

City Council Work Session

5:30 PM
Council Chambers
August 3, 2020

ATTENDANCE:

Mayor/Council (please check) ✓ Cole, ✓ Shaw, ✓ Yakawich, ✓ Neese,
✓ Ewalt, ✓ Joy, ✓ Choriki, ✓ Purinton, ✓ Ronning, ✓ Boyett, ✓ Brown
CM excused: NONE

ADJOURN TIME: 8:22 PM

Agenda

TOPIC #1	COVID-19 Update by Unified Incident Command
PRESENTER	John Felton, Yellowstone County Health Officer
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- John Felton: Positive numbers are all over the place with large numbers on some days and smaller numbers on other days. Watching the region carefully. Yellowstone 15-18 cases per day. Big Horn County is significantly higher per capita. Hospitalizations are up 45 patients, 7 in ICU and 4 on ventilators in Yellowstone County hospitals. 2/3 of hospitalizations are in Yellowstone County; 27 deaths in Yellowstone County. 11 deaths in Big Horn County. Quest Diagnostics has now caught up with testing results. MaCo is in North Carolina and they are running 1,000 tests a day for Montana. Bozeman's university labs will do 500 tests per day and are about ready to begin. Billings Clinic, Bozeman health and Kalispell Regional will do tests for the state. Riverstone has a site at the Shrine. That site has stopped testing for a day to reorganize. Testing numbers have decreased. Future surveillance -- a bit of gun shy, people are anxious to get the results and don't like waiting 2 weeks to get them back so they become more disruptive to testing staff. Governor is leaving reopening and returning to schools plans to the school. Talking about reducing risk, not eliminating risk for schools. School District #2 is offering remote learning – 30% will take up on that which will space those children out within the schools. High school sports are still being considered and tomorrow there will more conversations about it. School starts in 3 weeks. He stated his staff has been working full strength and getting tired because they have been vigilant for 5 months.
- Purinton: asked if Riverstone ever asks COVID patients to waive their HIPPA rights.
- Felton: No, a patient can disclose on their own, and when Riverstone explained isolation and quarantining. Isolate the ill and quarantine the well.

- Kevin Iffland, Assistant City Administrator: preparing press release regarding changes to City Hall due to 3 positive COVID cases.
- **Public Comment:** NONE

TOPIC #2	Billings TrailNet – Skyline Trail Update
PRESENTER	Kristi Drake, Billings TrailNet, Executive Director
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Kristi Drake: Gave a presentation of TrailNet vision and mission. Overview of bicycle plan for the Billings Urban Transportation Planning Area, trail segment contributions. She showed a map of existing trails and the Marathon Loop, and plans for the Highway 3 corridor study, and signage additions. Stated it took Billings TrailNet 2 years and \$120,00 in donations to engineer and build the first 1,000 feet of Skyline Trail. At that rate it would take 250 years to complete. Asked Council to consider funding.
- Mayor Cole: clarify ownership of Highway 3? Kristi: MDT right of way and MDT is not building more trails or accepting grants.
- Scott Walker: funding dried up. BUILD grant may be opportunity. Partnerships are important.
- Shaw: safe routes to school. Kristi: TrailNet can only do so much. City and community could help.
- Neese: Marathon Loop to include heights? Kristi: could incorporate heights. Marathon means 26.2, but could come up with something.
- Neese: Kiwanis trail could connect with Marathon.
- Joy: Bike share, scooter company rentals could be great funding source.
- **Public Comment:**
- **Don Christensen, President of Billings TrailNet, 2222 Virginia Lane, Billings, Montana,** gave his support for future funding and encouraged Council to continue its support for the trails system.
- **Kevin Oddenthal, 2416 Avalon, Billings, Montana,** stated he was involved with the Billings TrailNet. Trail use has doubled in 2020, Skyline Trail priority and encourage Council to become a funding source.
- **Ty Schmeckle, 134 Avenue C, Billings, Montana, Billings TrailNet secretary,** trail systems help people commute to work and encourage public funding.
- **Shelly Mann, 1006 Mary Street, Billings, Montana,** stated she was a new member of Billings TrailNet and stated she was amazed with all that the organization had done. She spoke about her personal use.
- **Neese:** funding program options, such as bike tax? **Kristi:** bike registration discussion, but foot traffic higher and seems unfair, administration costs high.

TOPIC #3	2021 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
PRESENTER	Scott Walker, Transportation Planner Rusty Logan, MET Transit Manager
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Scott Walker: Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) must be established in communities over 50,000 to do transportation planning and be eligible for federal transportation planning funds. The Work Program for the MPO is required to be revised and adopted annually by the Policy Coordination Committee (PCC). Overview of work elements, funding sources, Planning Department Fees for Billings and Yellowstone County, Yellowstone County Mill and Federal funds. Funding summary and sources for FY2021. 2020 priorities: Bike/Scooter Share Impact Study, North Bypass Corridor Study, 5th Avenue Corridor Feasibility Study, Complete Inner Belt Loop Corridor Study, Complete Wayfinding Signage Plan, Traffic Counter Replacement, Downtown Traffic Circulation, Public Participation and County Growth Policy Update. Transit section: The Transit section of the UPWP is also structured into separate elements with specific activities and functions outlined within each element
- As with PL funds, reimbursement of funds occurs quarterly; amounts will differ for each quarter based upon the activities undertaken and eligible hours spent per element.
- Federal funding is provided via FTA Section 5303 for multimodal transportation planning in metropolitan areas. Funds are apportioned via a formula including factors such as urbanized area population. Local match is provided through local transportation mills, transit fares, advertising revenue, and other applicable sources.
- Rusty Logan: Transit presentation
- Transit 2020 Highlights: Policy updates in response to 2019 FTA Triennial Review process.
- Community Wide Transit Survey
- Operational analysis modeling future transit
- Developed contingencies for COVID
- Significant technology updates
- Significant revision to the Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan
- Expanded and modified agreements for increased service to senior/disability pop.
- Rusty Logan: Transit 2021 Highlights: Public Transit Agency Safety Plan
- Transit Development Plan/Strategic Plan considering both fixed-route and paratransit
- Master Marketing Plan/Strategy
- Grant development and application
- Fixed-route overhaul and designated stop assessment
- Continue investigation of service expansion
- Continue developing partnerships via Coordination group and other venues

- Council: how is transit dealing with Covid? Rusty: Driver buffer zone, acrylic barriers being installed, busses cleaned regularly throughout drivers shifts and deep clean when off routes, mandatory masks (FEMA paid for)
- Ronning: green energy research, other cities (Park City, Utah)? Free public transportation options, like Missoula? Rusty: electric buses have shorter ranges-long routes for Billings. Researching solar options, watching developments. Researching free fare options, City needs fares for revenue.
- Neese: how are studies used? Inner Belt Loop (IBL) and North Bypass studies. Scott: recommendations included in studies, Public Works currently working on IBL. North Bypass study working with MDT. Both projects move slowly. Land use, traffic safety, Council involved, County Commissioners, etc.
- Ewalt: \$2.6 million in administrative costs? Scott: Correct.
- Ewalt: why was the round about placed at 312 and 9 mile? Scott: connection to 5 mile and 312 without using highway 87 intersection. Scott: Will allow huge increase in commerce and homes in the next 5 years.
- Choriki: enough staff for both projects? Scott: yes, staffed for both from a planning stand point. Construction is a different part.
- Wyeth Friday, Planning Director: part of IBL recommendations is inner governmental cooperation with County Commissioners, Lockwood, Council will play significant role.
- **Public Comment: NONE**

TOPIC 4#	Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Mayor Cole: there had been emails to Council about travel trailers on the streets, particularly in the Josephine Crossing area.
- Purinton: don't think there should be exceptions to policy.
- Kevin Iffland, Assistant City Administrator: recreational campers loading/unloading – camper hooked to a vehicle allowed on street for up to 5 days. Unhooked is a violation. Same for a motorized RV. Seeing some recreational campers on streets for quarantine purposes.
- Complaint driven and Code Enforcement attends to complaints received. Give Code Enforcement some discretion for medical personnel who are quarantining from COVID in a camper.
- Wyeth Friday, Planning Director: 450 complaints to RVs and camper trailers. Quite a bit more than last year. If the trailer or RV is in the private driveway or on a pad in the back, can have someone camp in it up to 5 days. Camping in RV on street handled by law enforcement for safety issues. If code enforcement is called to one problem and they see several others on the same street, they will address all of them on that street. Addressing on a case by case basis, work with people. Traffic vision issues, cords or pipes or hoses are running across streets and sidewalks or blocking vision on the street, those will need to be addressed. Only about 10 are COVID complaints.

- Brent Brooks, City Attorney: Similar to how Code Enforcement investigates abandoned structures. They work with the property owners. Ordinance cannot be suspended, but Code Enforcement can operate with discretion on a case-by-case basis.
- Choriki: list of safety issues as to why not allowed? Wyeth: clear vision, street construction issues, cords and hoses on sidewalks, Public Safety challenges.
- Purinton: work truck and trailers allowed? Wyeth: yes, allowable but there are weight limits. Occasionally see issues and handle case by case. Purinton: allow medical staff to use RV's for quarantine? Kevin: researching options.
- Neese: how are violations handled? Wyeth: use to place stickers on RV but were damaging, now \$10 ticket with flyer of rules. Neese: Council needs to direct staff how to handle violations. Mayor could do emergency ordinance.
- Joy: Code Enforcement uses discretion and are experienced, allow them to handle situations.
- Brown: options? Wyeth: currently situations being handled with education and information - has been working.
- Boyett: no need to micromanage Code Enforcement. Let them do their job.
- Choriki: agree, staff will let us know if they have concerns.
- Shaw: agree, do not need to micromanage staff. If ordinance needs to be addressed, have staff bring back recommendations.
- Ronning: agree, Code Enforcement does great job. Allow them authority to do their job.
- Ewalt: \$10 fine allows them how much time to move trailer? Wyeth: work with court to verify payment, and follow up to verify it has been handled.
- Neese: Council photo? Kevin: uncertain how to proceed with Covid.
- **Public Comment:**
- **Kevin Nelson, 4235 Bruce Avenue, Billings, Montana:** South Billings Urban Renewal meeting - *Yellowstone County News* (YCN) states 2 different dates. Website and minutes not kept up to date. Also, Council meetings not always on Community 7.
- Wyeth: will check on notices with YCN and website. Not a City website.
- Denise Bohlman, City Clerk: is Council meeting is same night as School Board meeting, public can view on channel 8 or internet.
- Ronning: Clerk's office does great job stating how to view Council meetings above beginning of agenda. Also shows how to find meetings on internet.
- Brown: need cable to get channel 8? Denise Bohlman: yes. Website for Community 7. Kevin: Facebook Live and Youtube channel is option.