

Tuesday 25, 2024
Harlowton City Hall

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

The minutes of the May 28, 2024, Council meeting were approved as written.

PUBLIC COMMENT: there was no public comment.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Library: Councilmember Johnny Cooney stated that they have a vacancy on their Library Board to be filled. Mayor Paul Otten asked if they had any interested? Mr. Cooney stated that they did not yet. Council member Kathleen Schreiber stated that she knew of some people interested and she would reach out to them.

Ordinance: The ordinance committee has not met yet.

Pool: Council member Charley Bennett stated that the Kiwanis is almost done with the Gazebo, and it should be done in the next few weeks. He stated that the Hutterites poured the wall over the weekend. He also stated that the pool is the cleanest he has ever seen it. The lowest levels so far were 30 and the other day it was 90 which is a great number. Things are running very well at the pool.

Tree Board: Public works director Bob Schuchard stated that he has nothing new to report. He stated that we need two new members, that there were other applicants we can look at.

Wetlands Rail Trail:

UPDATE ON PAST AGENDA TOPICS:

UPDATE ON DECAY ORDINANCE COMPLAINTS:

1. Clerk- Treasurer Sarah Williams showed the councilmembers the new complaints. There were two new ones. One located at 704 2nd Street NW and another 702 2nd Street NW. Council member Frank Brouillette mentioned that Ron had sold the house. He also asked if the Chinook Cafés complaint was just that the grass was too tall? Mayor Paul Otten stated that he believed it was. Julie Berg asked that some of these properties that people don't live at, do we have a letter that we send out to the homeowners that states that they have so many days to clean it? Mayor Paul stated that when we get to that point, we will send a letter out. Council person Kathleen asked if Todd King had been contacted? She stated that she would call him. Mayor Paul Otten asked Counsel person Frank Brouillette if he would get ahold of Laurie Teig and find out if the house sold. Council person Brouillette stated he would.

UPDATE ON PREVIOUSLY DISCUSSED ITEMS:

1. Recycle Bins. Mayor Otten asked Counsel person Frank Brouillette is he had met with the commissioners? Councilmember Brouillette stated he reached out to Dave with 4 Corners Recycling, and he was in the middle of getting ready for a trip, he was late, and he asked Frank to text him his email, which Frank did and did not hear back from him. council person Frank stated he hasn't gotten financials on the recycle bins, so he has not been able to go to the commissioners until he gets that. Frank will reach out to Dave again. Mayor Paul Otten asked if that was the papers he gave to Frank? To which Council member Frank replied they were not really what they needed.

2. Discussion on the rodeo grounds. Public works director Bob Schuchard stated that first of all he wanted this discussion to be a positive thing. He stated he did not want it to get ugly. However, this is having been an ongoing issue for the whole time he has worked for the city. He stated that they have signs down at the park stating no horses or livestock in certain areas. Bob feels it's not the cities job to patrol it. Bob has spoken with the sheriff's office; they have bigger issues to deal with. Mr. Schuchard asked why it can't be something as simple as having the rodeo announcer state "Thank you to the city for this beautiful park, lets keep it that way. Please keep your horses out of the park area." Bob asked why can't we designate the south side for people to bring their horses in that way? Mitch Pavlovich stated that he doesn't want horses all over the park either. Mitch stated that they put the rodeo on, and they are very busy, 246 contestants at the High school rodeo, it keeps them very busy. Mitch stated that by the time he was able to see anything the damage was done. Mitch suggested that eight or nine posts and some rope would handle that. Public works director Bob stated that rope will not work because they cut the rope. He stated that they were leading their horses over the painted rail, they tie them to the trees by the pavilion, there is horse droppings on the concrete in the pavilion. Mitch then stated that the only thing he was aware of was the grass that was trampled down. Kathleen Parks stated that she personally went out twice and had people move, but same thing, she can't live out there. She stated they don't have a lot of extra volunteers to keep someone out of there. She stated that they do try, but they just don't have the manpower to police it. Mitch stated that they did get banners to hang around, especially where the contestants can warm up. Bob Schuchard stated that they cut the rope by the dumpster, they cut the rope by the baseball field. Bob stated that our parks director Charley Church had to go and clean up all the horse droppings. Alli Jones stated that in previous years they didn't have anything to do with the High School Rodeo, but moving forward, can we get a list of things that have happened in the past so we can look it over and see what we can do about it, just so we can keep that communication open? A discussion then ensued about ideas the Rodeo committee has to help the City of Harlowton with the rodeo grounds. The rodeo committee stated that they will hang extra signage and do their best. They stated that they can't guarantee people will listen. They also suggested that the city remove the hitching post to which Bob agreed. The rodeo committee said they would talk with the sheriff's office and see if they can make a few passes through to police the grounds. They also wanted to reiterate that the Rodeo's bring a lot of money into Harlo, and that it is a big deal to those contestants who can hit four rodeos in a few days' time. Especially the High school rodeo which is two nights long. They stated that they are very grateful for the park, and they do care.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Interview with Jack Runner potential ward 3 council member. Mayor Otten stated that he does have a resignation letter from Ron Teig. He asked the council members to entertain the motion to accept Ron Tieg's resignation letter. Council member Kathleen Schreiber stated that she will motion to accept Ron Tieg's letter of resignation. Johnny Cooney 2nd the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Mayor Otten asked Jack if he would like to be the council member for ward three, to which Jack replied that he would love to represent the city. Mayor Paul stated that he is appointed as council member for ward 3. Jodie Campbell a financial consult for Montana League of Cities and Towns, stated that this next election Jack will have to run. Council member Charley Bennett made a motion to accept Jack Runner as a Ward 3 council member. Council member Johnny Cooney 2nd the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Susan Beley then read Jack his Oath of Office.

2. Clerk- treasurer wage discussion, new deputy-clerk hire. Mayor Otten stated he would entertain a motion to make Sarah Williams the new clerk-treasurer. Council member Kathleen Schreiber motioned to accept Sarah Williams as the new clerk-treasurer. Council member Johnny Cooney 2nd the motion. Three voted to pass, Councilmember Frank Brouillette abstained from voting since he is related to Sarah. Mayor Otten stated that he hired Sarah Williams at the same wage the other clerk-treasurers were making, \$20.00/ hour. Council member Kathleen made a motion to pass the wage. Council member Johnny Cooney 2nd the motion. Three votes to pass, with Council member Frank Brouillette abstaining since he is related to Sarah. Sarah Williams then introduced Jodie Campbell from Montana league of cities and towns; she stated that Jodie is training her in her new position as treasurer. Mayor Otten stated that Jodie will also be on call to help Sarah anytime after Sarah is done training. He also said how appreciative he was to Jodie for coming to help. Clerk-Treasurer Sarah stated that they did hire a new deputy-clerk, Tori Schreiber, and that she would be starting on July 8th. Mayor Otten asked the council to start Deputy-clerk Tori out at \$18.00/ hour as she does not want the city offered medical package. Mayor Otten asked to entertain a motion to accept Deputy-clerk Tori out at \$18/ hour. Council member Johnny Cooney made a motion to accept Tori at \$18.00. Council member Jack 2nd the motion. Four members approved with council member Kathleen Schreiber abstaining as she is related to Tori. Mayor Otten asked Jodie Campbell to then give us some information on why she is here and how she is helping the city of Harlowton. Jodie then began by saying she was the clerk in cascade for over 15 years, she left because the state has stopped training people, now there is two trainers at Montana League of Cities and towns who travel over Montana to assist where they need help at. She stated she was on the MMIA board, League board she loves traveling around to communities she has never been to and help people to stay and stick around. It is a very hard job. Jodie stated that Sarah was doing great. Mayor Otten stated that while Jodie was here, she was able to find us extra money that we didn't even know was there.

3. Mayor Otten stated that there was a complaint form filled out by Mr. Jack Martin. The new decking on the Boomer Trail bridge caught his dog's foot in it. Mr. Martin feels its unsafe for dogs. Council member Charley Bennett stated that he was in the office when the complaint came in and apparently its rough on dog's feet, all dogs. Charley stated he was going to go check it. Public works director Bob stated that his dog is a lab, and when he took his dog down there his dog was scared to cross it, he was fine, but he could have easily ripped a nail off on it. Council

Harlowton City Council Meeting June 25, 2024

member Charley Bennett stated he hasn't gone to check to see if someone slipped and fell how much damage it would cause. Mayor Otten stated since its expanded metal, that if someone fell, they would get cut, and that they would look into it more.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR REPORT: Public works director Bob Schuchard stated that the sewer project is still ongoing, and its hard to say when they will be done, but they did discover a lot of unknowns that they weren't expecting, so we wont be able to do as much as we planned but once its done we will be able to see how much money is left an go from there. They found 8 manholes here in town that were completey rotted out, so they are putting new bottoms in them. Mr. Schuchard stated that it's a huge improvement because there was a lot of issues. Bob also stated that he received good news from Great West Engineering, the 20 samples that Bob and his crew must do every month did get reduced. He stated that he is waiting for a letter from DEQ and it will go to every 6 months now, which will save the City a lot of money. Bob also mentioned that he is having an inflex of calls about landfill appointments, he mentioned he doesn't want to turn people away but at the same time if he pulls Charley off his job he gets that much more behind. Bob was hoping to get council input on what to do. Susan Beley asked if we charge extra for off hour appointments. To which Bob replied that they didn't do off hours. Susan Beley then stated that maybe the city should charge more. She stated that maybe it would make people a little bit more responsible to use the actual dump days. Mayor Paul Otten stated that it would be a great idea.

REPORT OF THE CLERK-TREASURER: Clerk-treasurer Sarah Williams presented some street closures that the city needs to approve. Public works director Bob Schuchard stated that the people need to be made aware that the city does not close the streets or provide the cones, that is their own responsibility. Council member Charley Bennett stated it needs to be stated on the sheet that they fill out. Mayor Paul Otten stated that we can rewrite it and have it on the sheet. Susna Beley then stated that its fine that the road closures were in the council packet but if the public did not know it was on the agenda they have no way to know to come here and make a comment. Council member Frank Brouillette asked if there is only one that needs to be approved now can't, we wait until the next meeting to get them on the agenda? Mayor Otten stated that we will just read the most recent one. Council member Katheleen Schreiber then read the request to have the street closed for Gallys BBQ over the 4th. Mayor Otten asked if there were any public comments? Cody Nelson with LEPC asked if all street closures can be forwarded to the office of emergency management. Mayor Otten asked if we have counsel approval, and everyone give their approval. Clerk-treasurer Sarah then asked for approval to pay all the rest of the June invoices so she can get the Fiscal year closed out. Mayor Otten made a motion to pay the rest of the claims through June. Council member Jonny Cooney made the motion, Council member Charley Bennett 2nd the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

MAYORS REPORT: Mayor Otten stated that we are having a little problem with our dog ordinance, and he thinks it won't take that much to fix, that it is something we need to discuss at the next meeting. He also stated that we will be having a closing on the Burrroughs property July 10th.

ATTORNEY REPORT: City attorney Brent Brooks stated that there are several criminal cases still pending, two of them may be disposed of. He also stated he did email someone with Civic Plus to see what they needed from the city, and he hopes to hear back from them soon.

WCSO REPORT: Nothing new to report.

ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING: Council member Charley Bennett stated that he would like to have on the next meeting's agenda about campers around town. Mostly about theft of utilities. Mr. Bennett stated that he was showed one that is hooked up to power and water on the street. Mayor Otten asked if they think its being rented out? Public Works Director Bob Schuchard stated that they are not renting it out, but they hooked sewer up to it and it was over the curb so its half on their property and half on the street. The slide outs were out too. If there was a fire you would never get out in time. Bob stated that he went and talked to them, and the owners of the house stated they were only using it for graduation, and it would only be two weeks but its been longer then that. Mayor Otten said to get a picture of it and turn it over to the sheriff's office. Mr. Schuchard stated that he did. Mayor Otten stated that he wanted to circle back next meeting.

CLAIMS:

Council person Kathleen Schreiber made a motion to pass the claims. Council member Johnny Cooney seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Council Members Present: Charley Bennett, Frank Brouillette, Kathleen Schreiber, Johnny Cooney, Kathleen Schreiber

Council Members Absent: Roger Kitts, City Attorney Brent Brooks via. phone

City Office: Mayor Paul Otten, City Clerk-Treasurer Sarah Williams, Public Works Director Bob Schuchard,

Public Present: Jodie Campbell, Susan Beley, Joe Hagl, Jack Runner, Julie Berg, Anita Leach, Dane Elwood, Alli Jones, Mitch Pavlovich, Lindsey Sramek, Katherine Parks, and LEPC coordinator Cody Nelson

Paul Otten, Mayor

Sarah Williams, Clerk-Treasurer