. Please stop in city hall to sign the ledger and amount of oil dumped before disposal of the oil. If you leave the waste oil on the weekend please come into city hall on Monday to sign the ledger. Thank you for participating in this free program. This is very beneficial to our environment.

Our recycling efforts for cardboard is going well. Since starting in the middle of October we have baled nearly a half of a semi load. This is another cost saving program for our county landfill. The five/six yard containers are for everyone's use. Please remember paper mills accept corrugated cardboard only. Soda cartons or frozen food boxes, for example, are not corrugated material. If you can not see air in between the two sides we can not use it. Thank you for your assistance and contributions to this advantageous program.

The city is in the final preparations to go out to bid to repair the road and bridge abutments on Power Road. Our engineering firm will be coordinating these efforts. It will probably take four to eight weeks to complete both ends depending on the weather. Notices will be given in advance as to when this project will begin.

The city's ten year on and off again issue with the Montana Department of Environmental Quality over our backwash water will hopefully come to a conclusion by this summer. We have come down to two options. The first backwash water is sampled out of an extended mixing zone. We are currently trying to get Montana DEQ to allow this. Option two is refurbishing our old clarifier building in order to settle out the turbidity and total suspended solids. This option would be very costly, approximately \$500,000, and would likely affect our current water rates. Hopefully, we can use the first option.

Schoolhouse History and Art Center

Lu Shomate, Director



The first day of Spring is March 20th, I had to look it up. I don't know if it's always on the 20th, but for the next few years it is. Springtime in Montana is about as special as Christmas to the little children. The thought of getting outside without a mountain of clothes on, experiencing the thrill of freshly churned earth, the days getting longer and the nights more enjoyable, sure makes everything feel fresh and new.

At the Schoolhouse we are looking forward to a fresh new spring also. We are already planning our Summer Program for the kids and adults. If you are looking for a way to find something positive and fun to do this summer please check out our program. We hope to have our flyers up by early spring.

The all school children's art show will be in the Gallery the month of March. The look on the faces of the little people when they walk into the gallery and see their artwork is priceless. On March 31st at 6:00 pm we will have a reception for these young artists. Everyone is invited to attend. Please take this opportunity to visit the Schoolhouse and share a precious moment with our artists.

During the months of April and May we will have a MAGDA show called "Bird on a Wire" in our gallery. This exhibit consists of exquisite photographs of birds and other wildlife by Patrick Rummans; photographer, artist, sculptor and Screen Actors Guild puppeteer. We are honored to share this body of work with you.

In June we will host the 32nd annual Southeastern Montana Traveling Art Show. This all medial exhibit represents professional and amateur artworks from across Montana and adjoining states.

Obert and Signe Rye, long time residents of Colstrip, loved their garden and Rosebud County. Signe always brought

Schoolhouse History and Art Center cont. page 5

Tree Board

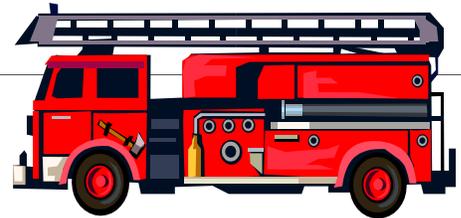


The City of Colstrip has been successful in obtaining another Urban Forestry Grant from the Department of Natural Resources. Tana Pippin has applied for and received a grant for \$14,809.47 to continue improving our tree planting project along the Boulevards. The City of Colstrip will be planting 50 trees along the streets on Homestead Blvd. and Main Street this spring. If any group or individual would like to volunteer to help with the tree projects please contact Tana Pippin at 748-2300 x 2. This would be an exciting and very valuable community project to be involved within. The city will also be continuing our efforts to trim and maintain the trees on city property through pruning.

The Tree Board has started planning Arbor Day for May 6, 2011. We are hoping to have an Arbor Day school program, litter pickup, sponsor a tree give away contest and possibly have a booth at Colstrip Days. The Tree Board is also looking for a new member as we have an opening at this time. If you are interested please submit a letter of interest to City of Colstrip, Attention: John Williams, PO Box 1902, Colstrip, MT 59323.

Volunteer Fire Department

Ryan Reid, Fire Chief



As we leave winter and start into spring, most people look forward to getting out of the house and spending time in the yard. As the weather turns nice the Colstrip Volunteer Fire Dept. would encourage a few things. First, don't forget to clean your stoves. This time of year stoves are burnt on low, which allows more build up in the pipe and can lead to chimney fires. Second, if you are burning in your yard, please notify the Colstrip Police Department at 748-2211 so your controlled fire doesn't get turned in as a wild fire. Third, make sure all ashes are cold before disposing of them or leaving them unattended. Last, check your smoke alarms. Smoke alarms save lives. Sixty-five percent of home fire deaths happen in homes with no smoke alarms at all or no smoke alarms that work. When there is a fire, smoke spreads fast and you need smoke alarms to give you time to get out.

Install smoke alarms in every bedroom, outside each separate sleeping area and on every level of the home, including the basement. Interconnect all smoke alarms throughout the home. When one sounds, they all sound.

An ionization smoke alarm is generally more responsive to flaming fires and a photoelectric smoke alarm is generally more responsive to smoldering fires. For the best protection use a combination.

Test alarms at least monthly by pushing the test button.

Replace batteries in all smoke alarms at least once a year. Many people change batteries when daylight savings time changes or on the first of the year.

Smoke alarms that include a recordable voice announcement in addition to the usual alarm sound, may be helpful in waking children through the use of a familiar voice.

The CVFD currently has 27 members that are training hard to be ready when the alarm sounds. We are always looking for new recruits. If you are interested in applying, contact any fireman. We can work long hours for no pay except the feeling of helping the community and working alongside some great people.

Bicentennial Library



The Friends of the Library annual scholarship application is now available at the library or the Colstrip High School counseling center. If you are a recent graduate or are graduating this year. Please stop by the library and pick up an application for consideration for this scholarship. Applications are due no later than April 15th.

The Bicentennial Library has some troubling news: All of our patrons probably already know the library was closed January 28th and January 29th. We were closed because there is a leak in the roof that has dripped down into the walls. The Bicentennial Library has had lots of support. So far with the dedication from County Commissioner Bob Lee; he has sought a roof repair man. The Advisory Board acting chair Autumn Stewart and Library Board Chair Ellis Parry recommended that we stay open and accessible to the public as much as possible during this time, and I completely agree. Our dedicated staff members, Sue McKamey and Frank Barreto, have moved some DVD's around so that they are still accessible, but not against the water damaged wall. The electrical outlets that posed a potential danger have been disconnected. The Bicentennial Library really appreciates your patience during this difficult time, and we will continue to serve you as best we can during the repair process. I want to thank Sue McKamey and Frank Barreto for their quick thinking and hard work on Friday, January 28th. Thank you Commissioner Lee for coming down to the library and getting a hold of a repair man so quickly. I also want to thank our acting advisory board chair Autumn Stewart and our Library Board Chair Ellis Parry for their guidance and advice.

A major library event is on the horizon: The Montana Library Association Conference is being held in Billings, MT this April. This is the furthest east this conference has been held so all the Bicentennial Library staff is attending. This conference is the best continuing education experience that is offered, in my opinion, and one that has not been offered so close to home in a very long time. So that all the librarians may attend this conference Bicentennial Library will be closed April 7th through the 9th. This is a Thursday through Saturday closure. We apologize for the closure, but we look forward to being able to come back from this conference with more ideas, more knowledge and better ways to serve the community.

This year seems to be moving as fast as 2010 at the library. After conference our next big event will be the Summer Reading Program. Yes, we are already planning that. The dates for the program have not been set yet but the theme this year is a fun one. "One World, Many Stories" is the theme this year. Friends of the Library and our fine money help fund this program.

The staff of Bicentennial Library appreciates your patronage and support.

Schoolhouse History and Art Center cont.

fresh flowers to church during the growing season. The Rye gardens were envy to this community. Upon the passing of these treasured residents, the Board of Directors of the Schoolhouse recognized a beautiful garden area would compliment our historic building. To commemorate Signe, our garden consists of blooms of bricks that continue to flower every time a brick is purchased. If you would like to walk through our garden and see the many blooms we have placed there please do so. If you have someone special you would like to be remembered as a part of our treasured history let us know.

SHAC will continue to strive to bring positive choices to our community. We are able to provide our services because of the generosity of the City of Colstrip, Montana Arts Council, our loyal members, and local businesses. Thank you for partnering with us! Through education we have been able to reach our youngest and our oldest community members in a very hands-on atmosphere. Each year our goal is to make our good better and our better best. We hope to see you soon!

Mayor's Message cont.

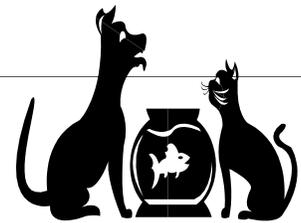
dealing with. On March 22nd at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall we will be holding a public hearing regarding these increases. The City anticipates water rates will increase 27% for the average residential customer and the sewer rates will increase approximately 48% for the average residential customer.

The requirement of the increase is to offset the increases in costs to operate and maintain these systems. We have aging water and sewer systems that have required our continual attention of replacing major components in addition to the ever increasing costs to operate them. This is the first increase for water since we became a City and the second increase for sewer.

On a positive note your City does an excellent job in supplying a safe, reliable product in the water that is provided to all our residents. We also effectively handle the sewage.

Animal Control

Can you hear your dog barking?? I'll bet your neighbor can! The biggest complaint we run into about animals is barking dogs and owners who won't quiet their own dogs. This is true in virtually every neighborhood in Colstrip and it is easily resolved.



It is most unfortunate but I, personally, have bark collars on our dogs, not because they are barkers but because our neighbors' dogs are barkers. Not across the street. Not next door. But across the street and one house down and the dogs will bark at anything – even if the wind changes direction. How sad, I wear a hearing aid and with the windows closed and the TV on I can still hear those dogs barking. When one neighbor is negligent before long every dog in the neighborhood is barking. For our peace of mind we have bark collars on our dogs to teach them to be quiet quickly. The collars are very humane and have governors on them so the dogs cannot be abused.

This is NOT a dog issue, it is a good neighbor issue, as usual, it's not the dogs it's the people. If you have dogs barking take them in the house. If you don't want them in the house, don't have dogs. Dogs are social animals and they want nothing more than a full belly and to be with their owners. It's that simple. Forced to choose they would choose the owner.

Additionally, dogs need exercise. Unless you have five fenced acres for the dog(s) to run on they need to be walked every day – or at least some playtime in the house.

According to Colstrip City Ordinance 5-4-1 Nuisance Animals:

A. Definition: The term "animal" shall include dogs, cats and all other types of animals.

B. Prohibited Animal Behavior:

1. Noise: It shall be unlawful for any person or entity to maintain a dog or any other animal in or upon any premises within city limits, which such dog or animal shall disturb the peace of any person by barking, howling, whining, growling, biting or making any other kind of noise.

As you begin your spring cleaning please remember the Colstrip Animal Shelter is in need of towels. We are good on all the rest of the supplies – we just have a GREAT need for towels. Thanks – as always!

City Court

Judge Gail Beckham



CITY COURT CASES FILED IN 2010

Traffic Violations	70
Seat Belt & Child Restraint	10
Driving Under the Influence / .08 or Greater BAC	10
Unlawful Possession of Open Alcoholic Beverage in Vehicle	1
Intoxicated Pedestrian	1
Criminal Possession of Dangerous Drugs / Drug Paraphernalia	6
Partner/Family Member / Misdemeanor Assault	9
Criminal Endangerment	2
Endangering Welfare of a Child	1
Failure to Register as Sex Offender	1
Unlawful Possession of Intoxicating Substance Under 21	12
Theft	5
Criminal Mischief	2
Criminal Trespass	4
Obstructing a Peace Officer	6
Disorderly Conduct	12
Probation Violations	16
Dog at Large	4
No Tag & Collar	2
Nuisance Animal	1
Civil Cases (Includes Orders of Protection)	4

Total January to September 2010 = 179

[Compared to 201 Cases for January to December 2009]

City of Colstrip
PO Box 1902
Colstrip, MT 59323

Website: www.cityofcolstrip.com

Phone: 406-748-2300
Fax: 406-748-2303
Email: info@cityofcolstrip.com

**PRSRT STD
PERMIT NO. 9
COLSTRIP, MT**

**ECRWS
Box Holder
Colstrip, MT 59323**

Celebrating 12 Years