Harlowton City Ordinance Committee Minutes

April 26, 2022

Harlowton City Hall

6:00PM

**Minutes:** Minutes from the April 12, 2022 Ordinance Committee meeting were approved as written.

**Public Comment:** none

**Updates on Previous Meeting Agenda Points:** A document from Council member Charley Bennett was presented for the Committee to review. The document was related to how Billings handles junk vehicles and long-term parking. Discussion took place regarding the article. Public Works Director Bob Schuchard stated that a similar plan had been enforced when Rosenberg was Sheriff. Vehicles would have stickers put on them and taken to a lot. When enough had accumulated they would call to have vehicles picked up.

Discussion took place regarding the revised decay ordinance not being part of the zoning section of the ordinance book. Bob stated that he had recently driven down two streets in town and had noticed multiple violations of the decay ordinance and long-term parking of vehicles no longer in use. Committee member Allison Jones stated that she realized it was a big problem because she no longer saw the violations. She just “tuned them out”. Discussion took place regarding what someone first impression would be if they drove through Harlowton. Discussion took place regarding how to enforce the new decay ordinance. Discussion took place regarding vehicles in town that were had been parked for long periods. It was stated that although options had been put out on Facebook, for example vehiclesforvets.org, it wasn't believed that anyone actually pursued the option of having their vehicles towed away for free. Mayor Paul Otten stated that when the decay ordinance goes into effect it would be enforced immediately. A copy would be given to the Sheriff's Department so that they could enforce as well. Committee member Jack Runner stated that it was important to let Sheriff Misner know that this was an important priority for this City. Discussion took place regarding what is considered a “junk vehicle” and what is considered a “classic car” on display.

**New Business:**

The Committee reviewed Title 11 of the ordinance book. Committee chair Frank Brouillette stated that some parts of Title 11 would not apply to the city. For example, references to building codes and officials. Paul stated that Bob had too much to do and could not be asked to enforce the ordinance. Discussion took place regarding damaged property in town and the threat it had to the safety of people. Charlie Bennett stated that he had been in touch with the State Fire Marshal. The Fire Marshal would be passing through town soon and would be meeting with him. The particular focus would be on the house in the flats that is haphazardly built. The property in question has been a huge safety hazard to the neighbors surrounding it. Discussion took place regarding having the Sheriff involved when the specific property owner would be approached regarding the violation to the decay ordinance. It is believed that the owner is not mentally stable.

Discussion took place regarding the State Theater and the safety hazards to the community. Bob stated that because the City had not been enforcing the decay ordinance on the State Building owner, if somebody happened to be hurt passing by, the City would be held liable.

Jack stated that City Attorney Karen Hammel should review Title 11, compare it to the revised Decay ordinance and give feedback. Jack stated that the ultimate goal was to make the community healthier and safer.

**Items on the next Meeting’s agenda:**

Continued discussion of Ordinance book Title 11 with input from the city attorney

Meeting adjourned at 6:58pm.

Committee Members present: Frank Brouillette, Jack Runner, Allison Jones, Charley Bennett (arrived around 6:40)

Committee Members absent: Karen Hammel

City: Paul Otten, Lara Brisco, Bob Schuchard

Sheriff’s Office: none

Public Present: none

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Frank Brouillette, Ordinance Chairman Lara Brisco, City Clerk-Treasurer