

City Council Work Session

5:30 PM
Virtual Meeting held via Zoom
January 4, 2021

ATTENDANCE:

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

ADJOURN TIME: 8:49 PM

Agenda

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

- **John Felton:** He gave the current numbers and stated we are back down to the September numbers and numbers were decreasing in Yellowstone County. Good progress made. First rounds of vaccinations have made good progress. Cannot vaccinate people in large numbers due to the infection rate of the virus. There is a fair number of reactions coming with the vaccinations, so they are being scheduled rather than just letting everyone come at once. It takes 2 shots, and the supplies are uncertain and limited. Gov. Gianforte will be announcing his directives soon.
- General Council discussion and questions.
- **Public Comment:**
- None

TOPIC #2	Beartooth RC & D Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
PRESENTER	Joel Bertolino, Executive Director; Steve Simonson, Economic Development Director;
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- **Joel Bertolino:** serve 5 counties and explained the MOU and funding assistance to various businesses.
- **Steve Simonson:** spoke of work on helping economic recovery, funding from EDA, and an affordable housing project they were working on.
- General Council questions and discussion on: South Side grocery store, grant funding for parks, deferral loans, revolving loan funds

- **Public Comment:**
- None

TOPIC #3	Yellowstone County Continuum of Care (CoC) – Emergency Low Barrier Shelter
PRESENTER	Kody Christensen-Linton, Downtown Billings Alliance, Resource Outreach Coordinator; Patti Webster, CoC Chair; Craig Barthel, Off the Streets
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Kody Christensen-Linton, spoke of the timeline to where they were currently with the Quarantine and Isolation (Q & I) site, operational challenges, temporary facility at Western Inn, 3311 2nd Ave. N. He gave an overview of the Operational Plan for the Covid Q/I site and the low barrier emergency shelter. He reviewed the Memorandum of Agreement and participants involved.
- Craig Barthel, gave an overview of accomplishments and partners involved.
- General Council questions and discussion.
- Patti Webster, spoke of the intention of the program to be temporary, guests served, funding options, and FEMA isolation requirements. She spoke of the Crisis Center evaluation with referrals to the appropriate programs.
- Council continued questions and discussion. Spoke of the role of Montana Rescue Mission (MRM) and the new campus and St Vincent De Paul.
- **Public Comment:**
- Oksana Sheehan, MRM Program Director, Billings, MT, spoke of the services offered by MRM.
- Russ Fagg, 3053 Thousand Oaks, Billings, MT, indicated they had not seen issues with the emergency shelter in the neighborhood. He spoke of costs and concern with the future plans for funding.
- Catherine Card, 2815 4th Ave. S., Billings, MT, spoke of various programs to help the community.
- Matt Lundgren, MRM, Billings, MT, spoke of services offered by MRM. He spoke of plans for the unified campus.

Recess: 7:45 PM

Reconvene: 7:52 PM

TOPIC #4	Castle Rock Park Master Plan
PRESENTER	Michael Whitaker, Parks, Recreation and Public Lands Director; Dayton Rush, Cushing Terrell; Stephanie Donovan; Wayne Freeman, Landscaper
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Michael Whitaker: introduced the consultants involved in the master plan. Dayton Rush gave an overview of public engagement meetings and played a recap video of the plans for Castlerock Park.
- General Council questions and discussion: upcoming projects, maintenance concerns, funding sources, partnerships and fundraising opportunities, and the Parks Foundation. They spoke of public and private donations.
- Kevin Iffland, Assistant City Administrator, explained the role of the Parks Foundation.
- **Public Comment:**
- **Jennifer Owen, Heights Task Force, Billings, MT**, spoke of the process of the Castle Rock Master plan. She said the Parks and Recreation Board had been very helpful during the process.

TOPIC #5	Council Discussion
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Joy – water conservation grants helpful.
- Ronning – Rocky Mountain Tribal Council teepee project meaningful in the community. Has press been invited to Zoom Council meetings? Mayor – press has not asked for special access, can watch meetings.
- Mayor – need Public Information Officer, Chief Development officer could fill multiple roles.

TOPIC #6	Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- **Public Comment:**
- None