

May 9, 2023  
Harlowton City Hall

A regular meeting of the Harlowton City Council was held May 9, 2023. The meeting opened at 7:00pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The minutes of the April 25, 2023, Council meeting were approved as written.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Shawn Vodall and Cassy Phipps stated their concern with their neighbor's barking dogs. They have called the sheriff's office at least 10 times, written a formal complaint, showed them the ordinance as well as talking to councilmember Kathleen Schreiber. Shawn recited an incident where he hollered for the neighbor to shut the dogs up resulting in a verbal warning, from the sheriff, for disturbing the peace and the neighbor got a verbal warning for barking dogs. Shawn also stated he spoke with the county attorney who replied he drives by 3 times a day, and it has been like that for years. Shawn mentioned after the dog owner is talked to the dogs have bark collars on for a day then it reverts to no collars and barking dogs. Mayor Paul Otten said he would visit the sheriff's office as they have this ordinance and should be enforcing it.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Library:** Per councilmember Jack Runner, nothing new to report

**Pool:** Per councilmember Charley Bennett, the building inspector gave them a clean bill of health. Need some kind of landscaping around the pool to keep water from coming into the pool house. Public Works Director, Bob Schuchard, stated they poured sidewalk over the storm sewer, on the east end, and he stated they will need to do a re-pour and put a lid over the top of it. Charley and the new managers, Kylie Meeker and Darian Murray, are cleaning the pool. Charley also stated that the pool floor was damaged from chlorine pucks being thrown directly into the pool instead of running through the chemical machine. Thompson pool said they have paint that can be applied.

**Ordinance:** Per councilmember Frank Brouillette, nothing new to report. Hoping to not need to meet once they get info about a company Municode.

**Tree Board:** Bob Schuchard stated he ordered 10 evergreens for Arbor Day from Blake Nursery. Bob will arrange with the Wind Farm on a day to plant them.

**Wetlands Rail Trail:** Councilmember Ron Teig absent.

**UPDATE ON DECAY ORDINANCE COMPLAINTS:**

Previous property under ordinance complaint is cleaned up and possibly sold. Charley stated it will be turned into 2 two-bedroom apartments.

**UPDATE ON PREVIOUSLY DISCUSSED ITEMS:**

**Landfill rate increase:** Landfill rate increase will be 4% with a possible increase if necessary, per Frank. Republic will not reply on a rate increase for next year for us to match the rate to cover costs. Bob Schuchard ordered dumpsters for discount dump day, following the city-wide yard sale. County Commissioner Jeff Sell thought we should get a hold of Republic in Phoenix AZ to

arrange for a representative for Harlowton. Frank motioned to increase the rate by 4% and Jack Turner 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. No comment from the public. Motion passed unanimously.

Dump day will be May 19-20, 2023.

**Dump day discount:** Charley said they asked the commissioners about helping to support a 2<sup>nd</sup> clean-up day and they said if we can give a price of what it costs the city, maybe they will work with us. The Deputy Clerk, Deshawnda Carver, is working on expenses which will include wages. Bob stated on those busy days it takes all 4 of them. Bob also passed around last year's rates which are grossly low. Discussion occurred regarding what will be accepted and prices. Raising property taxes and lowering landfill prices was discussed as an opportunity for the city and county residents to keep our community clean. It was discussed to have a scheduled day the landfill will be open and eliminate scheduled appointments. Prices were agreed upon and will be shared through an ad in the newspaper and on the City Facebook page. Joe Hagl removes any metal scraps at no cost to the city. A discount of 50% was suggested for Dump Day. Councilmember Alli Jones motioned to approve the 50% discount for dump day and Charley Bennett 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. No public comment. Motion passed unanimously.

**Recycle bins:** David Leverett from Four Corner's Recycling did not get back to us with pricing for new bins or cardboard crushing machine. Mayor wants to put item on hold until we hear back from David.

**Big Sky Rail Authority:** Mayor Otten asked if the council wanted to approve a \$100 per year donation to the Big Sky Rail Authority to help get a passenger train across the southern end of the state. Frank motioned to approve and Kathleen 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. No public comment. Motion passed unanimously.

**Bulk water rates:** Mayor Otten spoke with Susan Hayes, and she said we would be looking good to charge \$10 per 1000 gallons of water. Some other regional rates to compare: Glendive \$20/1000, Scobey \$7/1000, Big Sky \$10/1000, Absarokee \$15/1000, and Richie, \$10/1000. We will revisit bulk water rate increase once the new water source is in use.

**Grader repair:** Estimate from Paxton Wojtowick was \$8959. Frank motioned to approve, and Jack seconded the motion to repair the grader. No comment from the public. Motion passed unanimously.

**South well repair:** Proposal from Mahurin of \$20, 931. Frank asked if this is the well we hope to keep for irrigating the park. The mayor will find out from the board if we can keep that well. City Clerk, Debbie Johnson, has a call to DNRC, Anna Miller, and is waiting for her reply to see if ARPA funds can pay for the repair. It was determined we needed to repair the well regardless of if it is covered by ARPA or not. Charley Bennett motioned to repair the south well and Alli Jones 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. No public comment. Motion passed unanimously.

**Cameras in the park:** Charley said T-Mobile has portable one and they will give us 15 days to try it. Maybe we can talk to the county to see if they will help us with the cost to maintain. The camera can be monitored by the sheriff's office as they will be the ones to police it. We will need a Wi-Fi signal and a location protected by weather. Charley talked to Sheriff Misner about Harlowton City Council Meeting May 9, 2023

cameras in other locations that would be beneficial. There is discussion about who could help install cameras. Charley will check on what is needed, and resources needed to install. Bob Schuchard also stated that public works employee, Charlie Church, might be able to meet with T-Mobile in Billings to discuss.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Diane Jones, Adam Jones and Josh Henigman (via phone) were present to discuss water drainage at 102 A Ave SW property. At the end of A Ave is a drain that is piped through the property causing erosion. House built in 1955 and drainage pipe was installed sometime before 1966. There have been attempts to mitigate the erosion. One suggestion is to discontinue this drainage in this area and reroute it to the skate park or another area that will not cause flooding to another property. Josh commented that needed to get the water from the top to the bottom without causing more erosion, possibly a vertical pipe or concrete trough. The area also contains a main line for the sewer. Discussion on possible solutions and determined to seek outside vendor for suggestions. Plan to meet again with an engineering company, maybe Do-All Construction, and public works department to determine a corrective action.

Mariah Holt requested to be on the agenda regarding possible walk-through access on the north side of the parking lot used for The Harlo Farmer's Market at Chief Joseph Park. The public works department will work with Mariah to make sure they know exactly where the location is and complete the request.

There are 3 Ward 2 candidates to fill Jack Runner's seat vacancy as of May 23, 2023. The city will invite the candidates to the next council meeting on May 23 to hear from them about their interest in the council seat. There was also talk of a council seat questionnaire to obtain the applicant's views and interests for being on the city council. The city Attorney, Brent Brooks, stated he would try to get us a copy of some questions used for Billings council applicants.

**CITY ATTORNEY REPORT:** City attorney Brooks is working with Andy Stensrud regarding the Boyd Burroughs property and trying to get together to go over some of Andy's questions before the revised survey. A couple of things needing discussed is Northwestern Energy easement, if there is one, and if there is an easement for the city water line that goes across the property the city proposes to sell but also apparently goes across Mr. Burrough's land and onto other property owners and will we need an easement with the other property owners.

**PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR REPORT:** Bob stated that they had their Ultraviolet (UV) training. This trainer was out of Canada and very informative. The public works department ordered \$5000 worth of general maintenance parts which should get them through the year. The trainer will contact Bob any time he is in Bozeman to do a run through with Harlo. Also working on trees and locates for water and sewer projects. Also planning on putting in a new vault at the water tower.

**REPORT OF THE CLERK-TREASURER:** City Clerk-Treasurer, Debbie Johnson, stated we will get our Black Mountain accounting software on their cloud backup on May 17, 2023. She also stated the May paychecks will be direct deposit. Online timecards will begin in June where we will have online entry from employees with a paper backup and fully online by July. She spoke of the 5-day

Clerk Institute training in Bozeman and the wealth of information obtained and the many knowledgeable speakers. Debbie asked if the city staff still needs to remind the council members of their meetings. It was discussed that some council members do not check their emails so we will text via email. The council members gave the city staff their mobile phone carriers. The personnel policy states no unauthorized weapons on city premises. It was asked who authorizes the use of pepper spray as the public works department and the city staff would like to have pepper spray handy. It was also discussed to get a doorbell on the back door and open the door upon request. We would need to have a panic bar to use if the door is locked. Alli Jones showed us a door bell she has in her office.

**REPORT OF THE MAYOR:** Mayor Otten stated the city will start the process of removing unlicensed, non-running vehicles from the city streets. There will be an ad in the paper with the processes involving the 10-day sticker prior to implementation.

**ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING:** Charley Bennett would like to discuss a subdivision on the flats to determine if it is in the city limits or if it is county. This included licensing dogs in that area. It was discussed if the city can publish the names of dog owners that have licensed their dogs on the city Facebook page.

**CLAIMS:**

Frank made a motion to approve the claims and Kathleen seconded the motion. No comment from the public. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:12pm.

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

Council Members Absent: Ron Teig

City Office: Mayor Paul Otten, City Clerk-Treasurer Debbie Johnson, City Deputy Clerk Deshawnda Carver, Public Works Director Bob Schuchard, City Attorney Brent Brooks (via Teams)

Public Present: Shawn Vodall, Cassy Phipps, Adam Jones, and Diane Jones

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Paul Otten, Mayor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Debbie Johnson, Clerk-Treasurer