

April 25, 2023
Harlowton City Hall

A regular meeting of the Harlowton City Council was held on April 25, 2023. The meeting opened at 7:00pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The minutes of the April 11, 2023, Council meeting were approved as written.

PUBLIC COMMENT: no public comment

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Library: Councilmember Jack Runner stated they are still working on the card catalog the existing catalog they have does not work on the computer. The State Card catalog should be up and running shortly. We have all the bar codes ordered and we just have to put them on the books and on the shelves. They still have brick builders club going until the end of school on humanities ended last week, they had Earth Day earlier this week and they still have stories and music with kids in the afternoons. There were 1433 browsers in the last month and 761 adult books were checked out. Jack questioned if the council had to approve the library claims as they have their own approved budget. The city clerk will follow up.

Ordinance: Councilmember Frank Brouillette stated they did not meet.

Pool: Councilmember Charley Bennett reported the pool house is getting closer. All the lights and hand blowers are in. One shower done and they are working on the ceramic tile in the girl's shower now. Once this is done, they will start installing the toilets. Councilmember Alli Jones asked about a position of swim lessons only and the council agreed this would be a good idea and help to eliminate overtime for the lifeguards. Thompson pools is currently lined up to come down and go through the chemical machine. Currently have 4 returning lifeguards, 2 managers and a fill in lifeguard from last year.

Tree Board: council member Bob Schuchard reported nothing new for the tree board. Mayor Paul Otten mentioned a letter from Rob Ethridge regarding Arbor Day. As we are a Tree City and have received a DNRC Grant for purchasing trees, we will plan to coordinate a date with the Wind Farm and nursery once they get the trees. This will most likely be in May.

Wetlands Rail Trail: Councilmember Ron Teig absent.

UPDATE ON PAST AGENDA TOPICS: No updates

UPDATE ON DECAY ORDINANCE COMPLAINTS: Per Frank, previous complaints have been pretty well cleaned up. Also, Frank stated he talked to Joe Brouillette about the loose metal on the awning on his main street property and it was determined that it is set in the stone and not going anywhere. There may be other properties that may need to be addressed regarding the Decay Ordinance. Charley mentioned working through the sheriff's office to deliver concerns and Frank suggested we follow the ordinance unless otherwise warranted.

Alli asked about the cleanup dump day following the citywide garage sale. The city garage sale is on May 13. We will discuss offering reduced rates, requesting retainers and check on solid waste price increase prior to the May 9th council meeting. We would most likely honor yard waste and tree branches as free. NO discount on household garbage.

UPDATE ON PREVIOUSLY DISCUSSED ITEMS: Diane Jones requested to be on the agenda but was unable to attend. Bob Schuchard and Charley had gone to look at the Jones' property with Diane and there was discussion about possible remedies to stop the erosion.

NEW BUSINESS: Discussion on Times Clarion's article not matching draft minutes sent to them. Will request for them to post word for word from the draft minutes sent to them.

Dave Leverett from Four Corner's Recycling presented to talk about the Harlowton recycling bins. They have been in business for about 15 years without raising rates or changing the program in nearly 10 years since they put the roll off boxes in. Operations are changing a lot. Less staff to send to Harlo and the high-profile bins. Newspaper volume has continued to drop and cans and plastics shifting. Now practice is to use 2 roll off boxes, one would use the primary compartment for newspapers and the second box would have all plastics and the rest of the newspaper bins would be all cans. They would buy the current box back and we could purchase 2 new 34-yard boxes, with 6 compartments, allowing for a more efficient system with the company coming to pick up about 5 times per year. Charley asked about cardboard recycling. Dave mentioned they do not run a cardboard truck but did mention a cardboard compactor that would hold 9000 lbs. of cardboard which cost around \$30,000 plus the 3-phase electric, and a tank heater needed to run it. Dave will send us more information about the cardboard compactor. Council members brought up that the current property is being sold and there may be a need to look for a new location for the bins.

Mayor Otten talked about the Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority. They want to put a passenger train into the southern half of the state. They are asking for a \$100 annual contribution along with a letter of endorsement in support. Charley mentioned this will go from Spokane to Denver with possible busing to get passengers to the train. The council agrees to support, and item will be voted on at the next council meeting.

The mayor asked about council members' residency, and it is determined all members are living in city limits.

There was discussion on bulk water station. Mayor Otten has not heard back from Susan Hayes, at Great West Engineering, regarding the rate the city will be charged per gallon. Currently we are charging 0.10 / gallon and will need to know the city's rates before determining bulk rates. Public Works Director Schuchard would like to check with DEQ on required water tests before installing a bulk water station. It was again discussed that many residents are getting bulk water without paying for it.

Charley talked to the county commissioners about the transfer station and if they would partner with us or implement a mill levy. Charley talked to Travis ????, and he has hauled cars out of Tow Dot already and county commissioners working out a system where they can put them and pick them up. They went through Judith Gap Oil. The company they are working with has already hauled off old cars. They are paying \$100, \$300 or whatever the car is worth. They are taking confiscated cars to the county shed. Schuchard stated they quit hauling off cars, in the past, because of the expense of the tow truck.

Charley also brought up that he had talked to the Amish regarding some cement work needed at the library, depot, and pool. They are pretty booked out but will come by to give a bid. No available cement contractors in Harlowton.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR REPORT: Bob Schuchard stated repairs on the road grader will be \$8959 with \$6559 needed down to order parts. Engine overhaul, fuel injection remanufactures, oil pump, turbo, remanufactured head, clutch kit, and labor. Need to fix it or get another one because we use it once per month at the land farm and to grade roads and snow removal. Bob thinks it is worth fixing because it is a good machine, and the council agrees. Bob also told the council that the south well has failed but the repairs could be covered with our ARPA funds. It needs a new pump, new check valve and new pipe. Quote from Mahurin Excavating and Drilling for around \$20,931. The danger of running on two wells is if another one fails the only well left will burn up trying to cover for both. There is a gamble of receiving parts quickly if damage to our existing wells. Discussion about if one well can be retained after the new water line is operating. This well could be used for irrigation and firefighting. This will be discussed with Great West Engineering and looking at the contract in place. We will vote to repair the well at the next board meeting after checking the funding. Alli asked about running out of water if we lose power to the water tank. Mayor Otten thinks we should get the parts ordered to fix the failed well. Bob later stated that there has been a string of people stealing stop signs, yield signs and handicap signs. Also noted that there have been rocks stuffed into the rain drains and throwing big rocks on the roofs of the park restrooms and south well.

CLERK-TREASURER REPORT: Clerk-Treasurer Debbie Johnson reported that the city is looking at the May payroll to be the first direct deposit. She stated they have tested with the bank and there were no errors in the process. She will complete the employee information needed. She noted that when using this direct deposit function, the employee can use multiple banks or accounts to split the deposit. She also stated that the online timecards are getting closer to completion and the cloud backup and updates for the accounting software is almost done. Debbie is working with the city's auditor, and they are asking to add a few designated funds and cash accounts to make report pulling easier and cleaner. The Fireman's fund was discussed, and it was noted that they have a separate fund and the 4th of July breakfast and money from the state go into their fund.

ATTORNEY REPORT: Brent Brooks reported that they would be meeting with Bob Schuchard and surveyor Andy Stensrud in the morning to make sure they have the cities easement actually shown on the certificate of survey that will go to the Boyd Burroughs property and after the surveyor gives Brent a description and he will prepare a simple easement document to be recorded. The mayor will share the copy he has. Brent will discuss with Bob and the surveyor about the easement needs and if there are previously recorded easement documents for the Rocky Mountain Cookware.

Brent recommended the council reach out to Municode Corporation and reviews city ordinances and publish them online. They review ordinances to see if they are superseded by state law or if they are no longer required. The other thing Municode will do is put them online and organize so they are searchable by topic or chapter. Alli mentioned this cost could be covered by one of our Grants.

Debbie and Charley will get some information to send to Brent regarding the school pool usage for him to write up a memorandum of understanding. Brent will get us some information on decay ordinances from other locations.

MAYOR REPORT: The City of Harlowton has a Personnel Policy Manual, and we will follow up with MMIA on their EPLI (Employers Practices Liability Insurance) endorsement and the process for getting enrolled.

ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING:

1. Discuss and/or vote on Dump Day following city wide garage sale May 13
2. Discuss and/or vote on new recycling bins.
3. Vote on Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority annual donations and support endorsement
4. Discuss and/or vote on bulk water increase (pending info from Great West – Susan Hayes)
5. Vote on grader repair \$8959
6. Vote on south well repair \$20,931
7. Cameras in the park

CLAIMS:

Frank made a motion to pass the claims. Jack seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40p.

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

Council Members Absent: Ron Teig, Kathleen Schreiber

City Office: Mayor Paul Otten, City Clerk-Treasurer Debbie Johnson, Public Works Director Bob Schuchard, City Attorney Brent Brooks

Public Present: David Leverett, John P Cooney

Paul Otten, Mayor

Debbie Johnson, Clerk-Treasurer