

# City Council Work Session

5:30 PM  
Council Chambers  
March 16, 2020

**ATTENDANCE:**

**Mayor/Council** (please check)  Cole,  Shaw,  Yakawich,  Neese,  
 Ewalt,  Joy,  Choriki,  Purinton,  Ronning,  Boyett,  Brown  
**CM excused: ALL PRESENT**

**ADJOURN TIME:** 9:48 pm

Mayor Cole made an announcement regarding a critical blood shortage in Billings and encouraged people to donate. [www.Bloodhero.com](http://www.Bloodhero.com) will direct you to the nearest mobile donation point.

## Agenda

<b>TOPIC #1</b>	<b>Covid-19 Update</b>
<b>PRESENTER</b>	John Felton, Riverstone Health, Chief Health Officer
<b>NOTES/OUTCOME</b>	

- John Felton: gave an update on the statistics of cases in the US and worldwide. Testing is increasing, containment and mitigation plan.
- Council discussion on how health facilities were handling cases and how public should proceed if sick.
- **Public Comment:** None

<b>TOPIC #2</b>	<b>2020 Missing Sidewalk and Misc. Concrete Project</b>
<b>PRESENTER</b>	<b>David Mumford, Public Works Director</b>
<b>NOTES/OUTCOME</b>	

- Dave Mumford: PowerPoint overview of the program, and areas of missing sidewalks. Discussion with property owners going well.
- Ewalt: questions on how projects are handled in order to keep property owners happy and assessments low. Mumford: work extensively with owners.
- Neese: home owner already paid for Nutter and they are addressed on Aronson. Do they pay both? Mumford: typically no. Neese: questions about sidewalks. Mumford: existing 5 foot sidewalks will remain, trying to change to 7 foot sidewalks where possible. Don't recommend going with past standards for new construction. Administrative waivers allowed. Neese: Council can change policy.
- Ewalt: 7 foot sidewalks poured around fire hydrants, light poles, etc.? Mumford: yes, pour sidewalks around those as well as around trees.
- **Public Comment:** None

<b>TOPIC #3</b>	<b>W.O. 20-15: Wicks Lane Improvements</b>
<b>PRESENTER</b>	<b>Debi Meling, City Engineer</b>
<b>NOTES/OUTCOME</b>	

- Dave Mumford: City/MDT reconstruction of Wicks at 30% planning. Overview of improvements of Wicks, Bench Blvd and Hawthorne Lane. On street bike lanes to Kiwanis Trail with flashing beacon on street near trail.
- Brown: questions bike lane options being narrow? Mumford: standard width.
- Neese: kids use trail to school. Would like Kiwanis bike lane not on the street with traffic. Mumford: can look at options.
- Purinton: agree. Keep bike traffic away from vehicles.
- **Public Comment:** None

Recess at 7:15 pm. Reconvene at 7:25 pm.

<b>TOPIC #4</b>	<b>2020 Public Safety (PS) Mill Levy</b>
<b>PRESENTER</b>	Chris Kukulski, City Administrator
<b>NOTES/OUTCOME</b>	

- Chris Kukulski: abbreviated presentation to try to conform to Coronavirus recommendations. Overview of packet materials that were available online and to Council. Reviewed: City Public Safety needs, response times, staffing, etc. Police tactical implementation plan overview with costs. Code Enforcement Division increased investment amount and results. Legal Division (City Attorney) current caseloads, hiring schedule and costs for criminal division. Municipal Court current workload, outcomes and proposed investment. Fire Department staffing, stations, deferred maintenance, and new Fire Station 8 in the heights. Reviewed numbers and average home value cost of mill levy.
- Rich St. John, Police Chief: overview of department needs and costs.
- Ewalt: staffing level? St. John: 156 currently, on paper we are plus 2. 145 could be on street.
- Council discussion on current numbers and future needs. St. John: calls for service for 2019 are almost 95,000. Officers do not have time to be proactive which is needed. Can't make impact if they are only reacting.
- St. John: Domestic violence numbers are astronomical...hard to police when crime is happening in the home. Asking for additional Domestic Violence investigator and education programs.
- Mayor Cole: want to see more info on Facility plan for Criminal Justice department. How did City reach current numbers? Andy Zoeller, Finance Director: received estimate for Stillwater Building of \$28 million, took square footage and split between departments. Numbers could change with current market.
- Kukulski: don't want to convolute PS discussion with non PS items included in plan.

- Shaw: ready to vote yes tonight, great plan.
- Ronning: may need to adjust numbers lower to meet public needs. Can we see numbers without Fire, personnel? And spend next 5 years building up to Fire Station 8. Kukulski: that number is indicated in material.
- Joy: recession will not make PS needs decrease. Covid-19 isolation will negatively affect people and we need PS even more.
- Yakawich: would like to see mill levy cut down. Want to see a more realistic approach. What can be cut?
- Kukulski: team could bring back various numbers. Fire rating makes huge difference for business' and costs. Need to maintain our great rating. Can show what the ripple effect would be by cutting in different areas. 911 dispatch situation affects both Police and Fire, should be last area to cut.
- Purinton: questions on OSHA violations, ADA act deficiencies. Matt Hoppel, Assistant Fire Chief: department was approached with non-compliance ADA areas, issues have not been addressed due to money issues. Deferred maintenance has created problems.
- Choriki: mindset may be very different by summer, do not want to see another round of cuts. Need to look at language.
- Ronning: task forces can be very effective in helping crime reduction. Substance abuse coalitions help with mental health and work with Police department.
- Brown: keep hearing "make more cuts" but shouldn't Council give staff a number? Kukulski: would be helpful
- Mayor: look at language and show Council different levels of cuts. Send information early enough for review before next Work Session and allow public to access.
- **Public Comment:**
- Joe Holden, 316 North 26<sup>th</sup> Street, Billings, Montana, owner Stillwater Building: CTA Architects recently updated Facilities document and it is very well done and thoroughly researched.

<b>TOPIC #5</b>	<b>Covid-19 Impacts on City Procedures</b>
<b>PRESENTER</b>	Chris Kukulski, City Administrator
<b>NOTES/OUTCOME</b>	

- Kukulski: County Commissioners and City created a joint resolution-declaration of emergency signed by Mayor. Will be on consent agenda for approval. Will position City for State funding. Emergency plan already exists. Non-essential personnel - looking to minimize staff risks while still delivering services. Investigating options to separate essential employees. Future Council meetings options being researched. Televising is critical, Council Chambers and School Board meeting room only options for Community 7.
- Council discussion about closure options and legality issues. Questions about various departments and City procedures.

- Kukulski: Public transit will be discussed. City website will have updates information. Working with Legal Department and County Health Officer. Working on Emergency Declaration that will be brought forward to Council.
- **Public Comment:** None

<b>TOPIC #6</b>	<b>Council Discussion</b>
<b>PRESENTER</b>	
<b>NOTES/OUTCOME</b>	

- Choriki: would like Legal Department to look into a moratorium on evictions. Brent Brooks, City Attorney: will research and get back to Council.
- Ronning: City's authority on water bill shut off, etc. Kukulski: believe City has authority, can research and communicate with Council.

<b>TOPIC #7</b>	<b>Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda</b>
<b>PRESENTER</b>	
<b>NOTES/OUTCOME</b>	

- None