

City Council Meeting September 10, 2019

Present: Mayor John Williams and Councilpersons Pat Campbell, Jolene Verlanic, Mike Esser, Greg Koczur

Also Present: Public Works Director Bryan Swan, Planning/Zoning/Code Official Kami Egan, Attorney Ryder Gary Ryder, City Clerk/Treasurer Michelle Richards, and Assistant Police Chief Kris Egan

Mayor Williams called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. City Clerk/Treasurer Richards called the Roll Call.

Consent Agenda:

Councilperson Verlanic moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Councilperson Esser seconded the motion. No discussion or public comment received. Councilperson Campbell abstained stating he wasn't present at the last meeting. Motion carried.

- Minutes of 8/27/19 Regular Meeting
- Minutes of 8/12/19 Special Meeting
- Claims Roster 9/6/19

Departmental Reports:

Reports were given by Assistant Police Chief Egan, Planning/Zoning/Code Official Egan, Attorney Ryder, Public Works Director Swan and City Clerk/Treasurer Richards.

Mayor's Communications:

The American Legion in hosting a fundraiser at City Hall on September 14, 2019 for Robin Sterrett.

The Montana Coal Board will meet this Thursday in Billings. The City of Colstrip has two grant applications before the board, one for a used aerial fire truck and another for a community marketing plan.

There will be a luncheon on September 18th at noon for city employees reaching 20 years of employment with the City of Colstrip. Mayor Williams invited the City Council and public to attend.

A reporter from FOX News was here this week conducting interviews and a reporter from the Bozeman Chronicle interviewed the mayor a couple of weeks ago. Mayor Williams shared the updated growth policy recently completed by the Planning Board with these reporters.

Public Hearing:

Mayor Williams opened the Public Hearing at 7:18 pm for the City of Colstrip Growth Policy Update. Planning Board Chairman Gary Parry reported the board began working on this document in January. A lot of the work was done by the board members themselves but some of the information contained in the policy came from Kadrmias, Lee and Jackson. Gary hopes the City Council will look at it and give strong consideration of the items contained in Section 15.

Forrest Sanderson, planner with Kadrmas, Lee and Jackson, thanked the members of the board who invested a lot of time in putting the policy together. Forrest also expressed that chapter 15 is important and hopes the implementation tools and plans will be considered by the City. A public hearing was held on August 29, 2019 by the Planning Board and changes were made prior to submitting it to the City Council. Forrest will provide bound paper and electronic copies of the policy after final adoption by the City Council.

Mayor Williams closed the hearing at 7:25 pm.

Public Comment:

Jim Atchison, Southeastern Montana Development Corporation, reported SEMDC was recently awarded two more economic development grants. One is for a Community Marketing Study and the second is for a Business Innovation Center. Jim thanked the City of Colstrip for renewing its membership in SEMDC and presented a Certificate of Appreciation.

McKenzie Butcher, engineer with Kadrmas, Lee and Jackson, updated the City Council on the Homestead/Main Street project and the Power Road rehabilitation project. The first layer of asphalt was put down and is open for traffic. Paving is scheduled to begin on Power Road on Monday, September 16th. Power Road will not be reopened until the new guard rail is installed.

New Business:

Councilperson Verlanic moved to approve a Special Event Permit for the Homecoming Parade on September 13, 2019. Councilperson Esser seconded the motion.

Discussion: None.

Public Comment: None received.

Motion carried with all in favor.

Councilperson Verlanic moved to approve a Special Event Permit for the Run for H.O.P.E. on September 28, 2019. Councilperson Koczur seconded the motion.

Discussion: None.

Public Comment: None received.

Motion carried with all in favor.

Councilperson Koczur moved to approve Resolution No. 2019/R17, a resolution of intent to adopt the updated growth policy and creation of a 30-day public comment period. Councilperson Esser seconded the motion.

Discussion: None.

Public Comment: None received.

Motion carried with all in favor.

Councilperson Verlanic moved to approve Resolution No. 2019/R18 canceling the general election and electing Mayor and Councilpersons by acclamation. Councilperson Verlanic seconded the motion.

Discussion: None.

Public Comment: None received.

Motion carried with all in favor.

Councilperson Verlanic moved to approve a Work Change Directive to the 2019 Road Construction Project in the amount of \$39,648.75 for a storm drain repair at the intersection of Browning/ Cimarron. Councilperson Esser seconded the motion.

Discussion: None.

Public Comment: None received.

Motion carried with all in favor.

Councilperson Verlanic moved to approve installing stamped concrete on Main Street in the amount of \$43,501.00. Councilperson Koczur seconded the motion.

Discussion: Councilperson Campbell commented the stamped concrete fades so fast that it is hard to tell the difference between the stamped and regular concrete. Councilperson Esser asked if it is 4" or 6" thick and if rebar is in it. McKenzie Butcher with KLJ explained it is 6" thick in the medians, 6" by the clinic and 4" in the boulevards. There is no rebar in the stamped concrete. Councilperson Verlanic feels it is a drastic improvement. McKenzie talked to the business owners along the street and there were no objections.

Public Comment: Jim Atchison feels it would be a nice addition and is in favor of it.

Councilperson Campbell voted nay. Councilpersons Koczur, Esser and Verlanic voted in favor.

Motion carried 3-1.

Councilperson Verlanic moved to approve sidewalk replacements on Main Street and Homestead Boulevard in the amount of \$15,418.00. Councilperson Esser seconded the motion.

Discussion: Councilperson Verlanic thanked for replacing these due to all of the people that have tripped. Councilperson Koczur stated the City needs to work on all the sidewalks.

Public Comment: None received.

Motion carried with all in favor.

Administrative Matters:

City Council discussed the recent tax abatement approved by the Rosebud County Commissioners for the Clearwater Wind Farm in northern Rosebud County. The estimated amount of the tax abatement is \$4.1 million. Mayor Williams feels it is a corporate giveaway. The City of Colstrip has never stated it is against the wind farm, contrary to what has been reported. The tax abatement equates to \$4,423 per county resident.

Impact fees were not mentioned until after City Attorney Gary Ryder sent a letter to the Rosebud County Commissioners. Attorney Ryder has concerns about Commissioner Bob Lee being very active in the discussions even though he had a conflict of interest and was unable to vote on the abatement. He also has not filed a Conflict of Interest statement with the Commissioner of Political Practices.

The editorial in the Independent Press about Colstrip was written by the editor, who is a resident of Miles City. He did not attend either tax abatement Public Hearing or a City Council meeting and did not speak to any city official.

Councilperson Koczur feels a rebuttal should be written. Attorney Ryder feels a factual response is warranted without getting into an argument. Councilperson Koczur also wants to stress the city is not against the wind farm, it is against the tax abatement.

Adjournment:

Mayor Williams adjourned the meeting at 8:15 pm.

Michelle Richards, City Clerk/Treasurer

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