



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

WORK SESSION SUMMARY

COUNCIL CHAMBERS
220 N. 27th St.

November 6, 2023

5:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Cole

Present: Councilmember Gulick, Ward I
Councilmember Jennifer Owen, Ward II
Councilmember Neese, Ward II (Zoom)
Councilmember Denise Joy, Ward III
Councilmember Danny Choriki, Ward III (Zoom)
Councilmember Pam Purinton, Ward IV
Councilmember Mike Boyett, Ward V
Councilmember Tom Rupsis, Ward V
Mayor William Cole

Absent/
Excused: Councilmember Kendra Shaw, Ward I
Councilmember Daniel Tidswell, Ward IV

Staff
Present: Chris Kukulski, City Administrator
Rich St. John, Police Chief
Jason Banfield, Assistant Fire Chief of EMS
Lora Mattox, Planner
David Watterson, Information Technology Director
Andy Zoeller, Finance Director
Jennifer Duray, Public Works Deputy Director
Wyeth Friday, Planning Director
Pepper Valdez, Fire Chief
Debi Meling, Public Works Director

Mayor Cole and Chief St. John spoke of the tragic shootings that had occurred. St. John and Council discussed ways the crimes could be addressed.

Public Comment:

- **Jaqueline Garcia, 836 Dorothy Lane, Billings, Montana**, spoke of gun theft and crime concerns.
- **Catherine Card, 2815 4th Avenue South, Billings, Montana**, spoke of a vigil held for the 17-year-old recently killed. She spoke of community involvement and public comments.
- **Katie Harrison, 2901 6th Avenue South, Billings, Montana**, spoke in support of providing

shelter for homeless people. She spoke of the recent gun violence near her house.

- **James Lewis, Rescue Mission**, spoke of homelessness concerns.
- **Brad Molnar, Senator**, spoke of crime issues and juvenile justice concerns.
- **Dena Bishop, 4th Avenue hotel**, spoke of the need for family and community.

There was no further public comment.

1. Crisis Response Unit.

Jason Banfield, Assistant Fire Chief of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) gave an update of the program for the first month. He reviewed tentative numbers, the types of calls received, and needs.

Council discussed successes and challenges, telehealth, and classifications defining types of incidents. They spoke of timing percentages and follow up responses.

Coralee Schmitz, Rimrock Chief Operating Officer, spoke of Medicaid reimbursement concerns, collaboration with the State of MT and an available block grant.

Public Comment:

- None

2. Billings MPO Boundary Map Amendment.

Lora Mattox, Planner, reviewed the background of the Census Bureau requirements, the 2020 Urban Area Boundary map.

Council discussed the changes, traffic concerns, and development in the area.

Public Comment:

- None

Recess at 7:15 pm. Reconvene at 7:24 pm.

3. Technology Replacement Plan (TRP).

David Watterson, Information Technology Director, reviewed the TRP Committee members, plan overview, FY25 TRP replacement highlights, Hand-Me Down Program, and financial summaries per department.

Council discussed Public Safety software needs, body camera and evidence storage concerns. They spoke of the possibility of Police Citizens Advisory Board involvement.

Public Comment:

- None

4. Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Andy Zoeller, Finance Director, reviewed the CIP development timeline, Capital project definitions, and expenses. He reviewed major FY25 projects, Budget and Finance Committee discussion topics, Facility Colocation He briefly spoke of the following projects: Fire Station 9, Expo Drive, 25th Street Bridge, Landfill projects, Skyway Drive Water Loop, and Stormwater Projects.

Councilmember Owen spoke of increases in costs for the 25th Street Bridge and the possibility of an Expo Drive delay.

Council asked for clarification on Dehler Park. Chris Kukulski, City Administrator spoke of the partnership with the Billings Mustangs to maintain the field. He spoke of upcoming projects.

Council asked for an update on upcoming SBURA projects.

Jennifer Duray, Public Works Deputy Director, indicated Morgan, Ryan and Stevens streets were coming up.

Council discussed about Dehler Park, 25th Street Bridge, Fire Station 9, water loop for Skyway Drive, and the jersey barrier at cemetery.

Wyeth Friday, Planning Director, indicated the new estimate for the 25th Street Bridge was over \$5 million and included using the Charles Ringer bridge. He gave an overview of the project plans.

Pepper Valdez, Fire Chief, indicated the location for Fire Station 9 would be 48th Street West and Hesper Road.

Debi Meling, Public Works Director, indicated there was a planning study of the corridor and were in conversations with developers regarding the water loop for Skyway Drive.

Mike Pigg, Parks and Recreation Director, spoke of removing the jersey barrier from the CIP to search for alternative funding options.

Council discussed Safe Routes to School, traffic calming, the fog pit, lack of a concrete crew, and drag strip streets.

Debi spoke of ways to provide traffic calming on arterial streets.

Mayor Cole asked for clarification on redoing the Swords Rimrock Park road.

Mike spoke of ways to maintain the road into Swords Rimrock Park and reasoning for redirecting funding to other projects.

Chris Kukulski, City Administrator, spoke of Council's ability to decide how mills were used.

Public Comment:

- Kristi Drake, 2950 Walden Place, Billings, Montana, spoke of the need for the 25th Street Bridge and Expo Drive projects.

Mr. Kukulski spoke of the upcoming agenda and Mayor Cole asked him to would reach out to Council to see which department heads would need to attend the next meeting.

5. Highlight Upcoming Agenda Items of Council Interest.

Chris Kukulski, City Administrator, spoke of upcoming agenda topics.

Public Comment:

- None

COUNCIL DISCUSSION:

Councilmember Choriki mentioned an initiative to fund membership in the Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority and expressed a desire for a discussion on prevention of violence in the community.

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: 9:27 P.M.