

City of Colstrip

June 2014

Mayor's Message



- Mayor Rose Hanser
- Tom Jankowski
- Lawretta Miller
- John Williams
- Greg Koczur

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.

City Hall Information

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Celebrating 15 Years



Well, Summer is finally here. And the usual activities at city hall are budgeting, project planning, grant applications, and vacations. Budgeting is always open to the public, look for the postings. Since the budgeting process is part of your City Council person's responsibility, don't be shy about popping in to a budget session, there is always opportunity for public comment. The dates and times will be posted at the regular posting places around town; library, post office, city hall, and Taylor's.

During Colstrip Days, be sure to visit our new City Shop. We will be offering tours in the Senior Citizen Van from city hall to the shop starting at 9:00 am Friday June 27, 2014. This was our last big project. The old City Shop, as many of you know, was a building from the 1930's era. It was deemed structurally unsafe by OSHA, which led the city to build a new facility. Not to mention that most of our equipment could not fit through the door.

Our upcoming projects are not as visible or impressive to most folks. However, I have yet to meet anyone that is not impressed when the water or sewer system is not functioning well. I did not say it was a good impression. Water and Wastewater systems are an important part of our city's infrastructure. We are working with our engineers to upgrade the backwash system at the Water Treatment Plant, by DEQ mandate. We are also in the planning stages to repair and replace the remaining lift stations that are part of our sewer system later this summer/early fall.

The Coal Board has been a tremendous support to the city's projects in the past several years. SHAC is a current great example of Coal Board dollars at work in Colstrip. If you haven't driven or stopped by to see the improvements, now is the time to do so. It is looking great. The City will again seek funding from the Coal Board for grant funding on our Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrade for next year. We are expecting to be favorably considered, as this is an essential project for the continued health and safety of all those in our community.

Finally, it is common to thank people that vote for you after an election. Well, I was not up for election this year, but I would still like to thank you for electing me as the Mayor of Colstrip. I am truly thankful and greatly appreciate the opportunity to serve our community in this capacity. I will continue to work hard at doing the best possible job in the time remaining in my term of office.

Thankfully,

Rose Hanser
Mayor



Public Works Department

Bryan Swan, Public Works Director



The Public Works Department was glad to see this winter come to a close. We had enough snow and cold to last us awhile. But if we have another one of "those" winters we will be facing it with more equipment and manpower. Although we were able to put down record amounts of sand we were short staffed at times when it came to snow removal. Thanks to the City Council authorizing the hiring of another full time employee and equipping another dump truck with a plow we will have the ability to put more snow plows on the street this next season. Also having two dump truck mounted snow plows will help us cope with heavy wet snowfalls like we had this last winter. These types of storms can overwhelm the pickup mounted snow plows that do the job well most of the time.

The problem with putting down over 320 tons of sand is that now we have to pick it all back up. We have had some other jobs that needed to be completed this spring but now we should be able to get the street sweeper out more. The summer help has also been very busy on the streets clearing the storm drains, fixing potholes, mowing the right of ways and painting the curbs.

We will not be doing any major street projects this year and will be concentrating on our water and wastewater infrastructure. There are several construction projects already in progress. We are under a Montana Department of Environmental Quality order to have our Water Plant backwash water in compliance with our discharge permit by the end of February 2015. We have been out of compliance since the DEQ imposed strict limits on the Water Plant around the time that the City incorporated. We couldn't meet the parameters of the permit with our present facility and for over ten years have been exploring different ways to comply without making such a big capital outlay. We have now run out of options and need to start moving down the road to compliance. The DEQ have begun imposing fines and have threatened stiffer penalties for noncompliance leaving us few options other than making some kind of upgrade to the plant. To meet our compliance deadline we will need to rehabilitate an existing clarifier building that has been mothballed since the early 1980s. This facility will be used to treat the backwash water before being returned to the lake.

Also at the Water Plant we completed the first phase of a pipe replacement program. Some of the pipes have begun leaking due to age and are now being replaced. We hope to do the next 2 phases later this fall or early next year.

KLJ Engineering have completed a Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) on our Wastewater System. Several deficiencies were identified at the Wastewater Treatment Plant and in the Collection System. The Cherry Street Lift Station is in such poor shape we have already begun the planning phase for its replacement. We are also planning the rehabilitation of two of our other lift stations as well. These lift stations have exceeded their lifespan and needed to be moved to the top of the list of projects. The City has four other lift stations. Three have already been replaced in the last few years so the Wastewater Collection System should be in pretty good shape once these projects are completed. There will also be some major deficiencies that will need to be addressed at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. We are exploring all of our funding options for this project and hope to be able to make these repairs within the next 2 or three years.

I would like to thank all of the citizens of our fine community for the support and understanding you have given us throughout the year and hope that you all have a great summer.

Building/Zoning/Code Enforcement

Jan Morgan

Once again we had a wet spring in Colstrip. Sometimes it is difficult to keep the grass or weeds under the four inch (4") height as stipulated in code but remember it is the property owner's responsibility and letters will be going out to owners found in violation of this code.

I have noticed recently that several lots in town have started to accumulate an assortment of trailers, junk vehicles and debris. These accumulations of junk, as well as RV's, boats, trailers, snowmobiles and anything else that lays around gathering weeds underneath it instead of being properly put away or stored, are unsightly and infringe upon the rights and valuations of neighboring property owners. Letters will be going out to those property owners found in violation to remind them of the city codes that prohibit such accumulations.

Please be aware that RV's and other recreational vehicles are not to be stored on public streets but on off street parking spaces. Those spaces by code must be located on the same lot as the dwelling, and may not be located in any front yard except in the driveway.

The city receives many complaints concerning the above violations every year. Many more go unreported because people do not wish to complain or cause other people problems. Be considerate of your neighbors. Code compliance is simply a part of living in a community. Call if you have any questions or concerns. My office hours vary but you can usually reach me Monday through Thursday. If I'm not in please leave a message and I will return your call.



Bicentennial Library

Mary Kay Bullard, Director



As the director of Bicentennial Library, I probably don't work the front desk as often as I should. I pretty much work from the back room managing all the behind the scenes stuff that are required from public libraries. Bicentennial Library is conducting a survey right now. My personal goal for the survey is 430 responses, half the households in Colstrip. At the time I am writing this, we have just over 40, so we are about a 10th of the way there. My other personal goal is to work the front a little more often. Every director has a wish list for their library. I know I have one. Bicentennial Library has enjoyed frequent usage since it was started in 1976. I am overjoyed to be part of such an active library. If you have not taken the survey yet, please do so, all of the items discussed on the survey have been suggestions and wishes of other community members, and it would be good if we as a community we could make a commitment to one of these items.

It's the most wonderful time of the year! Summer Reading Program Time: This year's theme will be full of science fun and GREAT Prizes. Registration started Tuesday May 27th. First day of recording was June 2nd. Remember even if you do not start right away, you can still participate. We began our afternoon activities with blowing stuff up on June 5th. Then we will test our boat making skills on June 12th. On June 19th we will learn about robots and on June 26th we will have our annual SHAC visit. Recording will end on July 6th and final hour will be due July 7th with the final party being July 10th. Friends of the Bicentennial Library have donated a Kindle HD and we will have other wonderful prizes that you can put your name in for as you earn stamps and tickets leading up to the final party. Top readers will also win extra prizes for their efforts so I encourage all our participants to really read this summer. Bicentennial Library's Summer Reading Program has always been very competitive.

The Friends of Bicentennial Library would like to announce their BIG annual book sale that will take place June 28th during Colstrip Days. This year's book sale will also include a drawing for a twenty five dollar gift card and a Christmas in July almost silent auction. Some upcoming programming for our teen patrons will be a murder mystery pizza party called Pete's Piece a Pizza. We will have 16 openings for participation in this event, so as soon as it's posted please send your teen-agers down to the library to sign up. Because we want to offer programming for all different age groups we ask that no one under thirteen sign up for this event.

If you have not visited the library in a while; I think you need to know what you are missing out on: Witty, welcoming librarians, a plethora of DVD's for your at home entertainment, a constant influx of new non-fiction and fiction books, a vivacious and entertaining Story Time for young children, a cozy coffee providing lounge, and much much more. If you haven't been in to our library lately you are missing out. Come see us soon!

Schoolhouse History and Art Center

Lu Shomate, Director



Have you noticed all the activity around the Schoolhouse? We successfully secured funding to repair and replace our foundation, handicap access, and our heating system, and we are in the final stages of completing these projects. None of this would have been possible without our grantors, First Interstate Bank, PPL Montana, WECO, and the Coal Board. Without our donations from our Capital Campaign, and our valuable long standing members, both old and new, this wouldn't have been possible. Work began on the foundation first, then the handicap area, now we are completing the cement work, and soon will have an asphalt driveway for getting into the Schoolhouse a whole lot easier. As much as possible, all work and materials were purchased and contracted locally. We are excited to see the completion of this project while ensuring a better future for the Schoolhouse.

Schoolhouse History and Art Center cont. page 4

Schoolhouse History and Art Center Cont.

Soon the 35th Annual Juried Art Show will be in our Gallery for the month of June. July and August will host our own "Jennifer Pe-tritz" and her photography. Jen has won many National Awards for her photography, some of which will be shown in our Gallery. In September and October the Gallery will be filled with work from Shayla Haugen of Ashland. Shayla's outdoor scenes and wildlife are absolutely breath taking. In November the Colstrip Medical Center will be having their annual wreath auction at the Schoolhouse. It's hard to even think about Christmas today!! Mark your calendar, follow us on Facebook. We have lots of fun things planned throughout the year.

Our third SHAC Scholarship was awarded to Morgan Mueller. Three CHS seniors applied for our scholarship and their artwork was our Gallery display the month of May. Thank you Morgan Mueller, Lindsey Pippin, and Alexandra Winnings for applying for our Scholarship. Board Members have worked extremely hard to encourage and promote continuing education for a creative CHS Senior. The scholarship is funded through the dedication of our thirteen member board. Each Board Member sells raffle tickets and literally has worked in the soup kitchen at our annual Arts & Craft Fair to make this award possible. A Great Big Shout Out to Evelyn Broadus, President; Dan Schmidt, Vice President; LaCinda Galloway, Secretary, Cathy Frank, Treasurer; Scott Egan, Sue Neiman, Joan Hantz, Mary Noel, Tom Crippen, Paula Peplow, Patty Dunn, Barb Needham, & Steve Perusich. Good Job SHAC Board!

SHAC will continue to bring positive choices to our community. The Board and staff are able to provide these 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. Each year our goal is to make our good better and our better best. We invite you to enjoy the opportunities at the Schoolhouse; you will always be a treasure to us!

City Court

Gail Beckham, City Judge



JUROR NOTIFICATION TO SERVE

It's that time again to solicit citizens to serve as jurors in Colstrip City Court for the next fiscal year beginning July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015. Juror selection begins with 200 names randomly selected from driver's license numbers by the Clerk of the Sixteenth Judicial District of Rosebud County. A Juror Notice along with a Juror Questionnaire and Affidavit to Claim Excuse has been mailed to the selected jurors. When the questionnaires are returned the Judge will review them and make a determination which individuals may be excused, temporarily or permanently. The Court compiles a master list of eligible jurors for the upcoming year and generally, when a specific jury trial is scheduled 25-30 jurors are randomly chosen and will receive a Summons to Appear for jury duty. On the day of trial 6 jurors and 2-3 alternate jurors will be chosen to serve on that particular case. If you are summoned and fail to report you can be held in Contempt of Court.

The Court recognizes that jury service can be inconvenient, but it is an extremely important civic duty. The right to a jury trial is guaranteed under the United States Constitution and the Constitution of the State of Montana. The effectiveness of the jury system depends upon the willingness of all citizens to perform their duty as jurors, as well as their ability to be fair and impartial while deciding the facts and applying the law as instructed. Jury service is a serious duty and is of great importance to all those involved. Having the opportunity to serve should give you the satisfaction knowing that you made a significant contribution to our justice system, which was created to serve all citizens.

If you are summoned to serve as a Juror a "Juror's Guide" will be provided to assist you in understanding a Juror's role and responsibility. It is available on the City of Colstrip Website: cityofcolstrip.com or you may pick one up at City Hall.

If you have not completed and returned your juror questionnaire please do so as soon as possible. If you do not return the questionnaire you will not be removed from the jury list or be excluded from jury duty.

It's important to remember that without citizens willing to serve as jurors the American system of justice could not exist.