

**MINUTES
OF THE BILLINGS CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
March 10, 2025**

The Billings City Council met in regular session in the City Council Chambers, located at 316 N. 26th Street, 5th Floor, Billings, Montana, at 5:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER: Deputy Mayor Boyett

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Deputy Mayor Boyett

INVOCATION: Councilmember Owen

ROLL CALL:

Present: Councilmember Ed Gulick, Ward I
Councilmember Roy Neese, Ward II
Councilmember Jennifer Owen, Ward II
Councilmember TJ Rogers, Ward III
Councilmember Bill Kennedy, Ward III
Councilmember Scott Aspenlieder, Ward IV
Councilmember Daniel Tidswell, Ward IV
Councilmember Mike Boyett, Ward V
Councilmember Tom Rupsis, Ward V

Absent/
Excused: Councilmember Kendra Shaw, Ward I
Mayor William Cole

Staff
Present: Chris Kukulski, City Administrator
Kevin Iffland, Assistant City Administrator
Gina Dahl, City Attorney
Toni Keehner, Deputy City Clerk
Carly Collins, Grants Technician
Lora Mattox, Transportation Planning Coordinator
Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner
Wyeth Friday, Planning Director
Hunter Kelly, Planner
Debi Meling, Public Works Director

MINUTES: February 24, 2025

Moved by Councilmember Gulick

Seconded by Councilmember Tidswell

APPROVED 9-0, Councilmember Shaw and Mayor Cole absent/excused

COURTESIES:

Denise Joy, former Councilmember, spoke of her experience at the Legislature and encouraged Council to contact her with any topic of concern.

PROCLAMATIONS:

Deputy Mayor Boyett proclaimed March 9-15, 2025, as AmeriCorps Week.

Carly Collins, Grants Technician, introduced the AmeriCorps VISTA members. The following VISTA's spoke of their host sites and project area focuses: Dominic Deanda, Parks, Recreation and Public Lands; Matt Benowitz, Billings Metro VISTA Project; Cole Reisdorf, Tumbleweed; Sammie Murphy, Adaptive Performance Center; Row Olvera, Mountain Health Gives; and Louisa Spector, State of Montana Department of Health and Human Services.

COUNCIL REPORTS:

Councilmember Aspenlieder indicated the MSU-B Women's basketball team made the regionals and would be playing Friday, March 14, 2025, at 8:30 P.M.

Deputy Mayor Boyett indicated the Legislative and Local Affairs Committee was recommending there not be a Council Retreat this year due for various reasons.

Councilmember Gulick indicated the Budget and Finance Committee would not meet this week.

ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS - CHRIS KUKULSKI

Mr. Kukulski provided Council with information that:

- There were no exparte communications to Mayor and Council received after 3 P.M. concerning items on the agenda.
- There would be a lunch with Legislators cohosted by the City and Chamber of Commerce from 12:30 – 2:00 P.M. in Council Chambers to discuss House Bills 155 and 231.

PUBLIC COMMENT on "NON-PUBLIC HEARING" Agenda Items: 1, 2b, and 3b ONLY. Speaker sign-in required. (Comments are limited to three (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. Comments on items listed as public hearing items will be heard ONLY during the designated public hearing time for each respective item. For items not on this agenda, public comment will be taken at the end of the agenda.)

The following individuals provided public comment:

- **Michael Mayott, Amend Park Development Council**, spoke in favor of Item 1C and congratulated Mike Pigg, Parks and Recreation Director, on his upcoming retirement. He encouraged Council to rename the recreation campus and forgo the Amend Park name.
- **Katie Harrison, no address given**, requested Council adjust the Agenda order to allow public comment on non-agenda items to be heard at the beginning of the meeting and not make constituents wait until the end of the meeting to speak.

No further public comment was given.

Motion: I move to amend the agenda to allow public comments on non-agenda items to occur before the Consent Agenda.

Moved by Councilmember Gulick

Seconded by Councilmember Tidswell

APPROVED 9-0, Councilmember Shaw and Mayor Cole absent/excused

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.)*

- **Teri Todd, 135 Monarch, Billings, Montana**, thanked Council for their decision to allow TIF funding to be used for improvements to the Billings Convention Center. She spoke of a recent Gratitude in Action event held at the center.

The following constituents spoke of concerns with the recent violent hate crime that occurred and encouraged the City to address the issues:

- **Katie Harrison, no address given, Billings, Montana.**
- **Shay Reiser, 121 Custer Avenue, Billings, Montana.**
- **Margaret Beese, 643 Burlington Avenue, Billings, Montana.**
- **Tucker Colvin, 328 ½ Custer Avenue, Billings, Montana.**
- **Erin Alabaugh, 511 Avenue D, Billings, Montana**, spoke of her own mistreatment by the Billings Police Department.
- **Jonathan Gaustad, 175 Stonehaven Trail, Billings, Montana**, indicated he was the person involved in the recent attack.
- **Kristy Halderman, 1623 Stony Meadow Lane, Billings, Montana**, spoke in support of the Bicycle Master Plan and the importance of protected bike lanes. She expressed concern with the violent crimes the previous constituents had spoken of.

No further public comment was given.

1. **CONSENT AGENDA**

Councilmember Aspenlieder separated Items 1G and 1I for discussion and Item 1L1 to abstain as his employer received payment.

Councilmember Neese separated Items 1B, 1C, 1D and 1J for discussion.

Motion: I move to approve all items on the Consent Agenda, except for items moved for separation.

Moved by Councilmember Gulick

Seconded by Councilmember Kennedy

APPROVED 9-0, Councilmember Shaw and Mayor Cole absent/excused

A. **Bid Awards: See 3b below**

B. Purchase shade structure for Coulson Park; GameTime c/o Great Western Recreation.

Councilmember Neese spoke against the City spending money on Coulson Park. He indicated there was no funding for maintenance and another entity would be a better steward of the park.

Motion: I move to approve Item 1B, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember Aspenlieder

Seconded by Councilmember Rupsis

APPROVED 8-1, Councilmember Neese opposed, Councilmember Shaw and Mayor Cole absent/excused

C. Contract for Amend Park Recreation Campus General Contractor / Construction Manager (GC/CM); Langlas & Associates.

Councilmember Neese indicated there was no money in the Parks budget for maintaining Amend Park Recreation Campus and he would vote in opposition.

Motion: I move to approve Item 1C, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember Aspenlieder

Seconded by Councilmember Rupsis

APPROVED 8-1, Councilmember Neese opposed, Councilmember Shaw and Mayor Cole absent/excused

D. Amendment No. 1, Snow Plowing of Local Streets; K2 Civil, Inc.

Councilmember Neese spoke against plowing snow on local streets.

Motion: I move to approve Item 1D, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember Kennedy

Seconded by Councilmember Rupsis

APPROVED 8-1, Councilmember Neese opposed, Councilmember Shaw and Mayor Cole absent/excused

E. Lease Agreement Addendum with Yellowstone County for space in new City Hall.

Moved by Councilmember Gulick

Seconded by Councilmember Kennedy

APPROVED 9-0, Councilmember Shaw and Mayor Cole absent/excused

F. Final Amendment to Gross Maximum Price, Airport Terminal Expansion Project; Sletten Construction.

Moved by Councilmember Gulick

Seconded by Councilmember Kennedy

APPROVED 9-0, Councilmember Shaw and Mayor Cole absent/excused

G. Pedestrian Bicycle Master Plan.

Motion: I move to table Item 1G.

Moved by Councilmember Aspenlieder
Seconded by Councilmember Neese

Councilmember Aspenlieder indicated this was a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Plan and the County Commissioners had recently rejected it. He spoke of concerns with a lack of cohesive plans.

Council discussed the process of tabling the item with City Attorney, Gina Dahl. She explained that if Council did not take the item off the table by the March 24, 2025, Council meeting, the item would essentially "be killed".

Lora Mattox, Transportation Planning Coordinator, explained the City's approach to a non-motorized transportation network and how it differed from the County's approach. She indicated Commissioner Ostlund had not supported having a Complete Streets Policy in the City. She indicated the City was currently operating under the 2017 Pedestrian Bicycle Master Plan and this plan was an update.

Substitute Motion: I move to approve Item 1G, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember Gulick
Seconded by Councilmember Rupsis

Councilmember Gulick spoke in favor of the plan.

Councilmember Owen asked for clarification on the Yellowjacket Trail being included in the Pedestrian Bicycle Master Plan.

Elyse Monat, Active Transportation Planner, indicated the Yellowjacket Trail was on the list, it had just not made the top 10 priority list.

Councilmembers Owen and Neese spoke in favor of tabling Item 1G.

A vote on the substitute motion was taken.

FAILED 2-7, Councilmembers Neese, Owen, Rogers, Kennedy, Aspenlieder, Tidswell, and Deputy Mayor Boyett opposed, Councilmember Shaw and Mayor Cole absent/excused

Council discussed the process of tabling the item and how it would affect the City.

Ms. Dahl further explained the process of tabling an item and indicated the action was not debatable and could not be amended.

Councilmember Aspenlieder indicated he understood that the item would not move forward if it did not get pulled off the table at the next regular business meeting. He expressed that without agreement from the County, it was satisfactory with him that the plan not move forward.

Wyeth Friday, Planning Director, encouraged Council to consider delaying the item to allow staff to better understand their concerns.

Councilmember Neese called point of order as the motion to table was not debatable.

Councilmember Rupsis asked for details on how an item could be taken off the table.

Ms. Dahl indicated a Councilmember would need to make a motion to take the item off the table on the March 24, 2025, Regular Business meeting and the motion could be made by any Councilmember.

A vote on the original motion to table Item 1G was taken.

APPROVED 7-2, Councilmembers Gulick and Rupsis opposed, Councilmember Shaw and Mayor Cole absent/excused

H. State Highway Traffic Safety Billings DUI Program Grant.

Moved by Councilmember Gulick

Seconded by Councilmember Kennedy

APPROVED 9-0, Councilmember Shaw and Mayor Cole absent/excused

I. FY24 COPS Hiring Program (CHP) Grant.

Councilmember Aspenlieder questioned if the City's match was already accounted for in the budget. Kevin Iffland, Assistant City Administrator, responded affirmatively.

Motion: I move to approve Item 1I, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember Aspenlieder

Seconded by Councilmember Rogers

APPROVED 9-0, Councilmember Shaw and Mayor Cole absent/excused

J. Preliminary Plat Extension for Hunters Pointe Subdivision. *Quasi-Judicial

Councilmember Neese spoke against the type of development planned for this subdivision and indicated allowing large, tall buildings behind single family homes should not be allowed.

Motion: I move to approve Item 1J, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember Rupsis

Seconded by Councilmember Kennedy

APPROVED 8-1, Councilmember Neese opposed, Councilmember Shaw and Mayor Cole absent/excused

K. Second/Final Reading Ordinance 25-5904 expanding Ward III (Annexation 24-05). *Quasi-Judicial

Moved by Councilmember Gulick

Seconded by Councilmember Kennedy

APPROVED 9-0, Councilmember Shaw and Mayor Cole absent/excused

L. **Bills for the Week of:**

1. February 4, 2025

Motion: I move to approve Item 1L1, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember Kennedy

Seconded by Councilmember Gulick

APPROVED 8-0, Councilmember Aspenlieder abstained, Councilmember Shaw and Mayor Cole absent/excused

REGULAR AGENDA:

2. **FOUR-S CORPORATION PROPERTY - 1006 1st Avenue N.**

- a. **PUBLIC HEARING AND RESOLUTION 25-11260 APPROVING ANNEXATION 25-02:** generally located at 1006 1st Avenue N. Staff recommends conditional approval. *Quasi-Judicial

Hunter Kelly, Planner, provided a presentation and explained the connectivity between Items 2a and 2b. He reviewed the annexation map, zoning and the annexation criteria policy.

Councilmember Neese asked if the property was already connected to City water. Mr. Kelly responded affirmatively. Councilmember Neese asked if the East Billings Urban Renewal District (EBURD) would bring the property into their district. Mr. Kelly indicated he had not seen any correspondence from EBURD.

No testimony was given during the public hearing.

Motion: Having conducted a public hearing, considered written and spoken public testimony, I move to approve a Resolution conditionally approving Annexation 25-02, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember Kennedy

Seconded by Councilmember Gulick

APPROVED 9-0, Councilmember Shaw and Mayor Cole absent/excused

- b. **ANNEXATION AGREEMENT** with Four-S Corporation. Staff recommends approval.

Councilmember Aspenlieder spoke about the curb cut changes and how the ordinance did not match the subdivision regulations. He asked when those changes would occur.

Debi Meling, Public Works Director, indicated the ordinance change would be coming to Council shortly.

Councilmember Neese asked for clarification on stormwater retention for the property.

Ms. Meling indicated it would be triggered by any construction and then the property would have to meet the City's conditions for annexation. They spoke of City versus County water rates.

Motion: I move to approve an Annexation Agreement with Four-S Corporation, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember Kennedy

Seconded by Councilmember Rogers

APPROVED 9-0, Councilmember Shaw and Mayor Cole absent/excused

- c. **PUBLIC HEARING AND FIRST READING ORDINANCE** expanding the boundaries of Ward I to include recently annexed property in Annexation 25-02: a parcel located at 1006 1st Avenue N. Staff recommends approval.

Mr. Kelly indicated he did not have a presentation, but staff was available for questions.

No testimony was given during the public hearing.

Motion: Having conducted a public hearing, considered written and spoken public testimony, I move to approve the First Reading Ordinance expanding the boundaries of Ward I, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember Gulick

Seconded by Councilmember Neese

APPROVED 9-0, Councilmember Shaw and Mayor Cole absent/excused

3. **SID 1428 - Annafeld Subdivision, 5th Filing**

- a. **PUBLIC HEARING AND RESOLUTION 25-11261** creating SID 1428, Annafeld Subdivision, 5th Filing Streetlights. Staff recommends approval.

Debi Meling, Public Works Director, provided a presentation of the SID boundaries and reviewed the schedule and costs of the streetlights.

No testimony was given during the public hearing.

Motion: Having conducted a public hearing, considered written and spoken public testimony, I move to approve a Resolution creating SID 1428, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember Rogers

Seconded by Councilmember Kennedy

APPROVED 9-0, Councilmember Shaw and Mayor Cole absent/excused

- b. **Bid Award: SID 1428, Annafeld Subdivision, 5th Filing Streetlights.** (Opened 1/21/25) Recommend Millennium Electric, LLC.

Ms. Meling indicated she did not have a presentation.

Moved by Councilmember Neese

Seconded by Councilmember Gulick

APPROVED 9-0, Councilmember Shaw and Mayor Cole absent/excused

COUNCIL INITIATIVES:

There were no Council initiatives.

ADJOURN: 7:26 P.M.



CITY OF BILLINGS

BY: William A. Cole
William A. Cole, Mayor

ATTEST:

BY: Denise R. Bohlman
Denise R. Bohlman, City Clerk