

October 26, 2021
Library Conference Room

A regular meeting of the Harlowton City Council was held on October 26, 2021. The meeting opened at 7:00 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance. Minutes of the October 12, 2021 Council minutes were approved as written.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Community member (and previous Council member) Rob Elwood stated that he had been in communication with Northwest Energy (NWE) regarding the street light dimmers being installed. NWE stated that they had not yet finished their work in Billings. Great Falls would be next. NWE told Rob that if the City Council presented a letter stating that Harlowton would be willing to be first and willing to deal with issues that may arise from being first, NWE would consider installing dimmers sooner rather than later. Rob stated that he would help the City draft a letter to be reviewed and approved. Rob believes that installing dimmers will save the City some money, especially in the winter months when lights are on longer.

Discussion took place regarding the old lights and how costs have decreased since the LED light bulb installation a few years ago.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1) Mayor Paul Otten stated that there had been a zoom call with Snowy Mountain Development Company (SMDC) and the engineers regarding the City property formerly known as Biegel's Bar. The project would be moving forward with bids in winter and movement at the site in Spring 2022. Paul asked the Council for ideas on what could be done with the land. Council member Charley Bennett suggested that grants be applied for that would allow a building to be put on the land and the local food bank be moved there.

Council member Frank Brouillette suggested a youth center or some type of arcade. Discussion ensued regarding past issues with youth centers and misbehavior.

Paul stated that the Council could also consider selling the land to be used for commercial property. SMDC had stated that the land could be sold by the City so that a business could open to contribute to the community and encourage the economy. Paul stated that the City would be responsible for closing up the hole of the basement with dirt before the land could be used or sold. Discussion took place regarding any possible damage to the basement concrete caused by fire damage. Paul stated that he did not believe any damage to that area had occurred. Public Works Director Bob Schuchard stated that depending on the timing with Phase 5 of the Water Project, Do-All Construction might have dirt for back-filling the area.

Discussion took place regarding who might like to purchase the land.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Council member Jack Runner stated that there was nothing new to report regarding the library. The board meeting had been postponed due to illness.

Committee Chair Frank Brouillette stated that the Floodplain Ordinance was discussed. It was being pushed forward for the Council to begin reviewing and so that publication and the public comment process could begin.

Council member Charley Bennett gave a report on the pool. Thompson Pool had received the new sand filters. A meeting with Ron Fischer and a building inspector had occurred to discuss renovations to the pool house. Ron would create a blue print to submit to the State. Some ideas for the pool house include making ADA compliant renovations to the bathrooms. The funds being raise by Kiwanis (and other community members) to match the Bair grant would help pay for the project.

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

Bob gave a report on the Wetlands Rail Trail. DEQ had been at the Roundhouse land recently and had Bob and (PW employee) Jeff do some digging. A grant would be paying for their wages.

NEW BUSINESS

1) The Central Montana Water Agreement document was reviewed and voted on. Frank made a motion to approve the document. Ron seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2) Charley Bennett requested permission to travel to Arizona from mid-November 2021 to early April 2022. Frank made a motion to approve Charley's request. Councilmember Allison Jones seconded the motion. The motion passed with 5 votes (and Charley abstaining).

3) The Council reviewed the new Floodplain document that the Ordinance Committee had passed through. Discussion took place regarding what parts of the document would apply to residents in different areas of the City. Charley was concerned about how the Floodplain residents would be most affected by these new rules. Paul stated that the document would allow Page (Dringman) to review Certificates of Survey and Subdivision regulations throughout town—not just in specific areas. Jack made a motion to begin the process of public comment and publication. Allison seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 5/1 vote. Charley voted against the document. The first reading would occur at the 11/9 meeting, a second reading occurring 12/14.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR REPORT

Bob gave a report. There had been no alarm at the lagoon in the last two weeks. The PW department had been trimming trees and clearing leaves. Jeff was currently on vacation. Discussion took place regarding a water valve issue at a specific house in town. There was a "ghost line" somewhere and the PW department had issues locating it. The freezing machine had broken and a new one had been ordered.

MAYORS REPORT

Paul stated that there had been a conference call regarding Phase 5 of the Water Project. The bids would start January 2022 and the project would start Spring 2022. The next phase of the Sewer project would be in 2023. The State had allocated \$1.4 million towards the City's sewer project. The Central Montana Water Authority line going through Garniel would reach Harlowton in Summer 2022.

The Council training would occur in January 2022. Three Cities total would be participating. Charley brought up his concern with the City being able to save more money by sometimes using Amazon. He stated that the pipe freezer that Bob had purchased was \$300 less on Amazon than with Northwestern Pipe in Billings. Discussion ensued regarding keeping the money "local". Charley also brought up the City Employees having to use their personal credit cards to purchase

City-related items and have to wait to be reimbursed. Charley thought a City Credit Card would be useful. The Council agreed to allow a Business Credit Card to be opened for the City. (This was not on the agenda to be voted on. It will be on the 11/9 agenda for an official vote.)

ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

The next council meeting will be November 9, 2021
at 7:00pm.

Items to discuss:

- Floodplain ordinance 1st reading

CLAIMS

Frank made a motion for the claims from October 11th through October 22nd be approved for payment. Ron seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously by council.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:39pm.

Council Members Present: Charley Bennett, Jim Kalitowski, Jack Runner, Allison Jones, Frank Brouillette, Ron Teig

Council Members Absent: none

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

Public Present: Dan Edwards, Rob Elwood

Paul Otten, Mayor

Lara Brisco, Clerk-Treasurer