

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

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

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Cole

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Mayor Cole

**INVOCATION:** Councilmember Boyett

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  
Mayor William Cole

Absent/  
Excused: Councilmember Kendra Shaw, Ward I

Staff  
Present: Chris Kukulski, City Administrator  
Gina Dahl, City Attorney  
Toni Keehner, Deputy City Clerk  
Rich St. John, Police Chief  
Matt Hoppel, Fire Chief  
Jeff Roach, Aviation and Transit Director  
Andy Zoeller, Finance Director  
Sarah Lane, Fiscal Services Manager  
Wyeth Friday, Planning Director

**MINUTES:**

- October 27, 2025

Moved by Councilmember Gulick  
Seconded By Councilmember Rogers  
**APPROVED 10-0**, Councilmember Shaw absent/excused

## **COURTESIES:**

- Mayor Cole indicated Councilmember Shaw was currently in New York City for the publication of her new book.
- Mayor Cole spoke of the sacrifice and dedication required to run for a public office and congratulated all the candidates.
- Mayor Cole thanked all veterans and their families for their service and sacrifice.
- Councilmember Rogers announced it was the 250<sup>th</sup> birthday of the United States Marine Corp.
- Councilmember Kennedy spoke of the Friends of the Yellowstone National Cemetery and American Legion Post 4 event occurring on Veteran's Day and invited the public for a celebration.
- Police Chief St. John recognized Shane Shaffer as being awarded the Medal of Valor for lifesaving events that occurred at Lake Elmo.
- Fire Chief Matt Hoppel recognized the following members and citizens for their courage: Captain Matt Meeker, Medal of Valor; Engineer Matt Strain, Medal of Valor; Firefighter Corey Letendre, Medal of Valor; Firefighter Jacob Ellis, Life Saving Medal; Sadie Debusk, Citizen Hero Award; and Hallelujah McPherson, Citizen Hero Award.

## **PROCLAMATIONS:**

There were no proclamations.

## **COUNCIL REPORTS:**

There were no Council reports.

## **ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS - CHRISKUKULSKI**

Mr. Kukulski provided Council with information that:

- City offices would be closed on Tuesday, November 11th, 2025, in observation of Veteran's Day.
- There were no exparte communications to Mayor and Council received after 3 P.M. concerning items on the agenda.

**PUBLIC COMMENT on "NON-PUBLIC HEARING" Agenda Items: 1, 3 and 4 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 in reference to Regular Agenda Item 3:

- Cori Lefever Thelen, Old Billings Hardware Building partner, spoke of the importance of downtown and asked for Council support for TIF funding of the project.

- Alison Lefever, Old Billings Hardware building partner, spoke of plans for the development and her experience with historic tax credits.
- Mike Schaer, downtown business owner, encouraged Council to support the Old Billings Hardware development project.

There was no further public comment.

1. **CONSENT AGENDA**

Mayor Cole separated Consent Agenda Items 1J and 1K to abstain.

Councilmember Boyett separated Consent Agenda Item 1L to abstain.

Councilmember Rupsis separated Consent Agenda Item 1P to vote in opposition.

Councilmember Neese separated Consent Agenda Items 1C, 1G, 1I and 1O for discussion.

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

Moved by Councilmember Boyett

Seconded by Councilmember Tidswell

**APPROVED 10-0**, Councilmembers Ssshaw absent/excused

A. **Mayor Cole recommends that Council confirm the following appointments:**

1.

	Name	Board/Commission	Term	
			Begins	Ends
1	Mark Morse	EBURD Advisory Committee -- Yellowstone County Rep.	01/01/26	12/31/29
2	Zack Terakedis	EBURD Advisory Committee -- School District 2 Rep.	01/01/26	12/31/29
3	Robert Johnson	EBURD Advisory Committee	01/01/26	TBD*
4	Jarod Greenwood	EBURD Advisory Committee	01/01/26	TBD*
5	Jill Dawson	EBURD Advisory Committee	01/01/26	TBD*
6	Patrick Scott	EBURD Advisory Committee	01/01/26	TBD*
7		EBURD Advisory Committee	01/01/26	TBD*
8		EBURD Advisory Committee	01/01/26	TBD*
9	Mark Morse	SBBURD Advisory Committee -- Yellowstone County Rep.	01/01/26	12/31/29
10	Jourdan Guidice	SBBURD Advisory Committee -- School District 2 Rep.	01/01/26	12/31/29
11		SBBURD Advisory Comm -- Elysian School District 23 Rep.	01/01/26	12/31/28
12	Scott Hanser	SBBURD Advisory Committee	01/01/26	TBD*
13	Andrew Houlihan	SBBURD Advisory Committee	01/01/26	TBD*
14	Michael Mayott	SBBURD Advisory Committee	01/01/26	TBD*

15	Jeff Muri	SBBURD Advisory Committee	01/01/26	TBD*
16	Kelphen Lienemann	SBBURD Advisory Committee	01/01/26	TBD*
17	Joseph Walsh	SBBURD Advisory Committee	01/01/26	TBD*
18		SBBURD Advisory Committee	01/01/26	TBD*
19	Chris White	Downtown Urban Renewal AC - Yellowstone County Rep.	01/01/26	12/31/29
20	Janna Hafer	Downtown Urban Renewal AC - School District 2 Rep.	01/01/26	12/31/29
21	Heather Kirpach	Downtown Urban Renewal AC - BSEDA Rep.	01/01/26	12/31/28
22	Mary Walks Over Ice	Downtown Urban Renewal AC - NA Development Corp	01/01/26	12/31/29
23	Nick Steen	Downtown Urban Renewal AC - DBA Rep.	01/01/26	12/31/28
24	Blake Wahrich	Downtown Urban Renewal AC - BID #0001 Rep.	01/01/26	12/31/29
25	Jan Peterson	Downtown Urban Renewal Advisory Committee	01/01/26	TBD*
26	Sean Lynch	Downtown Urban Renewal Advisory Committee	01/01/26	TBD*
27	JR Reger	Downtown Urban Renewal Advisory Committee	01/01/26	TBD*
28	Ethan Kanning	Downtown Urban Renewal Advisory Committee	01/01/26	TBD*

**B. Bid Awards:**

1. **Snow Plowing on Local Streets.** (Opened 10/21/25) Recommend awarding all contractors.

**C. Agreements with Downtown Billings Partnership, BIRDworks and South Billings Urban Renewal Association.**

Councilmember Neese voiced opposition.

**Motion:** I move to approve Consent Agenda 1C, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember Gulick

Seconded by Councilmember Rupsis

**APPROVED 9-1**, Councilmember Neese opposed, Councilmember Shaw absent/excused

**D. Amendment No. 4, Airport Automobile Parking Concession Agreement; SP Plus, LLC.**

**E. Amendment No. 31, Airline Ticket Counters and Installation of a New Baggage Inspection System; Morrison-Maierle.**

**F. Change Order No. 7 to W.O. 19-12: West End Reservoir Project, GC/CM Contract; Dick Anderson Construction, Inc.**

**G. Final Acquisition** of 123.52 acres from Dr. Morledge Family, LLC, for the Airport.

Councilmember Neese expressed opposition about awarding a contract for above the appraisal price.

**Motion:** I move to reject the current proposal and offer an amount not above the appraisal price.

Moved by Councilmember Neese  
Seconded by Councilmember Kennedy

Jeff Roach, Aviation and Transit Director, spoke of the need for the parcel and how it would benefit and protect the Airport. He spoke of the negotiation process and encouraged support of the acquisition. He indicated the majority of the funding would be Airport generated revenue and reimbursement from FAA.

Gina Dahl, City Attorney, indicated Council could approve a purchase over the appraisal price.

Council continued discussion of the acquisition.

**Substitute Motion:** I move to approve Consent Agenda 1G, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember Aspenlieder  
Seconded by Councilmember Rogers  
**APPROVED 9-1**, Councilmember Neese opposed, Councilmember Shaw absent/excused

**H. FY25 Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act (LEMHWA) Grant.**

**I. Donation** to Parks and Recreation Department from BSEDA and Pedal United for bicycle pump track at Coulson Park.

Councilmember Neese spoke in opposition.

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

Moved by Councilmember Rupsis  
Seconded by Councilmember Gulick  
**APPROVED 9-1**, Councilmember Neese opposed, Councilmember Shaw absent/excused

**J. Donation** to the City from Anne and Bill Cole for Christmas tree and wreaths at City Hall.

Deputy Mayor Boyett presided over the vote on this item to allow Mayor Cole to abstain.

Councilmember Owen was not in attendance for the vote.

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

Moved by Councilmember Rupsis  
Seconded by Councilmember Aspenlieder  
**APPROVED 8-0**, Mayor Cole abstained, Councilmembers Shaw and Owen absent/excused

- K. **Donation** to the City's Anti-Graffiti Fund from Anne and Bill Cole for 6th Street Underpass mural project.

Deputy Mayor Boyett presided over the vote on this item to allow Mayor Cole to abstain.

Councilmember Owen was not in attendance for the vote.

**Motion:** I move to approve Consent Agenda Item 1K, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember Rupsis

Seconded by Councilmember Aspenlieder

**APPROVED 8-0**, Mayor Cole abstained, Councilmembers Shaw and Owen absent/excused

- L. **Donations** to Police Department from various donors.

Mayor Cole resumed officiating the meeting.

Councilmember Owen was not in attendance for the vote.

**Motion:** I move to approve Consent Agenda Item 1L, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember Gulick

Seconded by Councilmember Kennedy

**APPROVED 8-0**, Councilmember Boyett abstained, Councilmembers Shaw and Owen absent/excused

- M. **Donation** to Billings Public Library from Friends of the Library for Co+Lab.

- N. **Final Plat** of L.J. Wells Subdivision. \*Quasi-Judicial

- O. **Resolution 25-11305** allocating \$7,500 Council Contingency for an open house for new City Hall.

Councilmember Neese spoke of allocating funds for a Covid-19 memorial plaque.

**Motion:** I move to approve Consent Agenda Item 1O, to allocate \$10,000 of Council Contingency funds for an open house event for new City Hall and to purchase a Covid-19 memorial plaque.

Moved by Councilmember Neese

Seconded by Councilmember Rogers

**APPROVED 8-2**, Councilmembers Kennedy and Aspenlieder opposed, Councilmember Shaw absent/excused

- P. **Second/Final Reading Ordinance 25-5922 expanding the boundaries** of the South Billings Boulevard Urban Renewal District (SBBURD) and adopting a modified Urban Renewal Plan.

**Motion:** I move to approve Consent Agenda Item 1P, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember Gulick

Seconded by Councilmember Kennedy

**APPROVED 8-2**, Councilmembers Rupsis and Neese opposed, Councilmember Shaw absent/excused

**Q. Bills for the Weeks of:**

1. September 30, 2025
2. October 8, 2025
3. October 13, 2025

**REGULAR AGENDA:**

2. **PUBLIC HEARING AND RESOLUTION 25-11306** approving and adopting FY2026 Budget Amendments. Staff recommends approval.

Sarah Lane, Fiscal Services Manager, gave a summary of the FY2026 budget amendments and funding sources.

No public 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 approving and adopting a resolution for FY2026 budget amendments, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember Boyett  
Seconded by Councilmember Gulick  
**APPROVED 10-0**, Councilmember Shaw absent/excused

3. **TAX INCREMENT FINANCING ASSISTANCE** from the Downtown Urban Renewal TIF District for Old Billings Hardware Development Venture, LP for its mixed-use project at 2802 Montana Avenue, up to \$745,000. Downtown Billings Partnership (DBP) Board recommends approval.

Councilmember Gulick recused himself due to his employer's involvement in the project.

Wyeth Friday, Planning Director, gave a timeline of the project, reviewed the DBP Board recommendation and the project impact on the district. He gave an overview of the project status, Historic Tax Credits and financing status.

Councilmember Aspenlieder spoke of requiring that 25% of the budget be spent by a certain date to encourage progress on the project.

Randy Hafer, Old Billings Hardware Development Project, explained reasons the process was taking extra time and steps they were taking to secure financing and get started on the project.

Council discussed TIF funding, timing for the project and concerns about a negative cash forecast. Staff reviewed the cash forecast referenced and discovered the most recent forecast had not been included in the agenda packet.

**Motion:** I move to conditionally approve tax increment financing assistance from the Downtown Urban Renewal TIF District for Old Billings Hardware Development Venture, LP for its mixed-use project at 2802 Montana Avenue, up to \$745,000, as recommended by DBP Board.

Moved by Councilmember Rupsis  
Seconded by Mayor Cole

Council continued discussion.

**Motion to Amend:** I move to require 80% project completion by the end of March 2027.

Moved by Councilmember Kennedy  
Seconded by Councilmember Aspenlieder

Councilmember Aspenlieder indicated he wanted to see substantial completion by the end of June 2027 for the project.

Mr. Hafer indicated the developers were comfortable with the 80% completion by the end of March 2027 but could not guarantee substantial completion by the end of June 2027.

Mr. Friday indicated the development agreement had conditions (financing, proof of financing, permits, etc.) that had to be met which would give the parties an opportunity to decide how to proceed if conditions were not met. He reminded Council that the draft development agreement included a stipulation that reimbursement was to begin in FY2028 if the project was completed in FY2027.

Mehmet Casey, Downtown Billings Alliance Development Director, spoke of the development agreement language and how project payments would be affected if deadlines had not been met. He indicated an extension allowance per formal request could be allowed.

A vote on the motion to amend was taken.

**APPROVED 9-0**, Councilmember Gulick abstained, Councilmember Shaw absent/excused

A vote on the amended motion was taken.

**APPROVED 9-0**, Councilmember Gulick abstained, Councilmember Shaw absent/excused

4. **NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR.** Staff recommends Council nominate and elect a Deputy Mayor.

Mayor Cole clarified that nominations could be heard and there was no need for a second.

**Motion:** I move to nominate and elect, Councilmember Boyett as Deputy Mayor.

Moved by Councilmember Aspenlieder

There were no further nominations.

**APPROVED BY ACCLAMATION**

**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.)*

The following individuals provided public comment:

- Susan Jurovich, representing Human Relations Coalition, spoke against discrimination, hate and bullying. She invited Council to a round table on November 18th, 2025, at 5:30 PM at First Congregational Church.
- Denver Slater spoke of issues with the Montana Rescue Mission and the MET Bus Transit system.

There was no further public comment.

**COUNCIL INITIATIVES:**

There were no Council initiatives.

**ADJOURN: 7:50 PM**



CITY OF BILLINGS

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

ATTEST:

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