

City of Colstrip

January 2017

Mayor's Message



- Mayor John Williams
- Tom Jankowski
- Greg Koczur
- Jolene Verlanic
- Mike Esser

Council meetings are the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month unless rescheduled for a holiday.

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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What a way to begin the celebration of the New Year. Snow, snow, and more snow along with the very cold. Whatever happened to global warming-oh-that's incorrect now its called climate change.

Thank you and kudos to our city crew for keeping our streets plowed, sanded and most importantly "safe". You have all gone above and beyond what is required in the difficult situation of narrow streets with vehicles and the many cul de sacs.

Thank you also to CPRD and Mike Esser for your snow removal on our trails and around the rec center. Thank you also to the many neighbors that help each other out and helping our seniors with snow removal. You all make Colstrip a special place to live.

Our Senator Ankney is amazing and that also goes for Colstrip United, Lori Shaw and Ashley Denny, along with Jim Atchison of SEMDC. These individuals work tirelessly on getting truthful information out to the public on the value of coal and electrical energy production. It is extremely important for Colstrip to continue to play a role, not only in our state but in the Pacific Northwest. Colstrip provides for the needs of Montana and the Pacific Northwest.

We in Colstrip recognize the value of our community and the value of what we do for others. Our residents enjoy a great quality of life as a result of coal development. Montana also enjoys the many benefits from all the efforts of our plant workers and coal miners that live in our community.

Senator Ankney is in the process of introducing legislation to protect our workers, city, county, school district and very importantly our state as a result of the needless shutting of units 1 and 2 and the corresponding mine operations. We are very fortunate to have Senator Ankney in the position that he holds. He needs all of our continued support and encouragement. As your Mayor, I will continue to give him my support and the support of our city.

Congratulations to all the workers at the power plants for their recent achievement of unit 2's record setting run of 190.3 consecutive days producing reliable coal fired electricity to the western connection. This is an all time record for these smaller units. As has been stated by those that have plant knowledge, they (units 1 & 2) are not "worn out dirty units". I guess the record speaks for itself. Again, congratulations!

Speaking of accurate information, a couple months ago the Billings Gazette had an article regarding the groundwater in Colstrip. The article was very misleading, giving the impression that groundwater prior to the plants ash ponds was a source of quality drinking water, which of course is incorrect. A little bit of history—the original supply of water for our town came from six (6) deep water wells of 600 to 1200 feet. We had two (2) storage tanks one at the end of Woodrose and the other

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Public Works Department

Bryan Swan, Public Works Director



It is getting hard to remember the warmth of summer because it seems like this snow and cold has been going forever. I guess we had gotten spoiled because the last couple winters have been mild. The weather last year was fairly typical but we did have some unusual weather too. Like the storm in June that dropped nearly a foot of hail and 3 inches of precipitation in about 20 minutes leaving drifts making it look like the middle of winter. Then the snow and cold came early in December and has not let up. We have had 19 days below zero already this winter with a low of -25 recorded December 17th at our National Weather Service reporting station at the Water Treatment Plant. The average temperature for December was about 10 degrees below normal. We ended the year about 3 inches above normal for precipitation.

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	<u>Precipitation</u>	
September	2016	4.91
October	2016	1.81
November	2016	0.11
December	2016	1.20

The Public Works Department has kept very busy with sanding and snow removal. We have kept the streets clear but where to put all the snow will become a real challenge if this weather pattern continues for the next few months. We have used over 200 tons or about two thirds of our normal year's supply of sand/deicer mix. We replaced our ten year old sander this year. The new sander is stainless steel to resist the corrosive effects of the deicer. We are purchasing another sander for our other dump truck. This will give us two big trucks equipped with plows and sanders which will increase the efficiency of our plowing/sanding operation.

We had a small construction project in October that included modifications to some of the sidewalks on the west side of the highway to make them ADA compliant. A sidewalk was added along Willow Avenue to connect the bike path at the highway with the sidewalk at Cherry Street and a new "Welcome" sign was also installed. Good weather allowed AV Construction to complete most of these improvements before the winter weather set in. The landscaping will be finished in the spring.

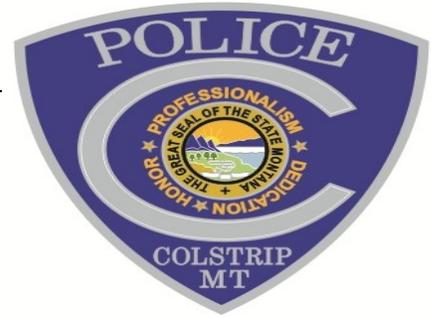
The Willow Avenue Reconstruction Project will be rebid this winter and construction should begin this spring or summer. The project will run from Highway 39 to the railroad tracks and will include new pavement, sidewalks, curbs, gutters and lighting. The old water main that runs the length of the project will also be replaced.

The Wastewater Treatment Upgrade Phase 1 is waiting for final approval by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality. The review process has taken over a year but we expect approval to come any time. The project will include replacement of failing equipment at our 40 year old Wastewater Treatment Plant and will be partially funded by a \$500,000 Coal Board grant.

The Zone 3 Water Tank Replacement Project is in the design phase. This project includes replacement of the water tank that supplies the town west of the highway. Our engineers are presently looking at new locations for the tank. They will also begin designing the pump system that will supply the new tank. The pumps will be more efficient and can pump to the higher elevation of the new tank but they can ramp the flow up and down slowly. This ramping will eliminate the surging that we presently see in our water distribution system. This surging or "water hammer" can cause damage to the water mains and other equipment connected to the system. This project has received a Coal Board grant for \$138,000.

Police Department

Cory Hert, Police Chief



We at the Police Department hope you all had a fun filled enjoyable holiday season and wish you all a very Happy New Year!

Our text-to-911 system has been installed and is up and running; please remember that the preferred and most efficient means of reporting an emergency is still by dialing 911. Text-to-911 is for those who may not have enough cell coverage to call 911 but have enough coverage to send a text; it can also be utilized when a situation deems it unsafe for the caller to make a voice call or when the caller may have significant hearing loss or deafness.

Thanks to the generosity of the Rosebud County Public Health Department all of our patrol vehicles are now currently equipped with an AED. We would once again like to express our gratitude for the funding of this important equipment and though we hope we never have to use them, they will save valuable minutes and seconds in a lifesaving emergency when necessary.

We have had a rash of barking dog complaints over the past few months and I would like to take this opportunity to remind the community of our nuisance animal 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.
2. Dangerous Or Offensive Animals: Any person maintaining one or more dogs, or any other animal of any kind within city limits which is injurious to the health of others; indecent or offensive to the senses; or an obstruction to the free use of property so as to interfere with the comfortable enjoyment of life or property, shall be guilty of maintaining a nuisance. (Ord. 99-17, 10-21-1999, eff. 11-21-1999; amd. 2003 Code)
3. Animals running At Large: It shall be unlawful for any person to allow livestock to run at large within the Colstrip city limits at any time. (Ord. 2013-02, 6-11-2013, eff. 7-11-2013)

C. Establishment of Nuisance Criteria: Maintenance of a nuisance created or caused by an animal may be established by proof that the nuisance condition described emanates from the defendant's property or premises as above described and that the nuisance condition is caused by an animal. It shall not be required that an individual animal be identified but only that a defendant maintained such animal and that the nuisance was created by an animal.

D. Violation; Penalty: A person convicted of violating this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and may be sentenced up to six (6) months in the county jail and/or fined up to five hundred dollars (\$500.00) or in the alternative, the enforcement authority may make an order or finding necessary to abate the nuisance, including an order directing the humane death of the animal involved. An order of abatement by the court may include a requirement that the owner or possessor of such nuisance animal post a bond to assure compliance with the order of the court. (Ord. 99-17, 10-21-1999, eff. 11-21-1999; amd. 2003 Code)

As you are all aware, our community is made up of a majority of shift workers and at any given time during the day almost half of the community could be resting or sleeping. Please remember this and be courteous to your neighbors and make every attempt to limit or eliminate unnecessary animal noises as much as possible. We don't enjoy issuing citations for nuisance animals however, when notified, we owe it to the reporting party to handle the call appropriately.

Thanks again for your continued support in making 2016 another successful year for our department and we look forward to working hand in hand with all of you to ensure continued success and safety for all of our community members!

Schoolhouse History and Art Center

Lu Shomate, Director



The gray days of January are behind us and we are looking forward to Spring. Our first show this year will once again be in honor of the "Gone to Pieces Quilt Club". These beautiful quilts will be ready for you in plenty of time to bring your Valentine by and pick out your favorite quilt in each of the five categories. The color on the gallery walls, the fabric and thread just makes me feel warm inside. We all are looking forward to Spring at the Schoolhouse.

We are excited to have Stacy Batie join our staff as our Education Director. Stacy and Rusty have been loyal members of the Schoolhouse. Stacy has joined us in the classroom throughout the years with her children so she is very familiar with our programs. Stacy has a degree in Elementary Education, who better to have at the Schoolhouse. Thank you Stacy for joining our group!

March will bring the annual all school art show. Students have been invited from Busby, Lame Deer, home schooled, St. Labre and Colstrip. These students will be displaying their multimedia talents in the Gallery. We support our local students in many activities, this is just another form of talent you might not want to miss, so be sure to add this to your calendar under fun. There will be a reception for this Gallery Show on Thursday, March 30th from 4:00 – 5:30, everyone is welcome.

We are excited to announce our April through May artist, Leroy Whiteman of Lame Deer. We are just now working out the details with Leroy, however, I know many of you know this hometown artist and we are privileged to have his work in our Gallery.

Have you checked out the back garden at the Schoolhouse lately? What a beautiful space for our brick garden. Signe's Garden looks beautiful after her recent facelift. The bricks are in two different colors now, it's so much easier to read the inscriptions. If you want to honor or remember a special occasion, why not purchase a brick for all time. Come walk down memory lane and read all the names and occasions celebrated in the cool evenings this Spring season.

Our gift shop continues to bring local artistry to our community. If you haven't had an opportunity to visit, stop in to see what we are all about and support your local artists. We regularly go to market, so we have the latest and greatest at prices you can afford. If you are a local artist and would like to have a place to sell your artwork, stop in and talk to our Gift Shop committee, we would love to share our shop with you.

Don't forget to check out our website www.colstripshac.org. Thank you Evan Stewart for all your help!! If you have suggestions for our website, please let us know. Your comments are appreciated.

As always, the Board and Staff at SHAC thank you for your patronage, your contribution through volunteering, your financial support through membership, your kind words when you stop in and your partnership in making Colstrip a wonderful community. Because of you and your participation, we can offer wonderful educational programs, speakers, share our history, and offer Gallery Shows to our communities for many years to come. And remember we are ADA Accessible too! Thank You Colstrip!!

Bicentennial Library



After some serious discussion the Bicentennial Library Advisory Board has made the recommendation that cost for color copies at Bicentennial Library must go up to .25 cents per copy. We will still offer black and white copies at .15 cents. We will begin charging .25 cents for colored copies February 1st.

I had an uncle who was very good at identifying problems and discussing them openly. He had no problem with confronting whatever the issue was and addressing that issue, even if his addressing that issue made others uncomfortable. Not all of us are like my uncle. We understand there is a problem we just don't like dragging the elephant out into the room and introducing him. The staff at Bicentennial Library can offer some of the very same services, like resume writing classes or online application help more discretely. It is also easier now to contact

Bicentennial Library cont. page 6

Mayor's Message cont.

on the hill across from the Moose. This naturally occurring groundwater was of very poor quality. It was high in sulphur, lead, magnesium and iron.

In 1974 the owner/operator, Western Energy, of the water system was notified the water quality was substandard for a municipal water supply and would have to be filtered and a disinfection system installed. Western Energy built a temporary water filtration and disinfection system near, what is now, the boiler makers training buildings. In 1981, our current water plant was constructed by Castle Rock Lake. This plant was funded by the Coal Board, owned by Rosebud County and operated by Colstrip Community Services. The plant uses a declining rate sand filtering process and would you believe also that "coal" is part of the filtering process. The purification is done with an onsite hydro chlorite generation system. The ownership and operation of the water system was transferred to our city in 1999.

The groundwater wells have all been capped off and we use Yellowstone River water as our water supply. The plants ash ponds do not now or have they ever been a threat to our city's water supply for our residents.

I would invite you to go to our website if you are interested in this or any other matter regarding your city's operation. The city's website is: www.cityofcolstrip.com.

Planning, Zoning & Code Official Denise Sisson

Snow Days Are Here Again! 2017 brings in this New Year with abundant snow.

While it's fun to play on a snowy hillside, our drivers can't be too careful. The sidewalks are often buried, forcing residents and our kids with sleds to walk in the already car crowded, narrowly snow plowed roads. And here's where YOU can help by shoveling the sidewalk in front of your house. Not only is it the neighborly thing to do, it is the Property Owners responsibility. It helps our drivers avoid accidents too.

Clear sidewalks make it easier and safer to get around. They are important for everyone using sidewalks, but they are especially important for seniors, people with disabilities and children. Snow or ice-covered sidewalks force people to travel in the street and that is unsafe. Snow also causes alley congestion requiring neighborly cooperation.

Please remember that after a snowstorm it is the property owner's responsibility to remove accumulated snow and ice from the sidewalk within a reasonable period of time. In addition, it is illegal for the snow and ice removed from the sidewalks or driveways to be deposited in the streets. Failure to comply may cause the city to remove the snow at the owner's expense.

Thank you and be considerate of your neighbors, as we all help keep Colstrip a Strong Caring Community!



Southeastern Montana Development Corp. (SEMDC) Director Jim Atchison

Colstrip based Southeastern MT Development (SEMDC) is a regional non-profit economic development group that was established in 1997 to stimulate and encourage economic activity in the four (4) Counties of Custer, Powder River, Rosebud and Treasure. Today, SEMDC continues to work with the private, public and non-profit sectors to help create and retain jobs in these counties and thus improve the economic base.

In the June City Newsletter, I noted seven major issues impacting Colstrip and Coal Country in different degrees. Since then, there has been a flurry of activity on these issues and thus impacts to our economic base are coming. As we all know, our local economy is simply a "one horse town." The economic stability of Colstrip, Coal Country and in some ways, Montana, is being threatened by the "War on Coal", election year politics and disinformation / legal campaigns by radical environmental groups.

Southeastern Montana Development Corp. cont. page 7

Colstrip United

Co-Founders: Lori Shaw & Ashley Dennehy



Happy New Year from Colstrip United! Can you believe how fast 2016 went? It was an incredible year for us here in Colstrip! We first want to say THANK YOU for the support you gave the movement! Without you we couldn't have accomplished all the wonderful things we did! Our community is one of a kind—we are so lucky to get to live here!

We were quite busy last year with the launch of the Facebook and website which have reached over 5.5 million people! We also began to fundraise by selling shirts, magnets, and stickers with our logo on them! To date we've done about 2000 shirts and over 2500 magnets! The reach those items have is incredible! We attended lots of events and even hosted a couple of our own last year! Among the most successful were the gathering at the power plant when the Owners came to town and the MEIC demonstration held in Helena. Thank you to everyone who helped coordinate and those that attended those events! We also had the opportunity to travel to Washington DC and let our town's voice be heard in our nation's capital! We are blown away by the incredible connections and friends that we've made on this journey. We are hopeful that these friendships will last for a lifetime and that our town has made many new friends that stand with us in our fight to win the war on coal.

We look forward to 2017 as a year that coal will finally be appreciated. The fight is far from over but things are looking so promising and are moving in the right direction for us. We need to continue to be good ambassadors for coal and our town as we travel into the world this year. We hope you'll help us to continue to show the world how important coal is for our local, state, and federal economies. We must continue to spread the positive message we originally set out with. Inform. Promote. Inspire.

We hope that you'll join us January 28th at CPRD to celebrate one year of our community fighting back against the misinformation and lies surrounding what we do here in Colstrip! It will be a laid back evening so just come enjoy yourself. Tickets can be purchased at Taylor's Ace Hardware! We hope to see you there!

There are so many things to be thankful for and we hope that you had a blessed holiday season filled with friends, family, and joy. We look forward to seeing where the journey takes us this year and hope you'll be along for the ride. Keep the faith my friends; we've come an incredible way and we will always remember the year we fought back. No matter what happens no one could ever replace the beautiful and incredible community that we all know and love. We will be victorious and we will stick together no matter what because we are proud to be where we are. God Bless and Happy New Year!

Bicentennial Library cont.

anyone of us, than it has been in history. You can message us on Facebook, send any one of us an email, call and request an appointment or stop by and pull one of us aside and make your request. We will do our best to help you in the manner that you are most comfortable.

Rosebud County has a very informative webpage. The web address is www.rosebudcountymt.gov. On this page you will be able to view and in many cases download and print the information that you need regarding Rosebud County. You will be able to contact whatever county department you need to complete your business. Phone numbers and in many cases emails are made available on www.rosebudcountymt.gov. Also on the county page when you click on departments and scroll down to libraries you will see a link to Bicentennial Library. When you click on that link you will see another link that simply says staff. When you click on staff, you will see a full listing of the staff members at Bicentennial Library. Select a staff member and their email will come up for you. Then you can contact a librarian from the comfort of your own home. Bicentennial Library still has our google page account as well. All you need to do is google Bicentennial Library of Colstrip and follow about the same procedure as you would for the county page.

Along with story time, I want to review with you some of our regular programming that we now offer every month instead of just once in a while. Every Monday afternoon at 4:00 p.m. we offer Lego Club. Lego Club is now open to anybody four years old and up. We also offer Snack Builders once a month and a Cookbook Club once a month. Tracy Daniels hosts Snack Builders, a food preparation program aimed at young people who want to learn how to make healthy snacks. Rachel Grafton hosts both Lego Club and the Cookbook Club. The Cookbook Club is a recipe sharing group that decides on a theme and then prepares the food and shares it. They have made soups, appetizers and most recently Christmas cookies that they shared with people in the community as well as Bicentennial Library's open house.

Southeastern Montana Development Corp. (SEMDC) cont.

SEMDC is currently very active with three (3) different Studies that are now in progress. All three of these have a Colstrip and Coal Country connection and impact. The basic details are as follows:

1) Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) - (Regional Effort)

- * Four (4) County Economic Development Plan by SEMDC
- * Objective: Remain certified with Federal EDA and State CRDC Programs with consistent regional economic and community planning efforts
- * SEMDC conducts seven (7) Town Meetings to record public input via a SWOT analysis
- * Outcomes are shared with key stakeholders for possible action, timeframes and investments
- * Time Frame: Five (5) Year Roadmap with Annual Updates
- * Completed annually by SEMDC staff with a due date of June 30, 2017

2) Coal Country Coalition (CCC) - (Regional Effort)

- * Regional Effort - Four (4) Economic Development Groups serving 15 Counties (SEMDC - Colstrip, Snowy Mountain Development - Lewistown, Big Sky Economic Development Authority - Billings and Beartooth RC&D - Joliet)
- * Objective: Identify accurate coal revenues for Montana and identify / create a Directory of Workforce Training Opportunities for possible displaced coal industry personnel
- * Time Frame: Completion due end of March 2017
- * Contractor: Tamerica Management Company - Mandeville, LA
- * Funded by two grants: Federal EDA and MT Big Sky Trust Fund

3) Colstrip Economic Diversification Strategy - (Local Effort)

- * Objective: Development a Strategy to Diversify the Economic Base of Colstrip
- * Subject was identified and requested during the 2015 Colstrip CEDS Town Meeting
- * Time Frame: Completion due end of February 2017
- * Contractor: KLJ - Billings
- * Funded by three grants:
 - Federal EDA POWER (1 of 2 grants in an 8 state region),
 - MT Coal Board and the MT Big Sky Trust Fund
- * First Community Input Sessions were held December 14th and 15th
- * Next Session: Draft Presentation by KLJ, Tuesday January 31, 2017, City Hall 6:00 - 8:00 pm

As always, my staff and I are open to old and new ideas concerning our economic future. Feel free to stop by or contact us at 748-2990.