

Harlowton City Council Minutes  
December 12, 2017  
Harlowton City Hall

A regular meeting of the Harlowton City Council held December 12, 2017 opened at 7:00 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance. Minutes of the November 28, 2017 council meeting were approved as written.

There was no public comment.

Jason Castillon of Triangle Communications presented information on the fiber-to-home project that will be taking place in the “632” exchange. There is a “right-of-way easement” that Triangle is requesting the City of Harlowton to approve and sign. Individual resident consent forms were sent to residents in the fall of 2017. Council member Bryan Tomlinson asked if there was any cost to the consumers. Jason replied that there is no cost for the equipment and as long as the consumer does not make any changes to their service (i.e. increase in internet speed) there is no increase in the monthly fees. This project is expected to be completed during 2018. Jason explained that if the house currently has an aerial drop (connection to the building) it will remain an aerial drop, but if it is a buried drop Triangle will bury the drop. The equipment within the building needed to run the fiber requires electricity and has an eight hour battery backup. Mayor Jeff Sell asked if a building currently does not have Triangle service will it be costly to connect at a later time rather than during the “fiber-to-home” project. Jason indicated that as long as the main fiber is close by and the building only requires an aerial drop it isn’t too expensive to connect. If extensive digging (for buried drops) is required or the main fiber is not close by, then there is a more significant cost to connect. Triangle is currently in negotiations with JKL for the construction portion of this project.

Jeff Sell presented the first quarter fiscal year 2018 financial statements. A detailed review of the cash report was done.

Robert Snyder (account 0782-00) submitted a letter requesting that his outstanding balance of \$886.48 be forgiven. As the city had already made the offer to forgive the balance if the project was completed by August 1, 2017 (see minutes of March 14, 2017 council meeting) and the project was not completed by that date the council did not change its position. Council consensus was that ample time had been given to Mr. Snyder to get the project completed by the due date. Robert Snyder will be allowed to agree to a payment plan that would get the past due balance paid within one year. If the account is not kept current and the monthly payment arrangement amount is not made, the water to that building will be shut off as per normal city procedures. Clerk Kathie Newland will prepare a letter to Robert Snyder explaining the council’s decision and his options for a payment plan.

Council was reminded of the February 6, 2018 floodplain meeting to be held at the library at 8:30am. This is not a meeting intended for the public. DNRC is requested the mayor and as many council members as possible to attend.

Council decided that the elected official training that the Local Government Center will be providing will be scheduled for 6:00pm February 20, 2018. Local municipalities will be invited to attend as well.

Council was reminded that the Thank You celebration for the out-going mayor will be held December 13, 2017 from 3:00pm to 5:00pm at the city hall.

Ian Reed reported that Jack Barnhart had resigned. The temporary position will be posted in February. The position is full time through the summer months.

Ian is aware that there are some street Christmas lights not working. An electrician will be fixing the broken connection December 13, 2017 as long as wind conditions allow him to use the bucket truck.

With the upcoming phase 4 water project and the Triangle fiber-to-home project the city crew will have a lot of locating to do. This takes up a considerable amount of their time. Kathie Newland will check with the grant writers to see if some of the man-hours used for locating can be allocated to the water project budget. Recently a customer removed their new water meter during their winterization process and indicated they thought the meter was not working. Ian was able to get hourly meter reports that indicated water was being used, verified the meter's accuracy, and tested the meter after it was disconnected. These new smart meters will allow the city to test accuracy and give consumers information on water consumption in their homes. The new meters are getting installed by Stan Wilting. There is no information on when this project will be completed.

The City of Harlowton did not get CDBG funding for the phase 4 water project; however all CDBG funds have not been allocated and there is still a chance that we could get some funding from this source. The CDBG funding would have allowed Central Avenue South to be part of the phase 4 project. Jeff suggested if the city does not get any CDBG funding that perhaps additional SRF funding could be asked for. The SRF funding is typically split 50/50 between a loan and loan forgiveness (grant). With this option the city would have a larger loan and therefore a potentially higher monthly utility rate increase for residents.

Council member Jim Kalitowski asked about a resident's complaint regarding snow plowing on A Street. Jeff indicated the resident had come to him as well. Ian responded that per the city ordinances sidewalk maintenance including shoveling and ice is the home owner's responsibility.

Ian reported that to date they have already used half of the street sand.

Next council meeting will be January 9, 2018.

Bryan Tomlinson made a motion to pay the claims, checks #21214-21241 from November 23, 2017 through December 8, 2017. Paul Otten seconded the motion. Motion to pay claims passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:07 pm.

Council Members Present:

Jim Kalitowski, Paul Otten, Ron Teig, Bryan Tomlinson

Council Member Absent:

John Anderson, Bob Jones

Employees Present:

Ian Reed

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Paul Otten, Mayor

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Kathie Newland, Clerk