

City Council Meeting
April 27, 2010

Present: Mayor John Williams, Councilpersons Dan Becker, Tom Jankowski, Evan Stewart and Rick Harbin

Also Present: City Attorney Gary Ryder, Public Works Supervisor John Bleth, City Clerk/Treasurer Michelle Richards, Police Sergeant Cory Hert, Zoning/Code Enforcement/ Building Inspector Jan Morgan and Fire Chief Ryan Reid

Mayor Williams called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Clerk/Treasurer Richards called the Roll Call.

Consent Agenda:

Councilperson Harbin moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Councilperson Jankowski seconded the motion. Discussion: Councilperson Stewart had a question regarding Claim #14326 to First Interstate Bank Corporate Credit Card. Clerk/Treasurer Richards explained the program was for a task the Mayor requested the Deputy Clerk complete. Motion carried with all in favor.

- a. Minutes of 4/13/10 Regular Meeting
- b. Claims Roster 4/23/10

Departmental Reports:

Department Reports were given by Police Sergeant Hert, Zoning/Code Enforcement/ Building Inspector Morgan, Fire Chief Reid, Attorney Ryder, Public Works Supervisor Bleth and City Clerk/Treasurer Richards in addition to written reports provided in Council's packets.

Public Comment and Participation:

Mayor Williams opened the Public Hearing at 7:12 pm to receive comments or objections to a Variance Request at 422 Wildrye. Jan Morgan explained the owners at 422 Wildrye are requesting a Four Foot Variance to Front Setbacks for a Front Porch and Foyer. They are remodeling and enlarging their home. Jan Morgan reminded the City Council that variances are hard to revoke once granted and that variances stay with the property and do not cease with new property owners. Councilperson Becker asked what the city's right-of-way is at this property. Jan stated the right-of-way is about 10 feet. Joe Baxley, of 422 Wildrye, explained the front foundation of the house is not sound and has come down. Their hardship is their family size, they would like more children but the house was built in the 1930's and is small. The edge of the sidewalk to the property pins is 5'7". The front of the house with the new addition to the sidewalk would be 21'4". Mr. Baxley is requesting a four foot, 3 inch variance.

Mr. Baxley has talked to all of his neighbors and they stated no objections to Mr. Baxley. Mr. Baxley plans on improving and enlarging the property, which increases the property value and neighborhood appeal. No other comments or objections were received. Mayor Williams closed the hearing at 7:26 pm.

Rose Hanser, a city resident of over 20 years, is a member of Aglow which is partnering with several other groups to bring a message of hope and encouragement to the state of Montana. A Mayor's Prayer Breakfast is scheduled for May 8th. Mrs. Hanser invited the council members, city employees and community members to attend this event.

Mayor's Communications:

The Montana Coal Board awarded a portion of the grant request for the shared Sewer Camera. \$22,700 will need to be funded by the four entities involved. Colstrip's share would be \$9,080. Mayor Williams would like to budget the city's share in the new budget year, unless there is objection from the City Council. The Coal Board awarded \$30,500 for the Senior Citizens Van. Rosebud County, the Colstrip Medical District and CPRD have committed money to help fund the remainder of the van. County Commissioners proposed a part-time senior coordinator to the Senior Citizens. This person would also act as a liaison between the Colstrip Senior Citizens and the commissioners. The county will provide a vehicle for the position to take senior citizens to doctor appointments, etc. The van is utilized for large group outings mostly for recreational activities. Mayor Williams feels this position should be shared by both the county and city.

Next week is the Municipal Elected Officials Workshop in Billings. Mayor Williams stated it is a very valuable resource and is put on by the Local Government Center of Montana State University.

A work session is scheduled this Thursday at 1:00 pm with Public Sector Personnel Consultants regarding Employee Position Descriptions, Position Classification, and Wage/Salary Study.

Unfinished Business:

Councilperson Harbin moved to approve the first reading of Ordinance 2010-02, revising the Tree Ordinance. Councilperson Stewart seconded the motion. Discussion: Councilperson Harbin complimented the Tree Board for reviewing and editing the ordinance to make it better and fully supports it. Motion carried with all in favor. Second reading of the ordinance will be at the May 11, 2010 regular meeting.

New Business:

Councilperson Jankowski moved to approve a Four Foot, Three Inch Variance to the front setback requirement for 422 Wildrye. Councilperson Becker seconded the motion. Discussion: Councilperson Jankowski thanked Mr. & Mrs. Baxley for attending and explaining their situation of wanting to improve their quality of life. He feels due to the age of the home that it is undersized. Councilperson Stewart commented that public participation is very helpful to the council in making a decision and thanked the Baxleys for attending. Motion carried with all in favor.

Councilperson Becker moved to approve Resolution 2010-R02, authorizing the disposal of surplus equipment. Councilperson Jankowski seconded. Discussion: Councilperson Becker explained the sandpoint blaster is not used and is in the way of the Public Works Department. Councilperson Stewart asked if there has been any interest expressed in this type of equipment. There has not been any interest because it has not been advertised as available. Motion carried with all in favor.

Councilperson Harbin moved to approve the Recycling Grant Award Contract with the Department of Environmental Quality. Councilperson Stewart seconded. Discussion: Councilperson Harbin stated any time a grant is received to help purchase equipment that will save the city money and the recycling will help extend the life of the landfill. No objections or comments were stated. Motion carried with all in favor.

Councilperson Stewart moved to approve the Personnel Committee's recommendation to continue providing Health Benefits to city employees at 100% of the Madison Plan Family Premium, Employee Only Dental Plan I, Employee Only Vision Plan C and an additional 10% of the Madison Plan Premium contributed to the Flexible Spending Account for those employees participating in the health insurance. Councilperson Jankowski seconded the motion. Discussion: Councilperson Stewart does not see any negative effect on the city financially and the city is able to provide generous benefits. Councilperson Harbin stated there will never be a financial burden to the city as long as there is HB409, which is a non-voted levy, but feels the city should look at the employees' participation level in the plan. Councilperson Becker abstained due to conflict of interest; he is a city employee. Councilpersons Stewart and Jankowski voted in favor. Councilperson Harbin voted nay. Motion carried 2-1.

Councilperson Harbin moved to approve the recommendation from the Personnel Committee to increase the employees' Life Insurance Benefit to \$25,000 for employees working more than 30 hours per week. Councilperson Jankowski seconded the motion. Discussion: Councilperson Harbin stated life insurance is very important and \$15,000 does not cover what it used to. This benefit is very equitable and palatable. Councilperson Becker abstained due to conflict of interest; he is employed by the city. Councilpersons Harbin, Jankowski and Stewart voted in favor. Motion carried.

Administrative Matters:

Councilperson Harbin reported he should be able to attend the work session this Thursday but will not be able to attend the Elected Officials Workshop in Billings next week.

Councilperson Stewart encouraged everyone to attend the Prayer Breakfast on May 8th to honor civil servants.

Adjournment:

Councilperson Stewart moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilperson Becker seconded the motion. Mayor Williams adjourned the meeting at 7:28 p.m.

Michelle Richards, City Clerk/Treasurer