

**MINUTES
OF THE BILLINGS CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
October 12, 2026**

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: Mayor Nelson

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor Nelson

INVOCATION: Councilmember Aspenlieder

ROLL CALL:

Present: Councilmember Kendra Shaw, Ward 1 (Via Zoom)
Councilmember Mark Nicholson, Ward 1
Councilmember Roy Neese, Ward 2
Councilmember Denis Pitman, Ward 2
Councilmember Amy Aguirre, Ward 3
Councilmember Bill Kennedy, Ward 3
Councilmember Scott Aspenlieder, Ward 4
Councilmember Andrew Lindley, Ward 4
Councilmember Mike Boyett, Ward 5
Councilmember Tony O'Donnell, Ward 5
Mayor Mike Nelson

Staff

Present: Kevin Iffland, Interim City Administrator
Gina Dahl, City Attorney
Andy Zoeller, Finance Director
Toni Keehner, Deputy City Clerk
Karla Stanton, Human Resources Director
Jeff Roach, Aviation and Transit Director
Gavin Woltjer, Parks, Recreation and Public Lands Director
Shawn Mayo, Interim Police Chief
Gavin Wjolter, Parks and Recreation Director
Jake Milliron, Community Outreach Specialist
Tracy Scott, Parking Manager
Wyeth Friday, Planning and Community Services Director
Hunter Kelly, Planner
Mac Fogelson, City Engineer
Tyler Westrope, Staff Engineer

MINUTES: September 28, 2026

Moved by Councilmember Boyett
Seconded by Councilmember Neese
APPROVED 11-0

COURTESIES: Honorary Billings Police Officer - Chase Lantz

Interim Police Chief Mayo recognized Chase Lantz with an honorary appointment as a Billings Police Officer. The presentation honored Chase's childhood dreams of serving in law enforcement and his legacy of compassion through organ donation. Sergeant Stovall, Officers Unruh, Lai, Tanzosh and Brandt presented his family with a commemorative shadow box.

PROCLAMATIONS: Make a Difference Day - October 24, 2026

Mayor Nelson proclaimed October 24, 2026, Make a Difference Day in the City of Billings, recognizing community volunteerism. Jake Milliron, Parks and Recreation Community Outreach and Engagement Coordinator, reported a volunteer fair planned with United Way at the Parks and Recreation campus from 10:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. to connect residents with service opportunities.

COUNCIL REPORTS:

Councilmember Kennedy reported a legislative breakfast scheduled October 13 at the Northern Hotel, with legislators invited to discuss City priorities including public safety, infrastructure, tax burden, economic development and land use. He also reported an October 14 urban renewal tour from 8:30 A.M. to 11:30 A.M. and a City-County-Schools meeting afterwards that would be held in Council Chambers.

Councilmember Lindley reported that the Aggressive Driving in School Zones Policy Committee had met. He indicated the City requested accelerated consideration of school-zone changes near Will James Middle School on Grand Avenue, and the matter was placed on the State Transportation Commission's December 10 agenda instead of waiting until February. The committee was also reviewing the City's school-zone policy.

INTERIM CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS - KEVIN IFFLAND

Mr. Iffland reported one ex parte communication received after 3:00 P.M. concerning Regular Agenda Item 10, the Lampman Park sale.

PUBLIC COMMENT on "NON-PUBLIC HEARING" Agenda Items: 1, and 5a ONLY. Speaker sign-in required. (Comments are limited to three (3) minutes or as set by the Mayor. Please sign the roster at the back of Council Chambers. 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.)

There was no public comment given.

Councilmember Aspenlieder separated Consent Agenda Item 1M2 because of business-related involvement and abstained from the vote.

Councilmember Aguirre separated Consent Agenda Item 1L for discussion.

Motion: I move to approve the Consent Agenda, with the exception of Consent Agenda Items 1L and 1M2, moved for separation.

Moved by Councilmember Boyett

Seconded by Councilmember Neese

APPROVED 10-1, Councilmember O'Donnell opposed

1. **CONSENT AGENDA**

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

1.

	Applicant Name	Board	Term Begins	Term Ends
1	Stephen Wahrlich (re-appointment)	Tourism Business Improvement District	10/01/2026	9/30/2030
2	Denise Joy	Community Development (at-large)	10/1/2026	12/31/2029
3	Charley Nunley	Community Development (at-large)	10/1/2026	12/31/2027
4	Beth Allen	Human Relations Commission (unexpired term of Tammy Schwabe)	10/1/2026	12/31/2030
5	Mark Van Waes	Library Board (unexpired term of Trudi Paulson)	10/1/2026	12/31/2029
6	Brennan DeBoer	Yellowstone Historic Preservation Board (City of Billings)	10/1/2026	5/31/2028
7	Dr. Rachael De La Cruz	Yellowstone Historic Preservation Board (at-large)	10/1/2026	6/30/2028

B. **Bid Awards:**

1. **W.O. 26-11: Monad Road and 36th Street West Intersection Improvements.** (Opened 10/06/26) Recommend Knife River - Billings.

C. **Contract** with Crowley Fleck for Montana legislative lobbying services.

D. **Purchase** Weiler model asphalt paver for Public Works - Streets and Traffic.

E. **Purchase** Rook armored response vehicle for the Police Department Special Weapons And Tactics (SWAT) team.

F. **Nurse Navigation System Integration** into the Billings City/County 911 Communication Center.

G. **Amendment No. 6**, Airport advertising and marketing consulting social media management with Madison Agency DBA Kinetic Marketing and Creative.

H. **Airport Authority Board** appointment process.

I. **2027 Highway Safety Grant** for the Billings Adult Misdemeanor Treatment Court.

J. **Preliminary Plat** for Shiloh Flats Subdivision. *Quasi-Judicial

K. **Resolution 26-11389** amending and restating the stormwater bond parameters.

- L. **Second/Final Reading Ordinance 26-5937** repealing the Animal Control Advisory Board, Section 2-511 - 517, Billings, Montana City Code (BMCC), in its entirety.

Councilmember Aguirre opposed repealing the board, stating that removing advisory committees reduces opportunities for residents to engage directly with City government.

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

Moved by Councilmember Neese

Seconded by Councilmember Boyett

APPROVED 9-2, Councilmembers Nicholson and Aguirre opposed

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

1. September 8, 2026
2. September 15, 2026

Motion: I move to approve Consent Agenda Item 1M2, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember Kennedy

Seconded by Councilmember Pitman

APPROVED 10-0, Councilmember Aspenlieder abstained

3. September 21, 2026

REGULAR AGENDA:

2. **PUBLIC HEARING AND FIRST READING ORDINANCE** amending Billings, Montana City Code (BMCC), Section 2-552, Human Relations Commission. Staff recommends approval.

Karla Stanton, Human Resources Director, explained that the change removed the ordinance's fixed meeting date and time so the Commission could meet monthly on dates published on its website, and corrected a related obsolete reference to the number of members. In response to Councilmember O'Donnell, Gina Dahl, City Attorney, indicated that 48 hours was generally the notice requirement for committee meetings.

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 the first reading ordinance amending Billings, Montana City Code (BMCC), Section 2-552, Human Relations Commission, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember Neese

Seconded by Councilmember Pitman

APPROVED 11-0

3. **PUBLIC HEARING AND FIRST READING ORDINANCE** amending Billings, Montana City Code (BMCC) Article 24-441 through 24-443.1, 24-445, 24-1004, 24-1007, 24-1008, and 24-1011, Traffic and Motor Vehicles. Staff recommends approval.

Tracy Scott, Parking Manager, presented amendments to align accessible-parking provisions with state law, including replacement of outdated terminology, a \$250 accessible-parking violation fine, clarification that access aisles are not parking spaces, and an increase in the vehicle boot fee from \$50 to \$200. She explained that one consistent violation amount would avoid uncertainty when multiple enforcement methods are used.

No public testimony was given during public hearing.

Motion: Having conducted a public hearing, considered written and spoken public testimony, I move to approve the first reading ordinance amending Billings, Montana City Code (BMCC) Article 24-441 through 24-443.1, 24-445, 24-1004, 24-1007, 24-1008, and 24-1011, Traffic and Motor Vehicles, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember Boyett
Seconded by Councilmember Pitman

Councilmember O'Donnell questioned whether the three-business-day period for presenting a valid accessible-parking placard should be extended before an appeal was required.

Councilmember Neese indicated he supported the updates but objected to placing specific fee amounts in ordinances rather than resolutions.

APPROVED 10-1, Councilmember Neese opposed

4. **PUBLIC HEARING AND FIRST READING ORDINANCE** expanding the boundaries of Ward 5 to include recently annexed property in Annexation 21-09: generally located east of South 48th Street West and south of Georgina Drive. Staff recommends approval.

Hunter Kelly, Planner, explained that the ordinance implements the Ward 5 boundary designation for the previously approved second phase of the Ridgeline Subdivision. No additional annexation action was required.

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 the first reading ordinance expanding the boundaries of Ward 5, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember Boyett
Seconded by Councilmember O'Donnell

APPROVED 11-0

5. **PUBLIC HEARING AND RESOLUTION 26-11290 APPROVING ANNEXATION 26-06:** generally located south of Hesper Road and east of South 48th Street West. Staff recommends conditional approval. ***Quasi-Judicial**

Hunter Kelly, Planner, described the approximately 52-acre Mullen annexation, including existing agricultural zoning, proposed mixed residential and neighborhood-use zoning, and staff's finding that the request satisfied the seven criteria in the City annexation policy. Councilmember Boyett asked that future agenda packets include the original annexation petition. Councilmember

Nicholson asked about the parcel's noncontiguous location. Mr. Kelly explained that an urban planning study had brought the property within the appropriate limits-of-annexation designation.

During the public hearing, Kolten Knatterud, IMEG representative for the applicant, explained that water and sewer infrastructure was nearby and the development agreement requires dedication of right-of-way for a potential future roundabout at Hesper Road and South 48th Street West, although none was presently planned. The applicant would improve its half of each adjacent roadway, including widening, curb and sidewalk or trail improvements. No additional public testimony was given.

Motion: Having conducted a public hearing and considered written and spoken public testimony, I move to approve a resolution conditionally approving Annexation 26-06, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember Boyett
Seconded by Councilmember Neese

Councilmember O'Donnell stated existing Hesper Road capacity was not so burdened as to warrant opposition. Councilmember Nicholson opposed expanding the City's service area without a funding mechanism for additional fire and police protection.

APPROVED 9-2, Councilmembers Nicholson and Aguirre opposed

Motion: Having conducted a public hearing, considered written and spoken public testimony, I move to approve a resolution conditionally approving Annexation 26-06, as recommended by staff.

a. ANNEXATION AGREEMENT with JMS Holding, LLC. Staff recommends approval.

There was no presentation.

Motion: I move to approve the annexation agreement with JMS Holding, LLC, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember Boyett
Seconded by Councilmember Kennedy
APPROVED 11-0

6. PUBLIC HEARING AND FIRST READING ORDINANCE expanding the boundaries of Ward 5 to include recently annexed property in Annexation 26-06: generally located south of Hesper Road and east of South 48th Street West. Staff recommends approval.

Kevin Iffland, Interim City Administrator, indicated there was no presentation, but staff was available for questions.

No public testimony was given during the public hearing.

Motion: Having conducted a public hearing and considered written and spoken public testimony, I move to approve the first reading ordinance expanding Ward 5 boundaries, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember O'Donnell
Seconded by Councilmember Boyett
APPROVED 11-0

7. **PUBLIC HEARING AND RESOLUTION OF INTENT 26-11391** to dispose of Beartooth Parcel. Staff recommends approval.

Gavin Woltjer, Parks, Recreation and Public Lands Director, presented the first step of the two-step property-disposition process for an approximate 0.7-acre parcel currently used as part of a field associated with an elementary school. He indicated Council would decide whether to proceed with disposition, not whether the property would ultimately be sold, retained, traded or donated.

Councilmember O'Donnell asked whether transfer to the school district could be considered. Mr. Woltjer indicated that such options would be evaluated at the second stage.

No public testimony was given during the public hearing.

Motion: Having conducted a public hearing and considered written and spoken public testimony, I move to approve a resolution of intent to proceed with disposal of the Beartooth Parcel, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember Pitman
Seconded by Councilmember Kennedy

Councilmembers Pitman and Neese supported proceeding and spoke of past efforts to resolve ownership and use of the land in connection with the school.

APPROVED 11-0

8. **PUBLIC HEARING AND RESOLUTION OF INTENT 26-11392** to dispose of Career Center Park. Staff recommends approval.

Gavin Woltjer, Parks, Recreation and Public Lands Director, presented the first-step disposition request for approximately 2.44 acres north of the Career Center Park.

Councilmember O'Donnell asked whether the unusual-shaped parcel had been dedicated as roadway. Mr. Woltjer stated no known road dedication existed and discussed its limited accessibility.

No public testimony was given during the public hearing.

Motion: Having conducted a public hearing and considered written and spoken public testimony, I move to approve a resolution of intent to proceed with disposal of Career Center Park, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember Kennedy
Seconded by Councilmember Boyett
APPROVED 11-0

9. **PUBLIC HEARING AND RESOLUTION OF INTENT 26-11393** to dispose of Wilson Park. Staff recommends approval.

Gavin Woltjer, Parks, Recreation and Public Lands Director, presented the first-step request to consider disposition of approximately 15 acres of Wilson Park. Mr. Woltjer confirmed this was an initial intent decision and not a final transfer.

No public testimony was given during the public hearing.

Motion: Having conducted a public hearing and considered written and spoken public testimony, I move to approve a resolution of intent to proceed with disposal of Wilson Park, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember Neese
Seconded by Councilmember Kennedy
APPROVED 11-0

Mr. Woltjer additionally reported that another property remained actively listed, more initial disposition requests would be presented in November, and he intended to remove Rush Park from disposition consideration because of its inclusion in the Parks Master Plan development process.

10. **PUBLIC HEARING AND APPROVAL OF PURCHASE AND SALE AGREEMENT** for Lampman Park. Staff recommends approval.

Gavin Woltjer, Parks, Recreation and Public Lands Director, reviewed the approximately 6.04-acre property and the disposition process initiated in 2013. The listing price was \$825,000. Three offers were received; two were at the asking price and Cal Kunkel submitted an offer of \$834,800, with contingencies including land-use mapping and zoning.

Wyeth Friday, Planning and Community Services Director, explained the distinction between Urban Residential and Urban Residential Limited future land use designations and the need for future land use map action. He anticipated net proceeds could be allocated to parks projects through a subsequent amendment to the prior resolution, rather than the existing designation for Lampman Strip.

The following individuals provided testimony during the public hearing:

- **Casey O'Malley** opposed selling Lampman Park, arguing that neighborhood traffic, pedestrian safety near Big Sky Elementary School, and long-term open space opportunities favored retention as a park.
- **Don Sterhan** said his company had made a full price offer and asked the City to review how competing offers were communicated and evaluated.
- **Stan Bayley** urged Council to consult nearby residents again about possible neighborhood funding for park improvements and expressed concern about traffic from future development.

- **Brittani Hunter**, the City's listing broker, described the marketing and offer process, stating that prospective buyers were informed of multiple offers and could amend or replace their offers before submission.
- **Mary Pankratz**, expressed concern about speeding, school children, and potential multi-family development, and asked for single-family zoning if the sale proceeded.
- **Ryan Icopini** described neighborhood use of the undeveloped park area and preferred retaining it for children and families; alternatively, he favored single-family housing.

No further public testimony was given during the public hearing.

Motion: Having considered written and spoken public testimony, I move to approve the Purchase and Sale Agreement (PSA) with Cal Kunkel for the purchase of Lampman Park, as recommended by staff.

Moved by Councilmember Boyett
Seconded by Councilmember Neese

During discussion, Councilmember O'Donnell questioned whether the proposed housing would fit surrounding lot sizes and raised concerns about the offer process. Councilmember Kennedy proposed postponing the decision for 30 days so all three bidders could resubmit offers. City Attorney, Gina Dahl, cited BMCC, Section 22-902(b), explaining that it was in the Council's discretion to select, conditionally accept or reject offers if it was deemed in the City's best interests.

Substitute motion: I move to pause the sale decision for 30 days and allow all three bidders to resubmit offers.

Moved by Councilmember Kennedy
Seconded by Councilmember O'Donnell

Councilmember Aspenlieder opposed reopening a process already underway, although he supported clarifying bidding procedures for future sales. Councilmember Neese stated that the City's broker had described equal notice to prospective purchasers.

FAILED 2-9, Councilmembers Shaw, Nicholson, Neese, Pitman, Aguirre, Aspenlieder, Lindley, Boyett and Mayor Nelson opposed

Councilmember Aguirre opposed the sale, citing correspondence describing wildlife and neighborhood attachment to the park. Councilmember Lindley recognized concerns about speeding and traffic on 30th Street and urged review through any future development process. Councilmember Aspenlieder suggested staff consider traffic-calming measures and appropriate intersection controls on 30th and 31st Streets. Councilmember Shaw discussed the City's limited parks funding, previous unsuccessful funding proposals, and support for retaining proceeds for improvements at established parks near the neighborhood, while also calling for better future disposition procedures.

Councilmember O'Donnell left the meeting at 7:14 P.M. and returned at 7:17 P.M.

A vote on the original motion was taken.

APPROVED 8-2, Councilmembers Kennedy and Aguirre opposed; Councilmember O'Donnell absent for this vote.

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:

- **Erin Gallagher** requested a formal review of school and crossing-guard safety practices near Boulder Elementary School and throughout Billings Public Schools, expressing concern about traffic incidents, outdated procedures and inadequate follow-through on parent safety complaints.
- **Casey O'Malley** voiced support for the waterpark project at North Park.

No further public comment was given.

COUNCIL INITIATIVES:

Councilmember Aspenlieder asked about scheduling his initiative concerning Council meeting duration and operations. The Mayor indicated it was anticipated for a forthcoming work session.

ADJOURN: 7:22 P.M.



CITY OF BILLINGS

BY: _____

Mike Nelson, Mayor

ATTEST:

BY: _____

Denise R. Bohlman, City Clerk