

# City Council Work Session

5:30 PM  
Virtual Meeting  
May 18, 2020

**ATTENDANCE:**

**Mayor/Council** (please check) ✓ Cole, ✓ Shaw, ✓ Yakawich, ✓ Neese,  
✓ Ewalt, ✓ Joy, ✓ Choriki, ✓ Purinton, ✓ Ronning, ✓ Boyett, ✓ Brown (Joined the meeting at 5:35 PM)

**CM excused:**

**ADJOURN TIME: 10:44 PM**

## Agenda

<b>TOPIC #1</b>	<b>COVID-19 Update – Cancelled</b>
<b>PRESENTER</b>	

- Chris Kukulski, City Administrator: 14 days into slow reopening, things are going well. John Felton will give update next week.
- **Public Comment** - None

<b>TOPIC #2A</b>	<b>Budget Presentation – Aviation and MET</b>
<b>PRESENTER</b>	Kevin Ploehn, Aviation and MET Director

- Kevin Ploehn – Last year Billings set a record high for passenger rates at the airport. This year due to COVID will likely be an all-time low. New freight/cargo record. Prior to Covid 19 - had secured additional flights for summer. Talked about budget being perhaps \$2 million over in the operating revenues because the budget had to be submitted before the COVID outcome could be anticipated. Reviewed capital revenue sources, i.e. Federal Grants, Passenger Facility Chargers, Customer Facility Charges and Airport Bond Revenue. Airport Capital Projects: replace parking attendant booths, CCTV terminal front and interior cameras, terminal server and access control server, replace Chevy 1500 (Building Maintenance) and 42" walker mover, replace west airfield operations road. Construction funding - \$60 million total project amount. Airport Terminal Expansion – reasons to not move forward and reasons to move forward. MET accomplishments and challenges overview. Replacing 9 buses.
- Mayor: decontamination light for handrails, retrofit facility to meet new Covid standards? Ploehn: currently seeing some push for standardization in airports.
- Choriki: airport going to need help financially due to lease bankruptcies, etc.? Kevin: not an issue yet. May have enough money to cover with CARE Act money, grants etc.
- Neese: economy dips, airlines go bankrupt...how will City handle?

- Kevin: do not foresee City having issues. Airport will be able to pay bonds, maintaining coverage may be challenge.
- Purinton: increased freight service issue?
- Kevin: have a lot of room for planes, UPS has outgrown facility. Foresee needing to grow in a few years.
- Mayor: increased ridership due to free fares?
- Kevin: yes, it has increased from 650-700 to about 900 riders.
- Brown: Missoula doesn't charge riders, how?
- Kevin: Agreement with U of M to cover costs.
- Ewalt: does \$60 million cover all costs of expansion?
- Kevin: yes, includes some nice features also.
- Choriki: stockpile fuel while prices are low?
- Kevin: yes, keeping all tanks full.
- Purinton: free ridership for elderly etc.?
- Kevin: MSU-B and elderly have reduced ticket price. Occasional events have free ridership.

<b>TOPIC #2B</b>	<b>Budget Presentation – Information Technology</b>
<b>PRESENTER</b>	David Watterson, IT Director

- David Watterson – Role is to bring the organization into modern technology. Support a vast amount of services, 150 physical and virtualized servers. Support City's website and Public Safety. Budget overview, revenues below expenses for FY 2020. IT expenditures, telecom, Zoom, cyber security increases, new phone system.
- Brown: more demand due to working from home, Zoom, etc. Reserves available to cover capital?
- David: have a lot of liability in reserves, make adjustments as needed, example: hardware run an extra year, making City mobile was inexpensive dues to have infrastructure in place.
- Ronning: auto attendant frustrating. Need to be able to talk to a human being.
- David: met with each department and some chose auto attendant and some did not. Trying to balance efficiency with customer service.
- Neese: chat capability on website?
- David: no, not currently.
- Ewalt: cyber security precautions in case of breech?
- David: Back up tapes, system complex, encrypted. Servers are virtual.
- Purinton: grants available for City to update security?
- David: most grants are for policy, procedures and planning.
- Joy: GIS map on website is excellent.
- Kukulski: thought we had been hacked last year. Went through the whole process of an actual breech, which was helpful. Systems in place worked.

<b>TOPIC #2C</b>	<b>Budget Presentation – Planning and Community Services</b>
<b>PRESENTER</b>	Wyeth Friday, Planning Director Monica Plecker, Planning Manager Brenda Beckett, Community Services Manager Brian Anderson, Building Division

- Wyeth Friday: explains there are 4 divisions that inspect all City and County residential and commercial projects. Code Enforcement, Community Development, Building and City/County Planning. Overview of expenditures and numbers over the last few years, revenue source by division, reserve status, planning division fee changes for FY21-22, PSCD challenges and Covid responses.
- Mayor: cost of services study?
- Wyeth: Project Recode current focus, but continuing discussions.
- Purinton: last Growth Policy 2016, when will next one be? West end Neighborhood master plan funding?
- Wyeth: growth policy every 5 years – 2022 proposal. Looking at funding challenges on West end plan to find funding options.
- Purinton: how to find reserves in each department?
- Andy Zoeller, Finance Director: top of page for each fund. Budget book.
- Chris Kukulski, City Administrator: funding for master plans is found by looking in the budgets.
- Choriki: additional staff to cover growth plans?
- Wyeth: staff plays a big role, combination of some outside help with staff. Starter planner position could help planners have time for 5-year processes.
- **Public Comment:** None

**Mayor Cole called for recess at 7:44 PM**

**Mayor Cole called the meeting back to order at 7:50 PM**

<b>TOPIC #3</b>	<b>Trust for Public Land</b>
<b>PRESENTER</b>	Mike Whitaker, Parks, Recreation and Public Lands Director David Weinstein, Western Conservation Finance Director Trust for Public Land

- Mike Whitaker: Introduced David Weinstein, Western Conservation Finance Director for Trust for Public Land. Plays a role in design and passing legislative measures.
- David Weinstein: Conservation presentation, 5-6 ballots passed since March. Uncertain if it is due to renewed focus on outdoors or economic implications. Critical steps for successful ballot measure: Terrific ballot language, elected

leadership, community support, and demonstratable need. Climate smart solutions.

- Mayor: funding?
- David: not seeking funding. Organization receives gifts and funding, non-binding letter and not seeking numeration. Either party may exit at any time.
- Purinton: money does not come in to play until ballot?
- David: non lobby work ends when measure is recommended at State level. Once Legislation level is reached, funding will be needed.
- Shaw: average timeline for a City our size, estimate of cost of campaign, campaign being project based versus dollar?
- David: 1 year is a good timeframe. campaign costs - \$50,000-\$100,000. No difference between project based or dollar based.
- Neese: what does Parks envision this being used for?
- Mike Whitaker: 2017 comp plan identified many needs in Parks system. Life cycle replacements and new development.
- Mayor: sign technical assistance letter but wait to proceed?
- David: no problem.
- Council discussed Parks department plans, needs, how data collected would be used,
- **Public Comment:**
- **Tom Ruppis, Parks Board Chair:** encouraged Council to move forward with having the Mayor sign the letter and have David Weinstein work toward parks funding and projects. He also stated it was important for this to be run as a community influenced process.
- Choriki made a motion directing staff to finalize the technical assistance letter and send it to the Western Conservation Finance Director Trust for Public Land seconded by CM Shaw. Motion was unanimously approved.

<b>TOPIC #4</b>	<b>Discuss Possible Public Safety (PS) Mill Levy Charter Amendments and Changes to Park Funding</b>
<b>PRESENTER</b>	Chris Kukulski, City Administrator Brent Brooks, City Attorney

- Chris Kukulski: first reading must be done by June 8. Draft of replace 2004 PS levy with 2020 levy. Language has not been vetted by experts yet. Meets legal requirements, staff will continue to work on language. Replacing Park District 1 (PD1) with mill levy option emailed late afternoon to Council.
- Mayor: focus on repeal and replace PS 2 first and PD 1 later.
- Brown: Chamber supportive?
- Chris: attended Chamber meeting and they were hesitant to fully support.
- Mayor: read it as a polite opposition.
- Choriki: talked with constituents and no one thought this was a good idea to do the Public Safety Mill Levy or anything with the Parks.
- Mayor: City Attorney's office or criminal department included?

- Chris: tried to replicate 2004 language to avoid confusion, could point out departments directly involved.
- Brent Brooks, City Attorney: intended to include City Attorney's office, prosecution, code enforcement, etc.
- Purinton: It is important to add code enforcement and additional prosecution and be transparent. Keep our priorities. Not complicated.
- Brown: reminded it is a stop gap for a year.
- Boyett: Need PS2 to be fixed. PD1 will be confusing for constituents.
- Ronning: not complicated. If City does not go forward (do nothing) what happens to budget?
- Chris: based on proposed budget, reserve level would fall below minimum requirement by 4<sup>th</sup> quarter.
- Ronning: People demanding safer downtown, etc., Chamber needs to understand what doing nothing will mean to City. Staff, programs, departments will have to be eliminated.
- Council discussed ballot language, budget effects, community education, Parks department mill levy.
- Mayor: Council consensus on moving forward with repeal and replace PS2 ballot? Majority approved.
- A committee was formed:
  - Mayor Cole
  - Neese
  - Ewalt
  - Ronning
- Choriki: no reason to repeal PD1, mill levy for Parks good idea, need to address how much money, contribution to Capital fund, trails, etc.
- Neese: Council needs to provide policy to Parks and how to spend money.
- Brent: rules and procedures reminder that subcommittees need to be formed during Regular Council meetings and motions during work sessions could only be to direct staff.
- Chris: made an informal request and asked for help from Mayor Cole, CM Ronning and CM Neese.
- Council discussed the legal options available to shift costs from Park District 1 or move it into Parks general fund and the need for public participation through a vote.
- Chris: Council had the authority to choose how assessment districts were handled.
- Mayor: mill levy would have to be higher than Park District 1.
- Mayor: asked the process of budget approval before knowing mill levy vote.
- Chris: mill levy set late September and would allow time for Council to levy mills through the budget.

- **Public Comment:**
- **Tom Rupsis, 105 Legends Way, Billings, Montana:** stated the Parks Board was having a special meeting on Wednesday to discuss the potential Parks mill levy, which seemed like a back door Public Safety increase through manipulation of the Parks budget.
- **Pam Ellis, 2000 Outlook Drive, Billings, Montana:** stated there was a disconnect in making decisions during meetings, Council has desire to hold power and not include public in decisions.
- **Anna O'Donnell, 131 Avenue B, Billings, Montana:** stated Council needed to get a feel from the community and was missing an opportunity to hear from the public.
- Ewalt: motion to send discussion to study group, seconded by CM Boyett.
- Purinton: special meeting by Council is an option.
- Shaw: support Parks and heard David Weinstein say it would take a year to educate.
- Choriki: do not have a clear consensus from Council and study group was not for PD1 issue.
- Brown: agree with Choriki.
- Ronning: do not support elimination of PD1.
- Motion to refer PD1 drafting issue to study group APPROVED: Councilmember's Ronning, Shaw, Choriki, Joy and Mayor opposed.
- Ronning: withdrew from study group
- Mayor: motion to have committee look at language for a Park mill levy (approximately the same as current budget) that does not include repealing PD1, seconded by CM Choriki.
- Joy: Councilmembers have expressed they do not support repeal of PD1.
- Brown: PD1 can be set at whatever amount Council decides?
- Mayor: correct.
- Neese: will not support, work on issue now to set Parks up for success. Can assess through PD1 if mill levy fails.
- Shaw: oppose Parks mill levy because it is a barrier against Public Safety.
- Motion FAILED 4-7, Boyett, Ewalt, Yak, Shaw, Purinton, Neese and Brown opposed.
- Choriki: motion to drop consideration of a Parks mill levy for this fiscal year, but continue to research for a later date, seconded by CM Joy.
- Ewalt: not a Parks vote, Public Safety (PS) vote. End effect will benefit PS.
- Motion FAILED 5-6, Ewalt, Boyett, Purinton, Yakawich, Neese and Brown opposed.
- Administrative committee formed to include Neese, Choriki and Mayor Cole. Meeting tomorrow at 2:00 pm.

<b>TOPIC #5</b>	<b>Council Discussion</b>
<b>PRESENTER</b>	

- None

<b>TOPIC #6</b>	<b>Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda</b>
<b>PRESENTER</b>	

- None