



VISION STATEMENT:
"The Magic City: A diverse,
welcoming community
where people prosper and
business succeeds."

**WORK SESSION
JUNE 6, 2022**

COUNCIL CHAMBERS

5:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Cole

Present: Councilmember Kendra Shaw, Ward I
Councilmember Ed Gulick, Ward I
Councilmember Roy Neese, Ward II
Councilmember Jennifer Owen, Ward II
Councilmember Denise Joy, Ward III
Councilmember Danny Choriki, Ward III
Councilmember Daniel Tidswell, Ward IV VIA ZOOM
Councilmember Pam Purinton, Ward IV
Councilmember Mike Boyett, Ward V
Councilmember Tom Rupsis, Ward V
Mayor William Cole

Absent/
Excused: All present

Staff
Present: Chris Kukulski, City Administrator
Kevin Iffland, Assistant City Administrator
Gina Dahl, City Attorney
Karen Tracey, Assistant City Attorney
Andy Zoeller, Finance Director

Rich St. John, Police Chief, spoke on crime over the last week and status of some of the events that had occurred. He made assurances that the Police department was focused on reducing violent crimes. Council spoke of Police responses and policies.

1. Sober Living Discussion.

Karen Tracy, Assistant City Attorney, gave an overview of sober living facilities, statistics for the City. She spoke of the legal statutes regarding the Fair Housing Act and discrimination issues. She reviewed the policies for various cities, stakeholders involved, upcoming challenges, potential benefits of capping number of non-related occupants. She summarized with the City's options: cannot regulate sober living homes based on protected class; may amend City Code definition of household/family to cap number of unrelated person in a home; and support legislature's effort to enact legislation.

Council discussed the definition of related versus non-related, accreditation of sober living housing, the City's legal ability to set standards of sober living businesses, housing quality standards, conditional use permit options, and tracking calls for emergency services.

Wyeth Friday, Planning Director, indicated the state had not adopted minimum housing standards which made it difficult for the City to adopt a maintenance code.

Ms. Tracy discussed the issue with setting a limit to the number of people allowed to live together, rental properties, staffing, substance abuse determination.

Gina Dahl, City Attorney, spoke of the definition of sober living housing and how City Code applied.

Katie Weston, MT Department of Corrections, spoke of the accreditation process, staffing and the DOC's role.

Recess at 7:25 pm. Reconvene at 7:35 pm.

Public Comment:

- **Terri Todd, 135 Monarch Street, Billings, MT**, stated she was a sober homeowner/operator and spoke of what the homes provided and how the City could help.
- **Sue Taylor, Native American Health Development Organization**, spoke of the accreditation process and indicated they were available for questions and as a resource.
- **Catherine Card, 2815 4th Avenue South, Billings, MT**, spoke about sober living houses and people that lived in them had a "membership". She spoke of the process of removal and protection.
- **Colin Wilson, Step Inc. Recovery Manager**, spoke of the various Step homes and the accreditation process.
- **Frank Ewalt, 2131 Phoebe Drive, Billings, MT**, spoke of DOC supervision and violent crime issues.

There was no further public comment.

Council indicated they wanted staff to: continue collecting data on crime impacts, other models being used, and engage public in discussions.

2. Budget Wrap-Up.

Andy Zoeller, Finance Director, gave an overview of the FY 23 Budget proposal, the Council amendment process, proposed amendments, Council direction, proposed changes by staff and Council proposed changes. He reviewed the Capital Improvements Projects (CIP), changes from the CIP, inflation impacts, and budgeted revenues.

Council discussed their proposed amendments, mental health, and substance abuse mills.

Chris Kukulski, City Attorney, indicated Council could create a subcommittee on how they wanted the mills and marijuana funds to be used.

Councilmember Joy discussed how the City supervised nonprofits.

Council discussed marijuana tax and how the City would need to adjust to possible changes.

Mayor Cole moved to increase the amount of capital replacement funds to include 2 mobile response vehicles, seconded by Councilmember Boyett. \$100k authority to ERP fund (Unanimous Approval)

- **Jason Banfield, Assistant Fire Chief of EMS**, gave an overview of the program needs and role the mobile response units would play.
- **Kristin Lundgren, Substance Abuse Connect Director**, spoke of cost savings opportunities and how the new model would help the City. She indicated the costs and hiring of the Behavioral Health side of the program has been handled.
 - **Kari Boiter, Continuum of Care President**, spoke of the program and needs of the community. She discussed the costs and plans to help the homeless population.

Council discussed the needs of the community, potential partnerships and funding.

Public Comment:

- **Tom Towe, 2739 Gregory Drive South, Billings, MT**, spoke in support for homeless population.
- **Catherine Card, 2815 4th Avenue South, Billings, MT**, spoke in support for the homeless

population.

Council indicated they wanted more information on substance abuse, mobile crisis units, and a possible Request for Proposals (RFP), breakdown of the county mills, and the scope of the project.

3. Highlight Upcoming Agenda Items of Council Interest.

Chris Kukulski, City Administrator, indicated Council had a full agenda the following week that included: budget amendments, utility water resale rates, Solid Waste landfill fees and a series of land use decisions.

Public Comment:

None

Council discussion:

None

Public comment:

- **Walt Donges, 941 Constitution Avenue, Billings, MT**, spoke of an upcoming 406 Pride parade and festival under Skypoint on June 25.

ADJOURN: 10:21 pm