

2023-06-13
Harlowton City Hall

A regular meeting of the Harlowton City Council was held June 13, 2023. The meeting opened at 7:00pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The minutes of the May 9, 2023, Council meeting were approved as written.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Councilmember Ron Teig mentioned the 2-year Butte Wind Project near Martinsdale that will begin preliminary work this spring and summer and start construction next summer. This project should bring around 300 temporary jobs and possibly 20 permanent jobs. Housing the construction employees was discussed and it was mentioned there is a lack of housing, but there are RV and trailer spots available around Harlowton. Once this project is completed, they will move to a project in Two Dot.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Library: The council will need to fill the library board vacancy.

Pool: Per councilmember Charley Bennett, the pool is up and running. The turnout has been impressive. In the first couple days there were 60 and 85 kids, 13 and 22 adults with a few people showing up for lap and evening swims. A 911 phone will be installed, and we are checking on an AED to be donated or purchased. There still needs to be some landscaping done to prevent water getting into the pool house.

Ordinance: Per councilmember Frank Brouillette, they still have not met. City Clerk-Treasurer Debbie Johnson provided the ordinance committee members, Frank and Alli Jones, with Municode information so they can contact them to start the process of codification of our ordinances.

Tree Board: In the Public Works director's absence, Mayor Paul Otten stated we have 10 evergreens ready to be picked up at Blake Nursery in Big Timber. Bob will arrange with the Wind Farm on a day to plant them.

Wetlands Rail Trail: Per councilmember Ron Teig, due to the rain, there is water everywhere. The mayor mentioned a meeting with Jason Seyler and Jorri Dyer and it was confirmed Harlowton was awarded \$400,000 from the state to be used toward the continued cleanup of the area.

UPDATE ON DECAY ORDINANCE COMPLAINTS:

There have been some complaints about tall grass. The council members will keep an eye on their wards.

UPDATE ON PREVIOUSLY DISCUSSED ITEMS:

Unlicensed / Inoperable Vehicles: The council gave approval to proceed with addressing vehicles that are unlicensed and appear to be inoperable. Discussion ensued regarding who's responsible for locating expired licenses and vehicles that appear to be inoperable due to flat tires etc. Frank Brouillette felt it is the sheriff's issue as this is a Montana State Code. The mayor will check with the sheriff's office regarding the support of the ordinances and also ask for someone from the sheriff's office staff to attend the city council meetings with a report of citations issued as a

result of enforcing the city's ordinances. City Attorney, Brent Brooks, stated Billings process for their ordinance states to put a 10-day sticker on the vehicle, take photos for evidence if not addressed after a verbal warning. After 10 days, the vehicle will be hauled off by a designated company. He will follow up and give us his best practice recommendations.

Cameras in the Park: Mayor Otten stated T Mobile has wireless, battery operated cameras that can connect to a laptop and upload to cloud storage. Councilmember Bennett motioned to approve the purchase of 2 cameras at \$250 each plus \$20 / mo. Frank Brouillette 2nd the motion. The motion passed unanimously. No public comment.

Diane Jones Drainage Issue: Per Mayor Otten, Jones has had some work being done on the property. The city will follow up if there is a need for further discussion and need for outside vendor consultation. The public works director, Bob Schuchard, was unavailable for comment as the city crew was working on several water main breaks.

Ward 2 Candidate: Johnny Cooney III was voted in as the Ward 2 councilmember to replace Jack Runner. Motions were as follows: Frank Brouillette motioned for Johnny Cooney, councilmember Alli Jones 2nd the motion. Three council members approved with two opposed. Charley Bennett motioned for Lori Hoge to fill the seat with no 2nd. Ron Teig motioned for Joe Hagl to fill the seat and Charley B. 2nd that motion. Two council members approved with three opposing. Mayor Otten administered the Oath of Office to Johnny and the paperwork will be filed with the clerk of court on Wed, 6-14-23.

NEW BUSINESS:

Abbi Sell withdrew her request to be on the agenda.

Kelly Evan and Jane Moe withdrew their request to be on the agenda due to illness.

A ward member will discuss with owners of property, on the flats, questioning if they are in city limits and the need to follow city ordinances regarding street closures and dog licensing.

A questionnaire for current council members asking what the councilmember has done to better the city, save the city money, and goals for the city was presented and motioned to approve by Charley Bennett with no 2nd.

Ron Teig motioned and Frank 2nd the motion to keep the council stipend as 1 time per year and to pro-rate Jack Runner's pay for ½ term. Motion passed unanimously with no public comment.

Request from Matt Speed to close Central Ave S between Division ST and 1st ST SW from 7 am to midnight. This will include the exemption from the City of Harlowton's Open Container Ordinance. Charley motioned to approve the closure and Frank 2nd the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Public comment from Lori Hoge that the City should require an insurance certificate of liability from the organization of the event naming the City of Harlowton as an additional insured. This should be in the amount of no less than \$1,000,000. Alli Jones requested we add this to the Street Closure Application.

Charley Bennett spoke to Mid-State Companies with several cement projects around the city.

They are booked months out.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR REPORT: Bob Schuchard was absent from the council meeting due to a water main break caused by the Central Montana Water Authority (CMWA) construction. The original break caused 500,000 gallons of water to be lost from the water tower causing loss of water and low pressure as the break was being fixed and water was replaced in the tower. Once the water was released, it caused a couple more water main breaks near the football field.

REPORT OF THE MAYOR: Mayor Paul Otten mentioned there is an MMIA meeting in Roundup. City Clerk-Treasurer, Debbie Johnson, Deputy Clerk, Deshawnda Carver will be attending this meeting and the council was given registration information. The mayor reported that the reduced dump day came in just ahead of break even. He also discussed the use of the old dump, west of the dumpsters, will be used for asbestos contamination from the Roundhouse project. This will save money from hauling it to Great Falls.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT: City attorney Brooks is working with Andy Stensrud regarding Northwestern Energy transmission lines before the title commitment, buy/sell and resolution can be completed for the Boyd Burroughs land purchase. He also suggested we get insurance contact information from the CMWA construction company that caused the water main break that may have caused any damage to property.

REPORT OF THE CLERK-TREASURER: City Clerk-Treasurer, Debbie Johnson, stated the former Clerk-Treasurer, Lara Brisco, is back on the payroll to consult Debbie with processes needed to complete required tasks. Debbie also reported the continued effort to get ARPA to pay for the broken well needed for water and fire suppression prior to the new water source project completion. Sharon Tripp, the city auditor, will be on site next week to complete the FY22 audit. She also reported the first direct deposit for May payroll was successful with only 1 data entry error that was immediately fixed. June is the start of on-line timecards completing the move to increased automation in the city office. The city clerk asked for a \$1.00/hour raise for the deputy clerk and the council approved. Debbie also contacted Shaffners Bindery, in Missoula, to bind our council minutes on acid-free paper. Each binder will contain 1 year's minutes for a cost of \$50 plus shipping. Council approved binding the minutes unanimously.

ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING: The ward members are asked to keep an eye out for tall, unattended grass on properties in their wards.

CLAIMS: Ron Teig made a motion to approve the claims and councilmember Kathleen Schreiber seconded the motion. No comment from the public. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Council Members Present: Charley Bennett, ~~Jack Runner~~, Frank Brouillette, Kathleen Schreiber, Allison Jones, Ron Teig

Council Members Absent: None

City Office: Mayor Paul Otten, City Clerk-Treasurer Debbie Johnson, City Deputy Clerk Deshawnda Carver, City Attorney Brent Brooks (via phone)
Public Present: Lori Hoge, Johnny Cooney, Joe Hagl

Paul Otten, Mayor

Debbie Johnson, Clerk-Treasurer