



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

WORK SESSION SUMMARY

COUNCIL CHAMBERS
220 N. 27th St.

February 21, 2023

5:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Cole

Present: Councilmember Kendra Shaw, Ward I (left meeting at 8:00 P.M.)
Councilmember Gulick, Ward I
Councilmember Jennifer Owen, Ward II
Councilmember Neese, Ward II
Councilmember Denise Joy, Ward III
Councilmember Daniel Tidswell, Ward IV
Councilmember Pam Purinton, Ward IV
Councilmember Mike Boyett, Ward V
Councilmember Tom Rupsis, Ward V
Mayor William Cole

Absent/
Excused: Councilmember Danny Choriki, Ward III
Councilmember Tom Rupsis, Ward V

Staff
Present: Chris Kukulski, City Administrator
Kevin Iffland, Assistant City Administrator
Gina Dahl, City Attorney
Kevin Johnson, Assistant Fire Chief
Rich St. John, Police Chief
Karen Schexnider, Assistant City Attorney
Tina Hoeger, Code Enforcement Manager

Public Comment:

- **Jacquelyn Garcia, 836 Dorothy Lane, Billings, MT**, spoke of trespassing issues and asked for clarification on how the public nuisance ordinance worked.
- **Kevin Nelson, 4235 Bruce Avenue, Billings, MT**, expressed sympathy for the residents on Dorothy Lane and nuisance properties.
- **Shaun Callahan, 836 Dorothy Lane, Billings, MT**, spoke of Dorothy Lane issues and safety concerns.
- **Nathan Shike, 4150 Southgate Drive, Billings, MT**, spoke of issues with sidewalks being covered with snow and the difficulty it created with accessibility.

1. Public Safety Update.

Chris Kukulski, City Administrator, introduced the presenters.

Kevin Johnson, Assistant Fire Chief, gave an overview of the total numbers of calls, ambulance only calls, personnel hiring, Fire Station 8 plans, and Mobile Response Teams plans.

Council discussed collective and bargaining negotiations.

Rich St. John, Police Chief, gave an overview of Public Safety Mill Levy (PSML) obligations and implementation, applications and hiring update. He reviewed strategic objectives, calls for service, violent/property crime numbers, arrests/cites, warrant information and community outreach.

Council discussed a strategy for speeding and traffic issues. Chief St. John spoke of focusing on targeting hot spots, speed indicators and legislation focusing on traffic cameras. Council discussed code enforcement/safety issues, warrant/arrest backlogs, response time to calls, and warrant/citation incentive opportunities.

Karen Schexnider, Assistant City Attorney, gave an overview of the non-domestic violence and domestic violence prosecutors average new case numbers for 2022.

Council asked for clarification on how the numbers were changing since the PSML. They discussed theft at big box retailers, loss prevention strategies and City policies for prosecution.

Tina Hoeger, Code Enforcement Manager, gave an overview of the PSML objectives and results, abatements in 2022, highlights and results of a few case studies.

Council discussed how the ordinance handled boarded properties, how the cases were being handled in court, and how Code Enforcement was handling graffiti concerns.

Kevin Iffland, Assistant City Attorney, gave an overview of the nuisance property team, property currently being addressed, status on each property, incident types and calls for service at various locations. He reviewed legislative statutes, ordinances, and Montana statutes relating to Civil litigation. He spoke of the results given by the crime analyst, the live database, and the CSF analysis results.

Council discussed how State legislature may be able to help with some properties and finding ways to prosecute property owners for crime at their businesses.

Public Comment:

- **Jacquelyn Garcia, 836 Dorothy Lane, Billings, MT**, spoke of public nuisance enforcement.
- **Kevin Nelson, 4235 Bruce Avenue, Billings, MT**, expressed sympathy for the residents on Dorothy Lane and nuisance properties.
- **Shaun Callahan, 836 Dorothy Lane, Billings, MT**, spoke of bond revocation.

Council spoke of mailbox fraud and mail theft. Chief St. John indicated postal department's role. Mayor Cole spoke of the State statute for public nuisance properties.

Recess at 8:12 pm. Reconvene at 8:20 pm.

2. Disaster and Emergency Services (DES).

KC Williams, DES Coordinator, introduced Anne Marie Overcast as a new employee. He gave an overview of emergency management, factors that could affect the community, responses, community lifelines, incident management and coordination. He reviewed senior leader and elected officials responsibilities, the City of Billings emergency authorities and ordinances, coalitions and committees, grants received and grants available to pursue.

Council discussed the City's role in a railroad emergency, Code Red usage, and things learned at a recent training. Mr. Williams indicated they had started an Emergency Management Advisory Council, and needing an increase in personnel to fill the amount of people needed in an emergency. He reviewed how grant money was being used.

Public Comment:

- **Kevin Nelson, 4235 Bruce Avenue, Billings, MT**, spoke of Code Red not working efficiently. He spoke of a long power outage and how no notifications had been received.

Council discussed continuity plans in the case of emergencies Chris Kukulski, City Administrator, indicated plans existed in several departments and spoke of the partnership with DES.

3. Highlight Upcoming Agenda Items of Council Interest.

Chris Kukulski, City Administrator, gave an update on the status of the following legislative bills: HB 534, Collection Limits; HB 542, Vehicle Taxation; SB 382, Land Use Regulatory changes; and SB 262, Licensing Requirements.

He discussed concerns with the low number of seasonal hires and upcoming budget amendments.

Councilmember Purinton discussed local government authority and working closely with legislators.

Councilmember Neese discussed Police department using personal phones and replacing old technology. He suggested a system of using cell phones with the Mobile Data Terminals. Kevin Iffland, Assistant City Administrator, indicated newer technology was being used and would look at the suggestion.

Public Comment:

- None

COUNCIL DISCUSSION:

- None

PUBLIC COMMENT on "NON-AGENDA ITEMS". Speaker Sign-in required. *(Restricted to ONLY items not on this printed agenda. Comments are limited to 3 minutes or as set by the Mayor. Please sign the roster at the cart located at the back of the Council chambers or at the podium.)*

- None

ADJOURN: 9:22 pm