

August 23, 2022  
Harlowton City Hall

A regular meeting of the Harlowton City Council was held on August 23, 2022. The meeting opened at 7:00pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The minutes of the August 9, 2022 Council meeting were approved as written.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Council member Jack Runner stated that the Bair grant for a new front door had been received and that Dean Sorensen would be doing the work. He had ordered the door. There had been 720 visitations and 800 books checked out over the last month.

The Ordinance committee did not meet this week.

Council member Charley Bennett gave a report on the pool. The pool was officially closed to the public. The school would be using the pool for the new few weeks. The State Inspector had been at the pool last week and had to shut it down due to low chlorine levels. The flow meter was not installed, which Charley said was his fault. He would put it in after the pool was closed for the season. There was concern with what part of the pool the inspector took the sample from. It was taken in the shallow end, which would not give an accurate reading. Charley is concerned about whether the new chemical machine is calibrated. Thompson Pools would be getting in touch with him regarding this. Charley stated that low chlorine levels would need the pool to be “shocked”. This process takes a few hours or overnight.

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

Council member Ron Teig was not present to give a report on the Wetlands Rail Trail.

### **UPDATE ON PAST AGENDA TOPICS**

Council members were asked to give updates on Decay Ordinance-related complaints from the community. Frank stated that the issue concerning the Billy Peck property was moving forward. The renters had taken two truckloads and one trailer load of trash away. Neighbor Norman Schuchard had helped them. The 2-yard dumpster was ordered and would be arriving soon. Frank would be following up again but it looks like good progress is being made. Paul asked how many Saturday transfer station dates were still left. City Clerk-Treasurer Lara Brisco stated that there are 3 left. Bob stated that there were issues with getting dumpsters ordered. Discussion took place regarding dumpster availability and delivery.

Jack presented a Decay Ordinance complaint from the Senior Center regarding a property owned by Joe Brouillette. Jack asked if the Council had had an opportunity to review the letter sent by

the Senior Center. Frank stated that he would excuse himself from the conversation but that he did not think it was necessary that he leave the room.

Jack presented photograph "57BEE" which illustrated the lots of the City block in question. Jack discussed the lot size and measurements from the Senior Center property to Joe's property. Jack presented photograph "72EE62DB", which shows the east side wall of Joe B's property from the view of the Senior Center lot. Jack stated that the rocks in that wall could be loose. Jack mentioned photograph "OD34BCA" and stated that this was the new side of the two buildings with a space where the two buildings would have met. Jack stated that part of that area might be the Senior Center's property between the wall and the garage. The pillars of the temporarily wall where put up for a wall which was created by the bank when it was going to be sold. Jack stated that since the wall is "shared" by the two properties, both owners would be responsible for their side of the wall. Bill Jones asked if Jack thought the wall was "structurally sound". Jack replied that he is not a structural engineer and would not make that call. Bill read sections of the Decay Ordinance out loud regarding the definition of what a "dangerous structure" is. Jack stated that the liability would be on whoever's side creates the damage. Paul stated that he would get in contact with Kathy at Snowy Mountain Development Company regarding getting a structural engineer to look at the wall. Discussion took place regarding other buildings in town and whether or not they were "structurally sound".

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- 1) Discussion took place regarding the City property of interest to Boyd Burroughs. Paul stated that City Attorney Karen Hammel was currently working on the necessary easements for the water line and driveway. Paul suggested that the Council move forward with advertising the land sale in the newspaper for two weeks for bids. Discussion took place regarding the surrounding areas of the land and what is considered city vs county property. Allison made a motion to advertise the land for bid. Kathleen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The bids will be opened at the 9/13/22 meeting.
- 2) Discussion took place regarding City land previously leased by Travis Schuchard. Travis is interested in leasing it again. Travis told Bob that he would fix the cattle guard if he gets the lease. Bob stated that no sub-leasing would be allowed and that the cattle guard would need to be maintained. Frank made a motion that the land be advertised in the newspaper for two weeks and the bids would be opened on 9/13/22. Kathleen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- 3) The Council discussed voting to raise the bulk water prices from 0.02 cents/gallon to 0.10 cents/gallon. Frank asked Lara what the average monthly bulk water sale was. She stated that currently it is around 3000 gallons (using July 2022 as an example). Paul stated that an exception would need to be made for the engineers putting the new water line in. They would need to water test the lines (instead of air test them). The agreement that he gave them was ½ cent per gallon to test. Frank made a motion to raise bulk water rates to 10 cents per gallon (with the exception of the water line testing, at ½ cent/gallon). Kathleen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- 4) Discussion took place regarding the RFQs from potential City Attorneys. Ed Guza from Bozeman and Brent Brooks from Billings were the two RFQs being reviewed. The Council agreed that Brent Brooks was their choice based on his rates as well as his familiarity with the City. Frank made a motion to offer Brent Brooks the position of City Attorney (effective 10/01/22). Jack seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- 5) Discussion took place regarding offering the position of Assistant Pool Manager to Isa Caballero for the Summer 2023 pool season. Frank made a motion to offer the position to Isa. Jack seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- 6) Discussion took place regarding the sale of an air compressor owned by the City. Bob stated that it had been used for the jackhammer until the Public Works Department purchased a part for the skid steerer that could operate the jackhammer. Discussion took place regarding the sprinkler system maintenance. Charley asked if the air compressor could just be advertised on Facebook or would it be necessary to advertise in the newspaper. Lara stated that she would look into it. Charley made a motion to put the air compressor up for sale. Allison seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- 7) Lara presented the Council with two versions of the preliminary FY 22-23 Budget. She showed a “high” and “low” version with different options for raises. The Public Works Employees would not be receiving raises since they got raises in October 2021 after the FY 21-22 Budget had passed. Lara offered options for Alanna Berg, Deputy Clerk, to receive a raise. Frank stated that Alanna had also received a raise after the FY 21-22 Budget had passed (in January 2022) and should not receive one. Lara stated that at the last Council meeting it had been suggested that she receive \$18.50. Lara showed an option for the City Court Judge and Clerk to receive either a 3% or 5% raise. The Council agreed that they should receive a 5% raise. Jack stated that the Library Board had approved a \$1 per hour raise for all Library employees. Lara stated that the permissive medical levy would decrease because health insurance rates had decreased from \$808/month per employee to \$717/month per employee. Discussion took place regarding the BARSAA funds being held for a larger project. This project could also include the Street Maintenance District funds. Discussion took place regarding the increase in revenue for camping, especially with the Harlo Music Project coming to town. The Council asked Lara to adjust the budget to reflect the agreed upon wages and present a “mid level” budget at the Public Hearing on 9/6/22 at 6pm.

#### **PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR REPORT**

Bob gave his report. There were issues at the water wells again. One broke and then another. He stated that if the third one broke, there would only be enough water to sustain the City for two days. Townsend had come to repair the wells. There had been a lightning strike earlier that day (8/23/22) which hit a power pole by the well at the top of the hill. The Skata system had been brought down by the power outage. Bob would be going to Billings the following day to get the necessary parts for repairs. There were also issues with “water hammer” which could possibly cause a break. He would reach out the Northwest Pipe for help. Paul stated that the ARPA funds should be used for the repairs of the well.

Frank asked why Do All hadn’t started Phase 5 of the water project. Bob stated that the funding agencies were delaying the start. There would be a preliminary meeting on 8/29 and then the

project would start. Bob expressed his concern with the water and sewer projects conflicting in the spring 2023.

Discussion took place regarding any interest in the open position at the Public Works Department for a Utility Worker.

#### **REPORT OF THE CLERK-TREASURER**

City Clerk-Treasurer Lara Brisco gave her report. There had been a pizza party the previous Sunday for the lifeguards. A majority of the lifeguards would be returning next year.

#### **MAYORS REPORT**

Mayor Paul Otten Gave a report. There would be a meeting at the ambulance barn with the Air Force the following day at 10am. There would be a presentation of machinery on 9/17/22.

Paul expressed concern regarding the solid waste fund being dangerously close to the red. Paul suggested that the Council think during the winter about how to address this. Frank asked about the recently raised rates. Lara stated that this only covered the cost of the removal by Republic and not the wages of employees working at the transfer station. Lara stated that currently \$2.23/per utility bill goes towards support of the transfer station. She also stated that Wheatland County gives annual support of \$3800.00 Paul stated that if the monthly rates were raised, only the City residents would suffer the cost. Also, the water and sewer portions of the bill would be increasing soon. Bob expressed concerns with people around town attempting to dump junk at the roundhouse. Lara stated that she would see if there were any grants to support the transfer station.

#### **ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING**

The next council meeting will be September 13, 2022 at 7:00pm. Charley stated that Senator Tester's office might come to a Council meeting in September.

#### **CLAIMS**

Frank made a motion to pass the claims from August 8<sup>th</sup> through August 19<sup>th</sup>. Allison seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously

The meeting was adjourned at 9:07PM

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

Council Members Absent: Ron Teig

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

Public Present: Boyd Burroughs, Bill Jones, Chad Roelfs, Joe Brouillette, Dan Edwards, Sanford Moore

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Paul Otten, Mayor

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Lara Brisco, Clerk-Treasurer