

May 10, 2022
Harlowton City Hall

A regular meeting of the Harlowton City Council was held on May 10, 2022. The meeting opened at 7:00pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES: Approved as written.

PUBLIC COMMENT: none

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: none

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Council member Jack Runner stated that he had nothing new to report on the library. Mayor Paul Otten stated that he had told Librarian Tina Peterson about a "Red Ants Pants" grant available to libraries.

Ordinance Committee Chair Frank Brouillette gave a report. The Committee had reviewed Title 11 of the Ordinance book and was going to "trim the fat" on the document to make it more applicable to the City.

Council member Charley Bennett gave a report on the pool. The pool had been filled in with water. Thompson Pool would come soon to hook up the heaters. The wading pool had been removed and the Public Works Department had filled in the area with dirt. Charley presented a sample of the interior siding for the Council to see. He stated that it would cost a few \$1000 more for the material but would be put in faster. Discussion took place regarding insulation methods. Charley is getting the pool ready for the June 3rd lifeguard training.

Public Works Director Bob Schuchard stated that he was waiting for the new trees to arrive. They were coming from North Dakota and some snow was holding them up.

Council member Ron Teig was not present to give a report on the Wetland Rail Trail.

NEW BUSINESS

1) The 2nd reading of the Decay Ordinance 2022-02 took place. Mike DeBorde suggested that he and Joe Hagl get together and collect scrap metal around town. It could be stored at the City dump and the City would gain revenue from selling the scrap metal. He stated it was about \$400-\$500 per tub. This could include cars, washers and dryers. Joe Hagl was recovering from surgery so Mike would wait and mention the idea to Joe soon. After discussing it with Joe he would request to be on a future agenda.

Jack made a motion to pass the revised Decay Ordinance 2022-02. Charley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

2) Discussion took place regarding ideas for the City-owned lot previously known as "Biegels Bar". City Clerk-Treasurer Lara Brisco stated that City Attorney Karen Hammel said that the land could not be sold with the contingency of a business being put on the lot. Paul presented a fair market

value assessment from realtor Julie Woodard. The lot was valued at \$5655.00. Julie gave a statement on how this number was reached. She compared it to other similar properties currently listed and then added 25% because it is on a City Main St. It also has access to utilities.

Council member Allison Jones stated that the Council should collect ideas and come back at the next meeting. There had also been interests previously by Rob Elwood to purchase the property.

3) Bids were open for City land previously leased by Gary Olson. The first bid opened was from Chad Roelfs. Chad was offering \$400 a year to lease the land with the contingency a fence being built. Chad offered to provide labor if the City would provide materials.

The second bid opened was from Gary Olson. Gary's offer was \$301 per year.

A 3rd bid from Kayle Allen was for \$1200 a year for three years. Kayle Allen was awarded the lease.

4) Discussion took place regarding digital readers for council meetings, purchased with ARPA funds. Charley Bennett had suggested the idea as a way to cut down on the cost of paper and ink. Each Council member would have a digital reader. Allison Jones asked what the cost would be. Charley was unsure. Allison stated that he should get more information and come back to this at a future meeting.

5) Discussion took place regarding the purchase of a television for City Hall using ARPA money. The purpose of this television would be for zoom meetings and PowerPoint presentations. Discussion took place regarding what situations required this and how often it would be needed. Charley would research prices. The topic would be tabled until then.

6) In reference to the April 26th meeting, Lara reported feedback from the Wheatland and Harlowton Connections Facebook pages regarding people's opinions on the "Straight Talk" month-to-month phone lines. The Wheatland Connections post had 16 responses, 11 in favor of Straight Talk and the others in favor of other plans. The Harlowton Connections post had 7 responses, 4 in favor of Straight Talk and the rest in favor of other plans. Both posts had a total of 23 responses, 15 in favor of Straight Talk. Discussion took place regarding whether a Verizon phone plan would be most reliable. Lara would look into a "bare bones" Verizon phone plan and report back the findings at the next meeting.

7) Allison presented the idea of the Rodeo Fairgrounds having a groundskeeper. The person would be partially funded by the City and the County. Bob stated that currently Charlie would be too busy to take on the County property and that it would be best if the County and City was kept separate when it came to park/rodeo ground duties. Paul stated that it was not in the budget to hire another person to handle this.

8) A variance for Rick Reese property was presented. This variance would allow a septic tank to be built on the property because a City sewer line was not currently available. Paul stated that the variance would be given but must be reapplied for every five years. Also, if City sewer ever became available, the property would need to be hooked up. Rick's son Rodney was present and agreed to the conditions. Charlie made a motion to approve the variance. Frank seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

9) Continued discussion took place regarding the City securing cyber insurance and what the alternative would be to poorly protected City computers. Lara was seeking approval to use Morrison Maerile as offsite backup as well as cyber security for the office computers. Lara again stated that the concern was with City computers accessing state websites and being hacked while accessing those websites. Lara stated that the computers in the City Hall were currently vulnerable. Bob stated that his computer at the City Shop also accessed state websites for his reports. Lara stated that perhaps this computer should be included as well. She did not realize that Bob's computer also accessed state websites. Paul stated that the two City Hall computers and

Bob's computer should be covered. Jack made a motion to approve using Morrison Maerile for cybersecurity for the three computers as well as continuing to use the company for offsite backup for the City Hall computers. Kathleen seconded the motion the motion passed unanimously

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR REPORT

Bob made a report. A new roof had been put on the old fire hall. A ridge cap had been put on the roof on the side of City Hall where Biegels Bar had been. A water break had occurred at the Thompson well. Because it had been offline there were issues and the Public Works Department was flushing hydrants. The wading pool had been filled with dirt. People had approached Bob regarding their concerns with what "appropriate" fence guidelines would be in regards to the decay ordinance. He saw people building fences of old pallets and pipes and was concerned.

REPORT OF THE CLERK-TREASURER

City Clerk-Treasurer Lara Brisco gave her report. Lara had attended the Clerk's Institute in Bozeman last week. She had collected lots of information and ideas that she would like to present over the next few months. The most important take away she had immediately started implementing was how to manage the City's social media account. She learned that when reposting City documents onto forums such as Wheatland and Harlowton Connections, the City was still responsible for how those posts were managed by the administrators. The Clerks at the institute were encouraged to not repost on public forums and to not have any City employees or Council members be involved with re-posting. She learned that it was best to have individual citizens repost these items if they would like, which would not hold the City liable for how the reposts were handled. Moving forward, Lara would only be posting City related documents/posts on the City of Harlowton's own page where the narrative could be controlled regarding offensive language. She would post on the forums that they documents were available on the City page with a direct link.

MAYORS REPORT

Mayor Paul Otten Gave a report. The City had mailed letters to Governor Gianforte and the Director of the DNRC regarding FEMA's revised Antelope Creek floodplain map proposal. He was hoping to hear back soon with any information they might provide regarding this issue. Charley asked what Senator Tester's office was doing regarding the flood plain map. Paul stated he was waiting to hear back from Kaitlyn.

ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

The next council meeting will be May 24, 2022 at 7:00pm.

CLAIMS

Frank made a motion to pass the claims from April 25,2022 to May 6, 2022. Jack seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously

The meeting was adjourned at 8:14pm.

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

Council Members Absent: Ron Teig

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

Public Present: Mike DeBorde, Julie Woodard, Rodney Reese, Steve and Konny Martin, Chad Roelfs

Paul Otten, Mayor

Lara Brisco, Clerk-Treasurer