

Emergency Services Committee Meeting 06.25.2018

Members Present: Bruce McGee, Irv Wilke, Taryn Massa, Bill Mountsier, and Chief Rick Musson, and Chief Brent Peters.

Others Present: Clerk/Treasurer to take minutes, Judge Kerr, Councilmen Stokes

1. Bruce McGee called the meeting to order at 17:31. Bruce stated that Fire Chief Brent Peters received Firemen of the Year from the American Legion recently, and he wanted to congratulate Chief Peters on his award and thank him for his service to the community.

2. Public Input:

Jason Summers 304 Cedar Ave. #3, stated that he had attended many meetings this spring and was told to come back at the end of spring to discuss the ambulance issue. He stated just last week there were four missed ambulance calls. He stated that everything has been going well the last month or two until now. He's unsure if because it's summer now, people are busy. He will keep coming to these meetings and he will attend the Council meeting tomorrow to keep working on this situation.

3. Motion made by Irv to approve the minutes from the April 23, 2018 meeting, Bill seconded the motion, all in favor, motion passed 4-0.

4. Old Business:

Chief Brent Peters presented the Committee with an update on the ambulance. AMR has put together proposals to present but Chief Peters and the director of AMR have not been able to meet due to conflicting schedules. They are hoping to get together Friday and discuss the proposals. The call number has increased since replacing the head of the ambulance department. The Committee asked what Chief Peters meant by call numbers. Chief clarified that he meant the number of calls being responded to have gone up since the change in staff. Chief Peters stated that the staffing and overall morale have also increased since the change. He stated that this is only a short-term fix. The department has narrowed the search for a new billing company down to two candidates. The department will bring the top candidates information to Emergency Services for review and then present it to Council for approval. The department doesn't feel that they are receiving proper billing from the current provider. The hope is that switching to a new provider will generate appropriate funds over time and allow for the hiring of full time staff. The Committee asked about the missed calls recently. Chief Peters stated that under the current system there will always be missed calls. He stated that AMR came in and took care of those calls. Chief Peters stated that until we can hire full time staff things are not going to be perfect, but things are much better than they were. The Committee asked how things looked for the 4th of July. Chief Peters stated that the staffing looked good for the 4th of July and this was a busy day for the ambulance

department. The Committee asked if Chief Peters was hiring full time staff or volunteer staff, because there is a posting on Facebook about hiring staff. Chief Peters clarified that was volunteer staff for both the Fire Department and Ambulance Department. Chief Peters stated that there are five openings for the Fire Department and fourteen for the Ambulance Department. The Committee asked how many staff the Chief currently has. He stated that he currently has sixteen on the Ambulance Side.

Councilmen McGee stated that under additional old business the County Community Volunteer Program had some discussion surrounding it. He stated that the Council is looking for a recommendation from the Emergency Services Committee regarding the program. He then read into record an email from Judge Kerr, which is attached to these minutes. Councilmen McGee stated that the Emergency Services Committee did not meet in May and this may have prevented the presentation from Officer Valdez. Councilmen McGee apologized to Judge Kerr regarding the mistakes made during the last meeting. He then stated that both Judge Kerr and Councilmen Stokes were present and asked them to speak to the Committee. Councilmen Stokes stated that three years ago the program was brought to the council and he feels it is a great idea. It is a program for non-violent offenders allowing them to clean parks and streets. There are a lot of clean up needed in the parks, curbs that need to be painted yellow and it seems that the City doesn't have the man power to do it. He feels it would save the City money with little to no cost to the City for the program. A couple of years have gone by, with nothing done, and now that we have a new council he would like it brought forward again. He doesn't think this program was ever brought before the Council for a vote. It was presented and not talked about again after that. The Committee asked if Councilmen Stokes knew of any limitations as to what the individuals in the program could do. They cannot drive or operate any equipment. They can use basic hand tools to clean up the City. They can clean gutters of debris but not go down into manholes. There are quite a few curbs that are not painted yellow and this can create situations where the public doesn't understand they cannot park in certain locations. They could possibly clean up after the 4th of July. The Committee asked how the projects would be identified. Councilmen Stokes stated that having a list of projects the City would like done would be best. This is the first step in getting this program going and Councilmen Stokes would like to see this brought to Council for a vote. The Committee asked how often these individuals would come work at the City. Councilmen Stokes would like to see this program utilized as often as possible. Judge Kerr stated that this is jail diversion and any non-profit can take advantage of the program. The program is not for anyone that is violent, assaults or even DUI's. Each eight-hour shift is equal to two days in jail. There is a \$25.00 fee the individual pays to be in the program. The Sheriff's department does a background check on everyone before approving them for the program. The City would notify Officer Valdez how many people we would need and for what days. The Judge stated that the City would need to check regulations regarding painting curbs and check with the Unions to ensure there is no conflicts with union contracts. The Judge stated that she spoke with Officer Valdez regarding placing sandbags in City locations, because of the high water this year. Officer Valdez stated that they did perform this in Huntley. She stated that all the key players, like the Police Department, someone who knows the union contracts and the Committee need to be on board. She stated that there needs to be

a plan before it goes to Council. She stated that she doesn't think it should go any further, and everyone do a lot of work and try to get people on board if it's not going to be welcomed. She stated that all the City does is provide the tools to do the work. If the individual doesn't want to do the work, then that is noted, and they are in trouble with the jail. The City doesn't go after them. The Committee asked who would contact the local non-profits about the program. Judge Kerr stated that first the City needs to decide if this is something it wants to do. The Committee asked if any juveniles would be in the program. Judge Kerr stated no, it was only for 18 and older. Chief Musson stated that he feels painting curbs would be an excellent project for this program. He stated that the local jail has about 500 inmates on any given day and are overcrowded. Councilmen McGee stated that he would like to know what recommendation the Emergency Services Committee would like to make. Councilmen Mountsier made a motion to recommend the program to the Council, seconded by Councilmen Wilke, all in favor, motion passed 4-0.

5. New Business:

Councilmen Mountsier presented pictures, which are attached to these minutes, showing parking violations around the sports complex. The concerns are parking in sidewalks, on yellow curbs and in alleys. A fire truck could not get down the alley if a fire were to break out. Buses parking in the sidewalk prevent wheelchairs from using the ramps on either side. The Police Department is short staffed and does not have the man power available to write parking tickets during this time. Chief Musson stated that when the street is blocked off buses can park in the yellow but not in the crosswalk. Reserves can be used to write tickets if they are available during these events. Barricades are used but people move them and park where they want anyways. The City will continue to work to correct and improve the parking issues within the City.

6. Police Chief Musson stated that his department is looking at quite a bit of change over the next year. Detective Wells is no longer with the department and is now the Chief of Police at Red Lodge, Officer Pitts is going to be retiring in November and Captain Guy may be retiring. The department is looking to hire four new officers by the end of 2019. The fourth of July is a busy time for the department and no staff is allowed time off unless it is very important. The department is ready for the 4th, even though they are short staffed. The Committee asked if any of the new officers will be hired from the reserve pool. The Chief stated that none of the new officers will be hired from the reserves and explained the hiring process to the Committee.

Chief Peters stated that ticket sales are in full swing for the 4th of July. The last count is 28,000 shots for the fireworks display this year. Sometime in the middle of July the Fire Department will begin having day time staffing for wildland fire season. DNRC pays for the staffing as part of a county wide task force. This is to get quick response times to wildland fires. This is the 2nd year this staffing will be done and last year was great.

Chairmen McGee adjourned the meeting at 18:45.

Subject RE: Apology

From Kerr, Jean <JKerr@mt.gov>

To ward2b@laurel.mt.gov <ward2b@laurel.mt.gov>, Ward 3B <ward3b@laurel.mt.gov>

Cc City Mayor <citymayor@laurel.mt.gov>, <Ward4A@laurel.mt.gov>, <Ward1B@laurel.mt.gov>, <Ward3A@laurel.mt.gov>, <Ward1A@laurel.mt.gov>, <Ward4B@laurel.mt.gov>, <Ward2A@laurel.mt.gov>, Musson, Rick <rmusson@laurel.mt.gov>

Date 06.21.2018 1:29 PM



Dear Councilman McGee,

I wholly accept your apology.

I do believe communication has not been clear as to the direction this discussion/project should go.

Approximately 3 years ago, Yellowstone County Under Sheriff Evans and Sergeant Valdez asked me why Laurel did not take advantage of the Sheriff's Labor Detail program. I told them I did not know and I brought that information before the Council. It was met with a lot of resistance from the very beginning from the CAO, Department Heads and Council. Statements were made by Laurel personnel that were unfounded plus negative thoughts shared that completely undermined a proactive thought process to reap the benefits of this program. The YCSD presenters were surprised by Laurel's reaction. I felt it was our loss. I also knew that I was not willing to present this again as it was a waste of the officers' and my time and efforts.

In February, I was contacted by Councilman Stokes. He inquired if the Sheriff Labor Detail program was still in existence and I affirmed it was. He told me he was thinking about several projects that could be completed throughout the City by the SLD workers. These projects (example: picking up trash at the parks and dump site) are ones that tie up our City workers' time and take them away from tasks that require their expertise. I agreed but also told him I was tired of taking my time to do things that are met with closed minds when presented as possibilities to be considered, thus it would have to be his project and I would be a resource and team player. So, Councilman Stokes brought up the issue at a Council meeting and I was called upon to give information I have. It was then sent to Emergency Services Committee.

Since that time, I have been asked when this topic was coming forward to the Council. I had my budget meeting May 29, 2018 and after we were completed with the financial aspect of the meeting, I asked the Mayor about the presentation and he gave me the date for June 26, 2018 workshop to schedule Officer Valdez.

I assumed since the Mayor gave me that date, it would be put on the agenda since he and Bethany were sitting at the table with me when I was given the date.

I recently received your email about the June 25, 2018 meeting. I was taken by surprise. First, I am thinking, Sgt. Valdez will not want to present twice and be away from his family 2 nights in a row. Second, I did not understand why I was invited to address this project as it is Councilman Stokes'. I am willing to help the team but am not willing to carry the ball without back up any more. I started questioning things.....and then I read the minutes of the Emergency Services Meeting Minutes and was irritated to be mentioned under "New Business" plus I felt the comments about me were written in a 'snarky' fashion. I do not feel it is fair that anyone is a topic at a meeting if they are not invited to attend to give information, share in the conversation and defend themselves. I was not invited to that meeting and those minutes are public record. I was offended. Plus, your committee had your information wrong, this is Councilman Stokes' project not mine.

As far as utilizing everyone's time effectively and efficiently, I suggest a different approach to this opportunity. 1. At your meeting, the group identify projects that could be accomplished by these workers.

The SLD workers

can only be placed with the City and other non-profits such as the Lion's Club, school district, churches, etc.

I think we should also be asking City workers for ideas. Our workers have lots of great ideas when asked, and believe it or not, they are not trying to get out of work....they would like to do the work that requires their skills and get sick of picking up trash, getting rid of graffiti, etc. I know they are rarely consulted and yet a valuable resource of great ideas.

2. Ask the Union if any of the projects are in conflict with their contract. If so, they are scratched off the list.

3. Once projects are defined and the Council says "I think we should give this a try" then the questions you pose can be answered....such as how will it work with City staff? Any staff member is going to say "no" to change. Why put forth the effort to get a new program going if a directive does not need to be followed?

The staff should be part of the action plan.

4. Supervision: There is a 1 time training the Sgt. Valdez does for those who would supervise. I know that the

workers can be assigned a task and expected to do it and it is expected they are periodically checked on.

We can ask questions of the personnel at the Billings landfill, Family Services, and the other agencies who utilize them in Billings. A few phone calls can give us direction.

5. If a worker is non-compliant, not working well, walks off the job, etc. the supervisor makes note of it and the

report goes to Sgt Valdez. He then reports the violation to the corresponding court and the Court takes over and the worker goes to jail. This program is a privilege for the defendant. In fact, not all people qualify. They are prescreened and no violent offenders are even considered. Safety is a key word for all.

6. The worker pays all costs of the program. That includes their workman's comp coverage, lunch, water.

The

program loans them a safety vest for visibility. I cannot say for certain but I can foresee the only cost to the

City would be if we invest in some hand tools such as push brooms, shovels/scoop shovels, 5 gal buckets, etc. One of my questions I posed to Sgt Valdez was about transport to Laurel and back if they check in at YCDF. If they were allowed to check in at LPD or a similar cite in Laurel, transportation would not be an issue for Laurel residents in the program. I have wondered if our Laurel transport bus could be utilized or not. That would be part of the discussion/brainstorming.

7. Implementation starts when Laurel notifies the County we would like to be part of the program. The people who would be potential supervisors would have to attend the training session. We would also

have

to have things in place as to where they check in and transportation. I know the County would be willing to

have those conversations when we get that far. Keep in mind, if Community Hope, Lions Club, Rotory, Chamber of Commerce, Laurel School District, churches, etc get on board, they are the ones who supply their supervisor and tools for their projects. I doubt any other non-profits know of this program. We would

invite them to be part of the group.

8. This program has been going strong for over 3 years and is very successful. I am sure it will continue far into the future. It will continue in Laurel as long as we request workers to assist with projects that need hands to accomplish the tasks.

6. Why it might be a bad idea?
7. What exactly has to be done to implement the program?
8. How long it might last?
9. Where will work be preformed?
10. How soon can it start?

If Sgt. Valdez, Councilman Stokes, or Judge Kerr or anyone else would like to help answer these questions, I am sure the committee could then make a recommendation to the city council. Which could help resolve any issues.

Again I apologize to all for my mismanagement of this issue, and not being better able to make a presentation to the Emergency Services Committee.

Respectfully,

Bruce McGee

On 06.20.2018 3:21 PM, Kerr, Jean wrote:

Mr. Mayor,
When I was at that Council meeting, I thought that was where it was at. Then I was asked when it would be brought before the council and that is when I asked you when we were done with my budget meeting about a date and you told me the June 26 workshop. I asked if that was too late for July 5 clean-up and you told me yes but that it was a process the council was taking.
When I read minutes when my name is mentioned, especially if there is some sort of call to action, I want to be invited to the meeting to be part of the dialog rather than reading comments made by others about me.
At this point, I do not know if Sgt. Valdez is able to come on Monday, June 25 or not. I am only the contact for this and do not want the responsibility of this when I was asked to give information at a council meeting by Councilman Stokes.
I think it could be beneficial to the City if there was a thought process and a proactive plan. I would be willing to help "brainstorm" the issues. I am not willing to try to "sell" the program to anyone and do not appreciate the verbiage in the Emergency Services minutes as they were reported/written.
Judge Kerr

From: City Mayor [<mailto:citymayor@laurel.mt.gov>]

Sent: Wednesday, June 20, 2018 1:53 PM

To: Kerr, Jean <JKerr@mt.gov>; Ward 2B <ward2b@laurel.mt.gov>

Cc: Ward 4A <ward4a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1A <ward1a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4B <ward4b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2A <ward2a@laurel.mt.gov>; Musson, Rick <rmusson@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3B <ward3b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3A <ward3a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2B <ward2b@laurel.mt.gov>

Subject: RE: Emergency Services April minutes correction

I have asked that this issue be presented to and debated by the Emergency Services Committee. They would then either recommend that I place this on a workshop for the

council or not. This is not on the Council Workshop for next Tuesday. I see in the Council minutes, it was recommended that Emergency Services take up this question.

Thank you,

Tom Nelson
Laurel City Mayor
City Hall
PO Box 10
Laurel, MT 59044-0010
406.633.3809
citymayor@laurel.mt.gov



From: Kerr, Jean <JKerr@mt.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, June 20, 2018 1:00 PM
To: Ward 2B <ward2b@laurel.mt.gov>
Cc: Ward 4A <ward4a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1A <ward1a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4B <ward4b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2A <ward2a@laurel.mt.gov>; Rick Musson <rmusson@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3B <ward3b@laurel.mt.gov>; City Mayor <citymayor@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3A <ward3a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2B <ward2b@laurel.mt.gov>
Subject: Emergency Services April minutes correction

Dear Councilman McGee,

As I stated in response to your email, I am the messenger about Sheriff's Labor Detail. This was brought to the table again by Councilman Stokes.

The April Emergency Services minutes are incorrect ".....*Since Judge Kerr was the individual pushing this program she should be the one to gather and present additional information on the subject.*"

1. Councilman Stokes should be inserted instead of referencing me. I was asked by Councilman Stokes to speak about it at the Council meeting the last time this topic was revisited by the Council (about 2-3 months ago).

I sponsored the presentation about 2 years ago when YCSD asked me why Laurel did not take advantage of a program that offered labor, at no cost, to get things done around here and to allow the people who wronged the community to 'right the wrongs' plus divert from jail.

1. If there is resistance to this program, then should the discussion be jointly held between the Emergency Services Committee and the Council, with Councilman Stokes leading the discussion, to determine all the questions of who, what, where, how and why and a list of projects defined before asking Sgt. Valdez to give up his evening to make a presentation to a body of people who are asking him questions that he cannot answer. If this is the case, his presentation should be postponed until Laurel is ready for it. If this is the case, please let me know so I can contact

Sgt. Valdez and tell him his presentation is not needed for the Council workshop
scheduled on June 26, 2018.

Please advise.

Judge Kerr

I had a conversation with Councilman Stokes last night. He will be present at the meeting on Monday, June 25 at 5:30pm and presenting this topic. I agreed to come and offer the information I have. Sgt. Valdez has been called and cancelled as we do not feel Laurel is at the point in this process for his assistance. I believe the discussion should be on a positive note and we should brainstorm to identify projects that could be accomplished if we embrace this program. If we determine the City of Laurel would benefit from the work that could be accomplished, we would take the next step to get Council approval. There is no sense taking the time to go through the whole process of setting the program up if the Council does not give a nod of approval.

Thank you for your invitation to this meeting and I hope others in the community are invited to participate as well. 😊

Sincerely,
Judge Kerr

From: ward2b@laurel.mt.gov [mailto:ward2b@laurel.mt.gov]
Sent: Thursday, June 21, 2018 9:46 AM
To: Kerr, Jean <JKerr@mt.gov>; Ward 3B <ward3b@laurel.mt.gov>
Cc: City Mayor <citymayor@laurel.mt.gov>; Bill Mountsier (Ward4A@laurel.mt.gov) <Ward4A@laurel.mt.gov>; Emelie Eaton (Ward1B@laurel.mt.gov) <Ward1B@laurel.mt.gov>; Ervin Wilky (Ward3A@laurel.mt.gov) <Ward3A@laurel.mt.gov>; Kelly Sparks (Ward1A@laurel.mt.gov) <Ward1A@laurel.mt.gov>; Richard Close (Ward4B@laurel.mt.gov) <Ward4B@laurel.mt.gov>; Richard Herr (Ward2A@laurel.mt.gov) <Ward2A@laurel.mt.gov>; Musson, Rick <rmusson@laurel.mt.gov>
Subject: RE: Apology

Judge Kerr:

Please accept my apology for making such mistakes. I do not know what I am doing to obvious. Backing this up, to the hand off to the E-services committee, I think it was believed that in the April meeting the committee would have a recommendation for the council. That could not happen because the committee simply did not have enough information.

I apologize again for the message that you where pushing it was a misrepresentation. The committee did not meet in May, because of the conflict with Memorial Day. And I should have been on this much sooner, but did not get around to organizing our next meeting until late.

The mayor has asked (and I still do not understand why this is an Emergency Services discussion) that we as a committee make a recommendation to council.

It is on the Agenda, anyone is welcome to address the committee for or against the program. The questions that need answers as I see it, and no one seems to have the answers are:

1. How it will work with present city staff?
2. Who will supervise?
3. Who reports to who about what if anything?
4. What cost if any will the city have?
5. Why it is a good idea?





