

CITY OF BILLINGS
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION SUMMARY
June 1, 2026 – 5:30 PM
Council Chambers – City Hall, 316 N. 26th St., Billings, Montana

Council Present

Councilmember Shaw
Councilmember Nicholson
Councilmember Neese
Councilmember Aguirre
Councilmember Kennedy
Councilmember Aspenlieder
Councilmember Lindley
Councilmember Boyett
Councilmember O'Donnell

Absent/Excused

Mayor Nelson
Councilmember Pitman

Staff Present

Kevin Iffland, Interim City Administrator
Jennifer Duray, Public Works Deputy Director

PUBLIC COMMENT (Agenda and Non-Agenda Items)

• Jeff Ketelsen, announced the Billings Fly Fishers' annual free Kids Fishing Day to be held June 6 at Laurel Pond and invited families to attend.

AGENDA ITEM #1 – Wholesale Wastewater Rates

Jennifer Duray, Public Works Deputy Director, presented the proposed FY2027 wholesale wastewater rates and reviewed a revised methodology developed collaboratively with refinery customers over the past year. The methodology allocates costs based on treatment capacity requirements and actual wastewater flow and loading characteristics.

Council discussed the use of seven-day rolling averages, treatment capacity requirements, surcharge alternatives, predictability of future rates, reserve capacity needs, and ensuring that wholesale customers pay an equitable share of system costs without shifting costs to retail customers. Staff indicated the revised methodology would be used for future rate studies and recommended bringing the rates forward for public hearing and adoption on June 22.

AGENDA ITEM #2 – Residential Cardboard Collection and Recycling Program

Jennifer Duray presented an analysis of the City's residential cardboard collection and recycling program. She reviewed participation levels, operating costs, landfill diversion impacts, and recycling market conditions. Staff reported that approximately 4,000

customers participate monthly and that the program costs significantly more than the landfill space savings it provides.

Staff presented several options, including maintaining the existing program, discontinuing the program, or replacing it with quarterly citywide curbside cleanup events. Staff recommended replacing the program with four annual cleanup events to provide broader community benefit while reducing costs.

Council discussed recycling goals, participation rates, operational costs, landfill subsidies, customer convenience, cleanup event logistics, public education needs, and the role of private recycling providers. Councilmembers expressed differing views regarding elimination of the program versus implementation of periodic cleanup events.

AGENDA ITEM #3 – Stormwater Fee Credits

Jennifer Duray introduced discussion regarding stormwater utility fee credits for commercial properties. Councilmember Aspenlieder outlined concerns raised by commercial property owners who have invested in on-site stormwater detention and treatment facilities and requested consideration of a formal credit or appeals process.

Council discussed the original implementation of the stormwater utility, equity among commercial property owners, potential criteria for credits, administrative costs, and the need for a structured review process. Staff noted previous consultant work on the issue and indicated that additional evaluation would require staff time and committee review.

Council provided direction to staff to evaluate the creation of a commercial stormwater fee credit program and appeals process, including consideration of on-site detention and storage facilities. Staff indicated the Stormwater Advisory Committee would likely be reconvened to assist with the review.

Highlight Upcoming Agenda Items of Council Interest

Interim City Administrator Kevin Iffland highlighted a June 5 work session regarding domestic violence issues and reviewed several items scheduled for the June 8 Council meeting, including FY2027 budget options, street maintenance assessments, storm sewer fees, and budget amendments.

Council Discussion

Councilmember Kennedy announced upcoming Legislative Committee meetings on June 17 and June 24 from 4-5 PM.

Councilmember Aspenlieder noted the June 10 Budget and Finance Committee meeting from 9-11 AM.

PUBLIC COMMENT – NON-AGENDA ITEMS

No audio for name – spoke about handicap parking signage compliance.

Michael Mansfield spoke about enforcement of illegal fireworks regulations.

ADJOURN

6:34 P.M.