

**MINUTES
COUNCIL WORKSHOP
FEBRUARY 14, 2017 6:30 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

A Council Workshop was held in the Council Chambers and called to order by Mayor Mark Mace at 6:30 p.m. on February 14, 2017.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

<input type="checkbox"/> Emelie Eaton	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Doug Poehls
<input type="checkbox"/> Bruce McGee	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Richard Herr
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chuck Dickerson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scot Stokes
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tom Nelson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bill Mountsier

OTHERS PRESENT:

Heidi Jensen, CAO
Noel Eaton, City Planner
Monica Plecker, CTA Architects

Public Input

Irv Wilke, 1017 Seventh Avenue, reported on the Laurel Rod & Gun Club's recent turkey shoot and invited the council to attend the next turkey shoot.

General items

- Leif Welhaven - Breakfast Exchange Club update

Leif Welhaven, 4637 Neibauer Road, distributed a handout to the council regarding the process of launching a new Exchange Club in Laurel. Some informational meetings have been held, including one at KC's Palace last week.

Leif explained that the Exchange Club is America's service club. The club serves veterans and veterans' projects, the prevention of child abuse and neglect, youth programs and community service projects. David Keyes, with the Rotary Club and the *Laurel Outlook*, has been very helpful in encouraging people to join the group and has seen that the current clubs cannot fill all the needs in Laurel. Leif recently spoke with the Jaycees, and they asked for help with the street dance on July 3rd and 4th. He also spoke with the American Legion in Laurel a couple weeks ago.

Leif spoke regarding some of the projects done by the Billings Exchange Club, as shown by the pictures in his handout. Projects include the holiday parade and the St. Patrick's Day parade, where they hand out over 10,000 US flags. He thinks that would be a natural fit in Laurel on the 4th of July, as it promotes veterans, honors America and gets kids excited about their country.

The next picture showed over 1,000 large US flags planted at Par 3 Golf Course. This was originally called a Healing Field, is sometimes called a 911 Remembrance Field or Field of Honor, and raises awareness about Americanism and our country. For this event, they sold flags to sponsors to honor someone that had served our country and passed away. Richard Klose, the head of the American Legion in Laurel, is excited about what could be done together.

The next picture showed former Commissioner Kennedy in front of a Freedom Shrine that was installed last year at the new VA Clinic on the west side of Billings. The documents in the background are important U.S. documents, such as the Declaration of Independence, Articles of Confederation, etc. The club pays for the documents and has a ceremony honoring veterans when the documents are installed in government buildings and schools.

The next picture showed some students in Billings in front of a Freedom Shrine. The students were recently honored for the Youth of the Month scholarship program. Students apply for scholarships based on grades, community service, being well-rounded and being community focused. A Youth Excel Club might be started at Laurel High School.

The next picture showed a couple shopping for a child, as the Exchange Club teams up with the Salvation Army and Dress a Child to provide hats, gloves, mittens, boots, etc.

Leif showed a picture of three individuals receiving a Golden Deeds Award. This award typically honors senior citizens who have served the community through their volunteer efforts.

An informational meeting is scheduled on Wednesday, February 22nd, at KC's Palace in Laurel from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. There will be discussion regarding possible projects. Ideas include the pool project, new lights at the Laurel Dodgers baseball stadium, and a Backpack Program. Leif stated that this is not a Billings Exchange Club that is in Laurel, but it will be a Laurel Exchange Club run by Laurel people.

- Appointments
 - Laurel Ambulance Service - Aleah Robinson and Sean Davis

Aleah Robinson stated that she is a new EMT fresh out of EMT School in Billings. She is excited to team up with the Laurel Ambulance to get some good experience with good trainers, and she is looking forward to serving the community.

Sean Davis stated that he also just finished the EMT class, and he believes in giving back to the community. His brother, who worked for Laurel Ambulance in the past, told him how much he loved working for Laurel and the community, and he wants to follow his path.

Mayor Mace thanked them for speaking to the council. The appointments will be on the next council agenda.

Executive Review

- Ordinance - Subdivision Regulations

Heidi stated that the subdivision regulations were updated by CTA Architects with a CDBG grant. Monica Plecker, the city's former planner and a consultant with CTA Architects, prepared the updated subdivision regulations with the current city planner, Noel Eaton.

Noel explained that the city was awarded a CDBG Planning Grant to update the subdivision regulations, which have not been updated since 2006. Monica had a lot of experience with the subdivision regulations and was able to provide valuable input. The Planning Board held a public

hearing on January 5th. The subdivision regulations will be adopted by the County Commissioners in the next couple weeks.

Monica Plecker explained the project started with the CDBG Grant last July. There have been several meetings with the Planning Board to get their input and review. The Planning Board gave a unanimous recommendation for approval of the updated subdivision regulations, which includes all legislative changes since 2006.

Monica spoke regarding some of the big ticket items that were addressed in the regulations that will be helpful to the city planner, be a benefit to the community, aid developers in what they need to do, and also require developers to do what they need to do for the community.

One of the first things that was clarified is what happens when multiple application processes are required as a part of a subdivision. A clear process was not outlined to go through annexation, a zone change and subdivision. In the last several months, the council has seen through first-hand experience what happens when the cart gets before the horse. Now there is language that will allow for a certain process to happen for annexation and zone change prior to a subdivision application. The nature of zoning affects density and lot sizes that can majorly affect a subdivision and what a preliminary plat looks like. That is not only a benefit to the community itself, but it also looks out for the developer. If a developer pays an engineer to develop something that will not conform to a zone change that they may or may not get, they are going to be out of a lot of money.

Monica explained that this community had incredibly high thresholds for when a traffic study was required. Basically, a 50-lot major subdivision required a traffic study, but there has not been a 50-lot major subdivision in six years. That is not the kind of development that Laurel is seeing. The recommendation in this document is that all major subdivisions will require a traffic study. Where Laurel is growing and where its subdivisions have been in the past is on streets that are already built out. People already feel like there is a lot of traffic on them, but it is unknown what kind of impact a new subdivision would have on the roads.

Monica stated that the importance of the traffic study leads into another section in the Laurel Subdivision Regulations that talked about offsite improvements. There was a vague structure in place that basically said a developer might be assessed money if there would be an impact on the road that is providing access. An example of a time when a developer had to do an offsite improvement is when Walmart had to upgrade the traffic signal at Southeast 4th Street and South First Avenue. The updated regulations have taken what MACo and the League state are the ideal ways of addressing offsite improvements and put a structure in place with a formula that will take what the traffic study says and determine the subdivision's proportion. It may not always be appropriate to make an improvement at that time, especially with streets that need improvements in other locations of the same street. If a situation like that occurs, the formula will determine their monetary share of those overall improvements. If that becomes a condition of approval through the subdivision review process, there will be administration of how the money gets held at the city, but it does go back into those improvements and those improvements only. Lewis and Clark County is where this model was developed through multiple lawsuits. Legal counsel feels like it has been thought through several times and the holes have hopefully been shaken out. Monica thinks this will be a huge help for the Planning Board, as they know there are impacts on the roads but they do not know how to make the developers participate. This will provide some tools to do so through conditions of approval.

Monica explained that the City of Billings and Yellowstone County have been working on Suburban Subdivision Regulation for the areas immediately outside of the City of Billings. This basically creates a transitional area for reviewing a subdivision that is out at the outer limits of the planning area and more rural in nature, such as off Thiel Road or in River Ranch Subdivision. Curb and gutter and similar things are not as important there. Monica stated that Laurel's city limits have all sorts of jagged city limit boundaries and there are parcels that can be developed that are in between that will be surrounded on three sides by the city. To have total rural standards for that area does not make annexation easy, as the annexation policy says it has to be built to city standards in order for the city to annex. In the zoning area for the City of Laurel, there are tighter standards to conform to as it relates to road widths, storm water, drainage swales, curb and gutter, and sidewalks. With the incorporation of the Suburban Subdivision Regulations, these areas will not be starting at a total rural standard prior to annexation. That does not affect the council's consideration of subdivisions, as the County Commissioners will still be responsible for any subdivisions in that area. However, in the long term as the city grows and is able to annex, those areas will be in much better shape than some of the others currently in town.

Monica stated that both legal counsels, Dan Schwarz with Yellowstone County, and Sam Painter with the City of Laurel, reviewed drafts before the subdivision regulations went to the Planning Board. As far as legal counsel oversight, they are on board with the draft the council received. The County Commissioners also have to adopt this document, as these are joint subdivision regulations and it is important that both governing bodies adopt the same version. The subdivision regulations will be on the County Commissioners' agenda for discussion this Thursday and for adoption next Tuesday.

Chuck asked what would happen if a subdivision is evaluated according to these regulations and then the business changes at a later time.

Monica explained that the subdivision regulations only apply at the time the parcels are created. When a developer applies for a subdivision, the developer states their intent for use, whether it is industrial or commercial, etc. The Uniform Traffic Control Manual will be used and the traffic studies will be based on whatever use the developer says at the time. When it comes to businesses changing over time and how that can affect traffic, whether a business is allowable or not will be handled through zoning and if it is allowable in that zoning district at the time. If there are increases to traffic, these regulations will not affect them because these regulations are only used when the land itself is being divided.

Tom asked if the updated regulations will actually replace Chapter 16 in the Laurel Municipal Code.

Monica explained that all underlined text is new and everything that is struck will be deleted. Once the regulations are adopted, a clean version will go into the Laurel Municipal Code.

Mayor Mace thanked Monica for her presentation.

- Council Issues:
 - Discussion regarding combining Tree Board, Cemetery Commission and Park Board (Mayor Mace)

There was a lengthy discussion regarding combining the Tree Board, the Cemetery Commission and the Park Board.

Heidi stated that the city attorney is looking for some guidance from the mayor and council regarding this issue, as different legal aspects would be involved with different combinations. The public works director has talked to multiple boards about making these citizen advisory boards, taking all council members off, and having them report to the council through minutes to determine whether items need to be placed on the agenda.

There was discussion regarding the Park Board's recent discussion, the number of members to have on the joint board, the need for the chairpersons to meet to consider the item, the budgetary constraints for each of the entities, the discouragement of the current board members, the need for additional funds, the leases in Riverside Park, the need for the CAO and city attorney to attend the meeting of the chairpersons, the need to keep a joint meeting on track with agenda items, and the number of members on the current boards and commission.

Mayor Mace stated that there will be further discussion on the next council workshop agenda.

- Update on 2011 Yellowstone River flooding event

Heidi stated that the ice jam has not broken. A projected "tidal wave" is supposed to come through tomorrow that should break that jam. The river level is high and the force of the water that comes from Livingston comes down and pushes it all out. This is good and bad. The good is that the river level will immediately drop, the sand bags and work area will hopefully become exposed again, and the contractor can start working on the intake. The bad part is the destruction that could happen. There is concern about the water treatment plant, as it is a little exposed. The date of substantial completion is coming quickly, and the contractor needs five solid weeks in the river to complete the intake. They have been granted an extension to April 11th for substantial completion and the intake being online. The date was set for the safety of the workers, who cannot be in the river during runoff. Heidi stated that this project has to get done before fall and cannot go through another summer. Nothing can be done until the water recedes and they find out if there has been damage to the coffer dam and get the pumps back out there. They will not be back in the river until the jam breaks. The pipeline project has gone slower than anticipated. With the river elevation so high and the swamp, they have to dewater as they are installing the pipe, which makes the process take longer.

Other items

There were none.

Review of draft council agenda for February 21, 2017

There was no discussion.

Attendance at the February 21, 2017 council meeting

All council members present will attend.

Announcements

Rick asked regarding a \$27,000 grant for the park department for a master plan study.

Heidi explained that the city successfully obtained the Big Sky Trust Fund Grant to complete the master plan. With the master plan completed, the city could utilize the Exxon money that may be distributed to this area to implement a project. A brief meeting about the contract is scheduled tomorrow morning with Sue Taylor from Beartooth RC&D.

Rick stated that a meeting concerning the \$12 million is scheduled on Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. at the Red Lion.

Tom stated that there was no Nelson intake item on the agenda because there is nothing to discuss at this time.

Recognition of Employees

- Cheryll Lund 29 years of service on February 9th Clerk's Office
- Kyle Bryant 12 years of service on February 1st Police Officer
- Heidi Jensen 6 years of service on February 28th CAO
- Jarred Anglin 2 years of service on February 18th Police Officer

Mayor Mace recognized the list of employees for their service to the city.

The council workshop adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Cindy Allen
Council Secretary

NOTE: This meeting is open to the public. This meeting is for information and discussion of the Council for the listed workshop agenda items.