



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

## WORK SESSION SUMMARY

**COUNCIL CHAMBERS**  
220 N. 27<sup>th</sup> St.

**October 16, 2023**

**4:30 P.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Cole

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** 4:30 PM – 5:40 PM

Reconvened Work Session at 5:43 PM

Present: Councilmember Kendra Shaw, Ward I  
Councilmember Gulick, Ward I  
Councilmember Jennifer Owen, Ward II  
Councilmember Denise Joy, Ward III  
Councilmember Danny Choriki, 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 Neese, Ward II

Staff  
Present: Chris Kukulski, City Administrator  
Kevin Iffland, Assistant City Administrator  
Gina Dahl, City Attorney

### Public Comment:

- **Jodi Adams, 5520 Morningstar Lane, Billings, Montana**, spoke of concerns about the Parks and Recreation ballot and lack of information regarding fees and membership costs.
- **Melanie Schwartz, 3630 Hayden Drive, Billings, Montana**, helped raise over \$4.1 million for the Parks and Recreation bond. Spoke in favor of the bond and listed the donors.

There was no further public comment.

### 1. **Billings Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) MOU.**

Chris Kukulski, City Administrator, spoke of the agreement from TBID to help cover operation loss on the Recreation Center.

Gina Dahl, City Attorney, spoke of the MOU formalizing the commitment from TBID. She spoke of the renewal of the district for an additional 10 years and increasing the assessment to satisfy the commitment to the Recreation Center.

Council discussed management structure and conditions of the MOU. They spoke of the language regarding “management or management group” and how the City resolution would affect the MOU.

Steve Wahrlich, TBID, spoke of the sections in the MOU established to determine the best entity to manage and to ensure the management had proper experience. He explained the fee was a hotel bed assessment and was not a “tax”.

Council discussed the process of adding it to a Regular Council meeting for action. Council informally indicated a majority in favor of proceeding with the MOU.

Council discussed assessments and how they would be used.

Mr. Wahrlich spoke of marketing enhancements that would be made with the assessments.

Alex Tyson, Visit Billings Executive Director, spoke in favor of the TBID MOU. She explained how the assessments could be used.

**Public Comment:**

- None

**2. Review Council's Subcommittee Structure.**

Mr. Kukulski explained the current resolution.

Councilmember Shaw reviewed the 5 proposed discussion points she had emailed to Council which were:

1. The Local Affairs board should be dissolved and the two council members assigned moved to the Budget and Finance committee. The Budget and Finance committee has taken on a great deal of responsibility for shaping financial policy; it is unbalanced to put this under the purview of only three council members. This committee needs representation from five CMs.
2. The Legislative Committee should be re-defined as “intra-governmental” and take on responsibility for coordinating with SD2 and the county on issues affecting the city.
3. Council should adopt an alternative structure for sub-committee participation so the boards aren't entirely new every two years. Two or three council members should rotate from Intra-Governmental to Budget and Finance, with another two or three remaining on the committee for an additional two years. This would ensure continuity from one legislative session to the next, for example.
4. Board chairs should be limited to two years and rotated so that a variety of CMs have the opportunity to take on these leadership positions.
5. The “Operations Committee” should be re-defined as a “Policy Committee,” or else the scope should be clearly limited to council “operations”—intra-council relationships, meeting efficiency etc. If Council decides a “Policy” committee makes more sense, my suggestion would be that the mayor is always chair of this committee and it is expanded to 5 members: Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Pro Tempore, and two mayoral appointees from council.

Councilmember Owen spoke of the lack of support and commitment Local Affairs Board had received to allow it to reach its potential.

Councilmember Choriki spoke against requiring every Councilmember to be on one of the committees.

Council discussion on Councilmember Shaw's suggestions and provided direction to staff on changes.

**Public Comment:**

- None

**3. Highlight Upcoming Agenda Items of Council Interest.**

Chris Kukulski, City Administrator, spoke of: training on the night of October 18 for the National Management Incident System, upcoming agenda packet would be amended to include the TBID MOU. He reminded Council ballots would be mailed on Wednesday.

Discussed grant application to create a Forestry plan for the community and planting trees had been approved. Could add a presentation.

Councilmember Owen indicated she was confused by initiative process. Had mentioned a dedicated family violence unit in the Police Department, but it had not been voted on. Mr. Kukulski indicated a vote by Council helped to clarify process for staff.

**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: 7:32 P.M.**