

City of White Sulphur Springs

The regular meeting of the City Council was held on December 5, 2022 at 7:00 P.M. Mayor Rick Nelson called the meeting to order with the following members present:

Pattie Berg
Ron Coleman
Rick Ellison
Lee Blanchard

A. Call Regular Meeting to Order

B. Roll Call

C. Pledge of Allegiance to Flag

D. Public Comment: Public comment will be accepted on public matters not listed on this agenda and are within the jurisdiction of the City Council and having a significant interest to the public. During a regular session, there will be time after each agenda item for comment about that item.

1. Step up to the podium and state your name and address for the record.
2. Please limit your comments to THREE (3) minutes.

E. Read & Approve - Accept or Reject Minutes

1. November 7th Meeting – Regular Session

Possible Motion: Move to Accept Minutes as presented or as amended.

The Mayor asked if there was a motion to approve or reject the Regular Session minutes from November 7th as presented. Pattie Berg motioned to approve the November 7th Meeting Regular Session Minutes as amended. Lee Blanchard seconded the motion. All said Aye. Motion carried and passed.

2. November 15th Meeting – Regular Session and Work Session

Possible Motion: Move to Accept Minutes as presented or as amended

Not ready yet.

F. Receive/Accept Reports

1. Sheriff's Report – Sheriff Jon Lopp

Jon Lopp handed out the Meagher County Sheriff's Office Complaint Report for the Month of November. The Council reviewed the Meagher County Sheriffs Office complaint report for the month of November. Jon Lopp asked if there were any comments or concerns about the report. Jon Lopp said that it was another busy month with hunters. Jon Lopp said that another decorative light pole was hit and torn down, this time over by Townsend Tire. There was a discussion about vehicles that are needing to be tagged for removal.

2. City Court Report – City Judge Lori Sorenson

Lori Sorenson said that last month slowed down, giving more time to work on the old cases. Lori Sorenson attended the COCOLJ Conference in November at the Fairmont Hot Springs Resort and took the exam, that is required every two years, and passed it.

3. Fire Department Report - City Fire Chief Sam Peeler – none.

4. City Engineer's Report

Project Engineer, Jessica Salo, emailed the Council a summary of what Great West has been working on last month and anticipated upcoming tasks.

Water System Preliminary Engineering Report (PER)

Environmental letters have been sent to applicable local, state, and federal agencies describing potential projects for the water system and requesting comments back by December 17, 2022. Great West has also been collecting and analyzing a variety of data sources for the water system analysis. Great West will present initial findings to the City and Council members in an upcoming work session that is anticipated to occur the week of December 19th or early January, depending on City preference. The work session will be an important step in the PER process to gain feedback on the initial alternatives and preferred project, before moving on to public involvement activities in January/February.

Backup Generators

Design is underway for the two backup generators needed to serve the well pump house and wastewater lift station. Preliminary calculations result in a 200kW generator for the well pump house and a 35kW generator for the lift station. A site survey was performed and preliminary plan set generated for location of the generators. Preliminary plans have been provided to the electrical subcontractor who is currently preparing the power distribution electrical design components of the project. Preliminary drawings will be provided to the City for comment and then Great West will finalize the design, cost estimate, and assemble plans, specifications, and contract documents in preparation for bidding.

Great West also prepared and submitted an ARPA Minimum Allocation Grant application for partial funding of this project and is also assisting the City with meeting the startup conditions of the ARPA grant including the preparation of the MEPA environmental checklist. In November, Great West sent letters to several local, state and federal agencies requesting comment on water system improvements, including the installation of a new generator for the City's wells. Once the deadline to respond expires on December 16, Great West will complete the checklist and send it to DNRC ARPA Specialist Katherine Certalic. The grant agreement can be expected to be executed by mid-January.

Capital Improvements Plan (CIP)

Great West has prepared a draft community survey that is ready for the City's comment and input. Great West will present the community survey to Council members during the upcoming work session with the City. Once the City is comfortable with the content of the survey, it will be ready for marketing and distribution to City residents after the first of the year.

5. Public Work's Report - City Public Works Supervisor Rocky Vinton

City Crew Employee, Matt Swett, reported that he worked on a 11x14 paper map for the water/sewer lines in inches, hydrants, and curb stops and printed it out for the City Office. Matt Swett said that he mostly did the map here and there at home where he had two monitors to view.

The Council told him to keep track of the hours he spends on this project and that he should be being paid for his services. Matt Swett said that he has not been able to get together with the GPS/GIS mapping company, Diamond Maps, to be able to start the process to put it onto the iPad. Lee Blanchard said that he would be willing to help Matt Swett. Matt Swett reported that Marc Pryor has ordered the needed water meter replacements.

6. Animal Control Report – Marc Pryor

Marc Pryor said that it has been quiet. Marc Pryor will be doing the deer management trapping December thru February 15th, and so far he has trapped three deer and three residents have taken the deer home to process them. Marc Pryor said that after a deer is in the trap, then he calls the Sheriff's Department and then has been waiting about 30 minutes before a deputy is available to shoot the deer, in the meantime he is worried that the deer could damage the trap. Marc Pryor said that the very first year it was reported that there were about 138 deer in town and this year the plan is to at least trap 25 deer. There will be an ad in the newspaper letting residents know that anyone interested in the meat to call City Hall and ask to be placed on the waiting list. Marc Pryor said that he will only be trapping if there is someone wanting a deer on the list. Marc Pryor said that the City will cut the head off but will not be gutting the deer and the rest of the processing would be up to the resident receiving the deer. Marc Pryor said that he has two traps out at different places. Marc Pryor will be tracking the deer to see where their routes are in various times of the day. Marc Pryor said that he will work with Jay Kolby to have the sampling for chronic wasting disease testing done. Marc Pryor said that he had a couple of loose dogs.

7. Parks Committee Report – Pattie Berg

Pattie Berg reported that the Parks Advisory Committee was chosen as one of the five selected to work with the Montana Access Project on getting grant park projects. There will be a Parks Committee meeting Thursday December 8th to discuss, review, finalize the “pitch Fest” responses and then they will be attending a Pitch Feast on December 15th to pitch their Spike Happy Trails Park project. The Mayor and Carol Berg will meet tomorrow at 10:00 am to discuss the status of the T-Mobile grant application for Springs Park renovation.

8. Library Report – Library Director - Rachel Wahlstrom

Library Assistant Director, Shannon Washburn, reported that everything is going good at the library. They were opened for the Christmas Stroll with various activities and a fireplace for people to warm up. The library has joined a group of libraries across the state that can share resources with each other. The library is still working on replacing the older computers, it was said that Triangle Communications when they update their computers, they may donate the older computers to the library.

G. Unfinished Business - Items for Discussion and/or Action

1. City Shop Building Contract – Review solicited proposals

Discussion and/or Action

Item was discussed Oct 3rd and Oct 18th, award withdrawn Nov 7th. Council now to review any options resulting from solicitations to contractors or firms to forward proposals for the work to be done re: new City Shop Building.

Accept Public Comment

Possible Motion: Move to award contract to XXX for their proposal of \$XXX,XXX. OR, Move to republish bid solicitation.

The Mayor said that Rocky Vinton has been in contact with two contractors, one is from by Missoula, MT, and they have been on a site visit already gathering the information to get a proposal quote for the City Shop building on the next meeting on December 20th.

H. New Business- Items for Discussion and/or Action

1. Parks Advisory Committee–Reinstate for another 2 year term – ending Summer of 2024

Discussion and/or Action

Reappoint Carol Berg for another 2-year term – ending Summer of 2024

Accept Public Comment

Possible Motion: Move to appoint Carol Berg for another 2-year term on the Parks Advisory Committee.

The Mayor said that he was not aware of a vacancy. It was said that the vacancy was actually in July but the Parks Committee is just getting caught up. There were several advertisements in June/July with no responses to fill the 2 year position. In all it would be a five seat committee that started in 2020 (2 would be for two years and 2 would be for 3 years). Carol Berg (2 years), Jen Frazer (3 years), Kelly Huffield (3 years), the new member Jordan Kibbee (2 years), and the fifth seat has not been filled yet. Lee Blanchard motioned to appoint Carol Berg for another 2 year term on the Parks Advisory Committee. Ron Coleman seconded the motion. Lee Blanchard, Rick Ellison, and Ron Coleman said Aye. Pattie Berg abstained. Motion carried and passed.

2. Approve Meeting Schedule for remainder of December 2022 and January 2023

Discussion and/or Action

Currently, the Council is set to meet on the December 20th for its usual work session meeting, and would typically meet on the 1st Monday and the 3rd Tuesday in January. Consider whether to conduct regular work session at the usual time on December 20th and whether to reschedule the January meeting from January 2nd to January 9th in 2023 and at that meeting have the Mayor appoint committee members for the ensuing year as well as cancel the usual 3rd Tuesday meeting for January.

Accept Public Comment.

Possible Motion: Move to approve the remaining December meeting schedule. OR Move to Cancel the work session meeting scheduled for Dec. 20, 2022.

Move to re-schedule the 1st January 2023 meeting from January 2nd to January 9th 2023 and cancel the January 17, 2023 work session meeting.

The Mayor said that Great West Engineering would like to set up a separate work session to present the water PER update that will be an important step in the PER process to gain feedback on the initial alternatives and preferred project, before moving on to public involvement activities in January/February. It was suggested to have the work session December 20th after the regular meeting. The Mayor will be out of the Country January 10th thru January 20th. After that the next meeting was discussed and agreed to have that meeting on Tuesday January 3rd and to possibly cancel the January 17th meeting. Lee Blanchard motioned to keep the scheduled December 20th meeting and change the January meeting to January 3rd. Pattie Berg seconded the motion. All said Aye. Motion carried and passed.

3. Approve Gift Cards for Christmas

Discussion and/or Action

Tis the Season: rather than a Christmas Party, request for approval for City Gift cards for employees.

Accept Public Comment

Possible Motion: Move to approve issuance of gift cards rather than a Christmas Party for employees.

The Mayor asked if the Council wanted to do like they did last year with giving the City Employees gift cards (of \$60) instead of a Christmas Party for employees. Pattie Berg motioned to approve Christmas gift cards of \$60 for all of the City Employees. Lee Blanchard seconded the motion. All said Aye. Motion carried and passed.

I. Comments/Discussion

1. Future Business

2. Mayor's Comments—Rick Nelson

The Mayor said that he received a letter from Jackson Rose about the Housing Committee that they will be invoicing the City/County monthly for the work that they are doing and that they are requesting a City representative to set on the newly formed committee consisting of City, County, School Board, and MCSC, and will meet in December (likely virtually) in advance of a larger meeting in January with the full committee. The Mayor said that he thought that Rick Ellison would be a good fit. The Council agreed. This will be on the December 20th Agenda. The Mayor said that the Planning Board, Great West Engineering, and the US Forest Service will be having a meeting on December 7th @ 4:00 pm about the concerns with Willow Creek. The Council should attend as this could impact the City's water system that is fed by Willow Creek.

3. Council Comments/Discussion

a. President of the Council—Pattie Berg

Nothing.

b. Council Member—Ron Coleman

Nothing.

c. Council Member—Rick Ellison

He said that he was approached by a resident with complaints about the snow plowing on the streets. Him and a resident drove around and saw berms left in the intersections or in the middle of the street, lack of curves around the corners, and some streets plowed better than other streets in town. The Mayor said that they are not done yet and there are different employees to do the snow plowing in town with one with more experience than the other one, it all takes training. He also said that there are children sledding on Baker Hill and felt that there should be signage there to let residents know to be caution and look out for them. Baker Hill should be all gravel. The Mayor and City Attorney said that the City can't put up signs about children sledding without taking on the liability for allowing it to happen. The Mayor said that there are not as many vehicles going by so the sledding would be better and safer on Badger Street. It was suggested to place a "caution children present" sign up. Susan Wordal said that she would speak to MMIA on the correct signage to place on that street.

d. Council Member—Lee Blanchard

Nothing.

J. Claims Signing/Motion to Approve the Bills

Pay the Bills

Accounting Claim Check #'s 18892-18914 November 16, 2022 thru November 30, 2022 for \$381,401.63.

Accounting Journal Vouchers – not until December 20th

Payroll & Electronic Checks November 16-30 for \$19,544.94

Utility Billing System Adjustments Journal Vouchers \$124.42 November 1-30


Received a copy Budget Expenditure/Revenue November 2022 – not until December 20th

Not until the December 20th meeting, the bills were missed.

November 16, 2022 thru November 30, 2022 were presented for Council’s approval, but will be added to the December 20th bills to pay.

K. Motion/Vote to Adjourn the Meeting

The Mayor asked the Council if there is a motion to adjourn the meeting. Pattie Berg motioned to adjourn the meeting. Lee Blanchard seconded the motion. All said Aye. Meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.



Michelle Stidham–Clerk-Treasurer



Mayor – Rick Nelson