

City Council Work Session

5:30 PM
Council Chambers
November 16, 2015

ATTENDANCE:

Mayor/Council (please check) x Hanel, x Cromley, x Yakawich, Cimmino, x Pitman, x McFadden, x Bird, x Swanson, x McCall, x Crouch, x Brown.

Crouch and Bird departed at break – 7:30.

ADJOURN TIME: 8:25 to executive session

Agenda

TOPIC #1	Quarterly Updates
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- BIRD: Scott Chesarek : update on personnel and projects. Written summary submitted.
- Downtown Billings Partnership: Greg Krueger update on TID. Yakawich: definition of blight? Krueger: blight defined in state and federal law. Discussion about what buildings and conditions contribute to blight. McFadden: common to buy property expecting TIF assistance? Krueger: exactly what we hope happens if there’s new investment. Bird: groceries and drug stores, evening activity and retailers.
- SBURA: Steve Zier – project updates, new private investments. Accomplishments.
- Budget: Staff is present for questions.
- Health Fund: Mayor: ask health committee to give serious consideration to bidding the health services.
- Initiatives: Tina Volek – Pitman: report on inner belt loop right of way acquisition.
- Strategic Plan: Volek – will send later
- Park District 1: Mike Whitaker – completed projects, upcoming projects. Brown: Stewart park circulation planning and Poly Vista bathroom. Bird: est cost of replacing bathhouses? Est. \$500k.

- Public comments:
- Tom Zurbuchen: 1747 Wicks Lane, Billings, MT - why didn’t you invite newly elected councilmembers to participate in the PIO discussion. Cromley initiative on ethics code needs to be resolved. SBURD – Miller Crossing investments.
- Dwayne Branger: 322 Orchard Lane, Billings, MT – attended design meeting – want to park on the improved street. Turn lane – State Ave a poor example. Turn lane will turn into a passing lane. Lewis not safe. Orchard speed needs to be 25 mph and don’t need turn lane.
- Kevin Nelson: 4235 Bruce Avenue, Billings, MT - TIF glaring example of incompetent government. Preserve all documents between parties about paying off the King Ave East

SID. Phipps and High Sierra need toilets. What is the state interest in TIF districts, esp in residential districts. Billings will be the focus.

- Sandra Mckee: 2901 Monad Road, Billings, MT - ethics board chairman. New complaints this year, new board, horrible experience for accused and for board members. Council needs to revise the ethics code. Board members must be oriented before hearing complaints. Process worked, but needs changes.

TOPIC #2	Review of 2015-2019 Transportation Improvement Plan – Amendment #2
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Scott Walker: packet for 11/23 has amendment to the TIP. Handout given earlier on the contents of the amendment. 12-13 projects changed enough to cause amendments. 1st Avenue North major rehab is a new project. Explains difference between major rehabilitation and pavement preservation.
- Public comments:
- Tom Zurbuchen: no long range plan for Zimmerman Trail. City has to develop one.
- Kevin Nelson: question about new middle school in Heights. MDT has been let on Bench and construction will be built next year. Great asset. Need a plan for Barrett road, which will be impacted when school opens.

TOPIC #3	Public Information Officer Discussion
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Tina Volek: sent information last week, subject of community conversations, MT and area cities with PIOs and info about them. Pluses and minuses to having the position. Could develop job description and bring back to Council. If added, an SBR in the FY 17 budget.
- Hanel: Council needs to seriously consider it but balance against cost.
- Swanson: Volek recommendation?
- Volek: city needs to seriously consider it. Future uncertain so funding concerns. Examine how much time being spent on social media and would it be better to centralize.
- Pitman: run position through the PBB process. Think that it's Council's job to communicate.
- McCall: PIO a good idea and new council should consider. City doing well but need to step it up to next level.
- McFadden: \$ we spend on PIO, could be spent on another police officer.
- Brown: PIO increases chances for successful levy campaigns.
- Yakawich: roles of PIOs? Volek: Missoula descriptions is pretty standard, have job descriptions too. Consider funding it next year but start working up more info now.
- McCall: agree that we get PS personnel hired.
- Pitman: Tracy Livingston letter supporting position.

- Public comments:
- Connie Wardell: P.O. Box 21432, Billings, MT - PIO mentioned at community conversations and people support city sending out info, but also want someone to listen to them. Public relations person. Council do the work but working in silos. No one listening to everyone and assimilating it for Council.
- Tom Zurbuchen: concur with Wardell: Website is hard to navigate but info usually there. People want instant access to everything and don't know how that gets done.
- Richard Clark: 1207 25th St. West, Billings, MT - would like for Council to share the additional info with the newly elected officials.

TOPIC #4	Council Discussion
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Hanel: remind people that we don't pick up leaves from the street. They must be in a container.

TOPIC #5	Public Comment on Items not on the Agenda
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Kevin Nelson: how will city comply with new state law that requires minutes from executive sessions. McFadden: agree with premise that council needs to discuss litigation privately? Volek: Volek, Bruce McCandless and Brent Brooks have been deputized and will keep notes.
- Dennis Ulvestad: 3040 Central Avenue, Billings, MT - veteran and concerned citizen: flag display – dirty and tattered need to be replaced. Volek: trying to find a way to replace flags. Brown: will Federal delegation help us with flags?
- Connie Wardell: happy to donate White House flag that she can't fly.