

Harlowton City Council Minutes  
July 13, 2021  
Library Conference Room

A regular meeting of the Harlowton City Council was held on July 27, 2021. The meeting opened at 7:00 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance. Minutes of the July 13, 2021 Council minutes were approved as written.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1) Mayor Paul Otten stated that he had no news to report from SMDC on the City property formally known as Biegel's Bar.

#### COMMITTEE REPORTS

Council member Jack Runner stated that there was nothing new to report regarding the Library.

Committee Chair Frank Brouillette gave an update on the Ordinance Committee. The Committee is currently working on the Floodplain subdivision ordinance documents.

Council member Charley Bennett gave a report on the pool. Bead blasting and apoxying of the pool would take place in September. The valves and water heater recently arrived. The new chemical machine had been ordered. Concrete blocks costing \$50 each and weighing 4000 lbs each were ordered. The hot water heater broke and an anonymous donor had fixed it and not charged for labor.

Public Works Director Bob Schuchard stated that there was nothing new to report on the Tree Board.

Council member Ron Teig gave a report on the Wetlands Rail Trail. More asbestos removal had been done at the Roundhouse by DEQ. Bob stated that more had been found than was expected. The DEQ crew would have to come back to finish. Ron stated that the noxious weed issue around the area would need to be priced out for removal.

#### NEW BUSINESS

1) Members of the Wheatland Memorial Hospital as well as the County Commissioner, Jeff Sell, were present to discuss plans for a new Hospital in Harlowton. Rick Poss, the Hospital Administrator, presented the feasibility study for a new facility.

Vice President of Construction at the Billings Clinic, Mitch Goplen and Gene Kolstad, the project Architect gave their input. The committee is working with the USDA to discuss the process with the community and get local feedback.

Jeff stated that the committee was interested in multiple land options, including one that is currently owned by the City of Harlowton. The land in question is just north of the Peters Inc building on the highway. The property is approximately 3.7 acres. The USDA grant would allow a

land donation from the City to be used toward matching the USDA grant. It would also show the USDA that the City supports the project.

Gene stated that the project would be a 30,000 square foot facility with an imaging center. The project would cost approximately \$13.3 million. Bids would start in February 2022 be a 14 month project with a completion date of September 2023.

Council member Jim Kalitowski asked if the project would need City water. Gene said yes. Bob stated that there is currently no sewer at that location and that they would need to talk to the Department of Transportation regarding the Rest Stop sewer line. Jim stated that the new water line coming into the City from Garniel would also raise rates for the water. Jeff stated that if that happened, the milled tax money from the County residents would have to be adapted to cover the difference. A vote would be involved.

Charley Bennett asked if the project would include a new nursing home for local residents. Jeff stated that after hearing from the Community and how much the nursing home meant, the feasibility study would need to be adapted to include long term care in the plan. He stated that a tax levy might need to be added to support this plan. Committee member Paxton Wojtowick stated that there had been some interest from private companies to take over the nursing home and that some tax subsidies were available.

Mitch stated that because the nursing home was not considered “profitable”, the USDA would not fund the additional project. A third party financier would need to be involved.

Charley asked about a housing project to coincide with the development of the hospital so that the staff would be able to stay close by. Mitch stated that it was being looked into as part of the feasibility study. Mitch also stated that many Physicians want to see the facility before signing contracts so this new construction would be beneficial in that way. Frank asked that the Council make an agreement that the mentioned City land would not be used for anything else while the preliminary stages of the Hospital construction project were in effect.

2) City Clerk-Treasurer Lara Brisco presented an amendment page to the current City Employee Policy Manual. This amendment would include a clear statement allowing the City to offer opening employment positions to current City Employees before publicly advertising. Discussion took place regarding the legality of this as well as past instances where this had already occurred. Charley made a motion to pass the amendment. Ron seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3) Headstart would like to “rent” the Community Pool on the evening of August 26 for a family night. Pool manager Heather Mysse was present to give the details. It was agreed that Headstart would be responsible for their own liability insurance, they could only use the shallow end of the pool, and no food or drinks could be served in the pool area. Heather volunteered herself and another pool employee, Sammy Fusco, to be present as lifeguards during the event at no cost. Frank made a motion to allow the event. Council member Allison Jones seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4) Charley presented to the Council regarding demoing the concrete wading pool currently to the west of the City pool. The concrete sidewalk around the wading pool would also be removed. Part of the Callant Grant money had been allocated for the jackhammer to use for this specific project. Charley made a motion to allow for the project to be carried out. Allison seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5) Bob presented to the Council regarding illegal dumping at the park dumpster by local residents. A motion was made by Frank to allow cameras to be purchased for surveying the area. Ron seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6) Discussion took place regarding the purchase of concrete picnic tables and concrete slabs for Chief Joseph Park. The regular sized tables would be \$500-550 each and \$600-650 each for handicap accessible tables. Concrete slabs would be an additional \$300 each. The tables would be purchased from Casino Creek in Lewistown. Discussion took place regarding the placement of the tables. It was agreed that 2 pads and 2 tables (one of each size) would be purchased. Jack made a motion to purchase the tables/slabs, Frank seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Items 7 and 8 on the agenda regarding Budget Amendments were bypassed at the request of Lara. She had discussed the documents earlier that day with Accounting Consultant Magda Nelson and it was determined that they would be done at a later time.

#### PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR REPORT

Bob gave a report. The City crew would do a 3 day training on the new UV building at the sewer lagoon. The new building would use a lot of power. Possibly another employee might need to be hired to maintain it. Later on, when the new water source comes to town, there would be less power needed at the water wells so that would be saving money. Discussion took place regarding the wells.

The current bulk water rates of 0.02 cents per gallon were compared with the 0.01 cents per gallon that City residents currently pay. Discussion took place regarding whether the bulk water rate of 0.02 cents was too low. Discussion took place regarding water rights and the football field.

Bob presented the issue of City owned property being trespassed on by cows from nearby in Lance Schuchard's property. The cows had damaged the City fence and were getting out and roaming the neighborhood. Discussion of the (previous) City leases being violated/ not upheld took place. Discussion took place regarding liability and property damage done by the cows. Bob stated that annual repair costs for the fence would be approximately \$3000.00. Discussion took place " "calculating" signs on the highway was discussed. Currently Lavina has some but it was unclear who financed them.

#### ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

The next council meeting will be August 10, 2021  
at 7:00pm.

#### CLAIMS

Frank made a motion for the claims from July 12-23 be approved for payment. Ron seconded the motion and the motion was passed unanimously by council.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10pm.

Council Members Present: Charley Bennett, Jim Kalitowski, Jack Runner, Allison Jones, Frank Brouillette, Ron Teig

Council Members Absent: none

City Office: Mayor Paul Otten, City Clerk-Treasurer Lara Brisco, Public Works Director Bob Schuchard

Public Present: Dan Edwards, Paxton Wojtowick, Gene Kolstad, Mitch Goplen, Amanda Hannah, Rick Poss, Jeff Sell, Heather Mysse

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Paul Otten, Mayor

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Lara Brisco, Clerk-Treasurer