

**CITY OF COLUMBIA FALLS
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
HELD FEBRUARY 16, 2021**

REGULAR MEETING – 7:00 P.M.

Mayor Barnhart called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Mayor Don Barnhart, Councilor Darin Fisher, Councilor Doug Karper, Councilor Paula Robinson Councilor Jenny Lovering, Councilor John Piper and Councilor Mike Shepard.

Also Present: City Manager Nicosia, City Clerk Staland, Deputy City Attorney Breck and Sergeant Murphy.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Councilor Lovering motioned to approve the agenda, seconded by Councilor Shepard and the motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA: Councilor Piper made motion to approve the Consent Agenda noting all claims are in order, seconded by Councilor Shepard with council voting as follows. Ayes: Fisher, Karper, Lovering, Piper, Robinson, Shepard and Barnhart.

Approval of Claims - February 16, 2021 - \$494,355.72

Approval of Payroll Claims - February 5, 2021 - \$85,057.42.

Approval of February 1, 2021 Regular City Council Meeting Minutes

Mayor Barnhart read the following Updated Notice of Public Hearings:

UPDATED NOTICE OF HEARINGS - MARCH 1ST: The Columbia Falls City-County Planning Board held public hearings for the following items at their regular meeting on Tuesday, February 9, 2021. The Columbia Falls City Council will hold subsequent hearings on Monday March 1, 2021 starting at 7:00 p.m.

Request for a Conditional Use Permit to construct a House and Accessory Dwelling over 800 Square Feet:

Lori Bjork is requesting a Conditional Use Permit to construct a new house of 2,600 square feet and convert the existing house of 1,700 square feet into an accessory dwelling unit. The Columbia Falls Zoning Code requires a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for Accessory Dwelling Units that exceed 800 square feet in residential zones. The 0.98 acre property is described as Assessor's Tract 3AC in SE4NW4SE4 of Section 4, Township 30 North, Range 20 West, P.M.M., Flathead County. The property is located 1550 14th Street EN but also has frontage on 13th Street EN.

Request for a Conditional Use Permit to construct an Accessory Dwelling in the existing house in the CB-2 Zoning District:

Kevin and Cindy Hooker (current owners) and Six Peaks, LLC (prospective owners) are requesting a Conditional Use Permit to convert half of the existing 1,288 square foot house into an accessory apartment. The house is located at 28 6th Street East in Columbia Falls and is zoned CB-2 (General Business). The zoning code allows Single Family Residential use as a permitted use in the CB-2 and it allows an Accessory Apartment within the

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same building with a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). The 6,250 square feet property is described as Lot 11, Block 45 of the Columbia Falls Townsite in Section 8, Township 30 North, Range 20 West, P.M.M., Flathead County.

NOTE: Following hearing may be postponed:

Request to change the zoning from CR-5 (Two Family Residential) to CRA-1 (Multi-Family Residential) in the Columbia Falls Zoning Jurisdiction:

The applicant, Toby Gilchrist, is requesting a zone change for 302 Meadow Lake Boulevard from the current CR-5 Two-Family designation to a CRA-1 Multi-Family residential designation. The vacant property is approximately 2.5 acres in size and is located approximately ¼ mile north of Highway 2 on Meadow Lake Blvd. The property is described as Assessors' Tract's 2BDAE and 2BDAEA of Section 7, Township 30 North, Range 20 West, P.M.M., Flathead County.

NEW BUSINESS:

Columbia Falls Transportation Plan & Quiet Zone Proposal Update - Wade Kline, PTP, KLJ Engineering
Mr. Kline presented the draft Transportation Plan to the City Council. Reports completed thus far include: Existing Conditions – Background Data, Public Engagement Summary – Summary of public input and Reports Online – columbiafalls.transportationplan.net. Mr. Kline said he was pleased with the public responses, with 187 individual comments – 354 reactions and 261 unique visitors. The Public Engagement Summary Online Survey Overview showed the following concerns. 44% Traffic Safety, 20% Bike/Pedestrian Safety, 13% Bike/Pedestrian Gap, 10% Congestion, 8% Transit and 4% miscellaneous. Traffic Safety & Analysis Intersection Considerations include Hwy 2/Hwy 40, several intersections along Hwy 2, 12th Street/13th Avenue, Nucleus /5th Street, and Truck Route/6th Ave.

Mr. Kline said the engineers have taken an initial look at a possible Quiet Zone in Columbia Falls as part of the overall Transportation Plan; an in depth proposal would require a separate contract. Kline reported that the Consensus during the onsite visit was to close the 4th Ave. EN crossing with a potential center median on 2nd Ave. WN with pedestrian accommodations.

Authorize the Call for Bids - Tennis Court Construction Hoerner Park Resolution

City Manager Nicosia said the Public Work's Director will be ready to call for bids and publish on Sunday February 28th. Nicosia noted that the Council previously approved moving the tennis courts from Columbus Park to Hoerner Park. The estimate for moving the four tennis courts was \$143,000. Nicosia said we will also look at playground equipment for the northern section of the block. Staff recommends approval to call for bids.

Councilor Fisher motioned to approve the call for bids, seconded by Councilor Shepard with council voting as follows. Ayes: Fisher, Karper, Lovering, Piper, Robinson, Shepard and Barnhart.

ORDINANCES / RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution# 1841 - A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Columbia Falls Authorizing Investment Accounts with Multi-Bank Securities, Inc.

City Manager Nicosia said this Resolution is to update to an existing Resolution to add Shawn Bates as Finance Director.

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Councilor Lovering motioned to approve Resolution #1841, seconded by Councilor Robinson with council voting as follows. Ayes: Karper, Lovering, Piper, Robinson, Shepard and Barnhart.

REPORTS / BUSINESS FROM MAYOR & COUNCIL

Councilor Shepard said the berm in the center of Nucleus is still a problem. Nicosia said she spoke with Justin Juelfs and there was improvement.

Councilor Karper said he and City Planner Mulcahy went to the river bank off Riparian Dr. to look at the trees that were removed. Mulcahy agreed there were trees removed that should not have been. Karper said below the 30 foot mark they are not supposed to use anything other than hand tools which was not the case. Mulcahy will make contact with the property owners to let them know they are not to do that level of clearing along the riverbank.

Councilor Karper said the Arbor Day Celebration is scheduled for May 7th, 2021 and the Arbor Day celebration typically includes having the 5th graders attend the celebration. As it is right now we will not have students as the school is not allowing field trips at this time. Karper noted that one of the grant requirements is to have an Arbor Day Celebration. Lovering said the kids aren't allowed to have field trips but you could arrange the kids to come outside to attend the educational portion of the celebration. Barnhart asked if we could plant some trees at the school. Nicosia said the City likes to have the trees on city property to ensure they are taken care of as required by the grant. Karper said we could have a celebration near the Vets Home so the veterans can attend and we can replace the trees in the Veteran's Memorial Park. Karper said he would keep Council updated as the celebration gets closer. Nicosia noted that DNRC abated the celebration requirement for the grant last year due to COVID restrictions.

Mayor Barnhart said he found a letter from the City in 1997 in regards to a public hearing for a proposal of closing the railroad crossing at 4th Ave.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

City Manager Nicosia said the City opened bids today on the 6th Ave W. overlay project, and they came in very good. The apparent low bid was just below \$192,000 which was better than our expected \$250,000 estimate. Nicosia also reported that the City received an update from the Service Line Protection Company that said we have a fantastic response here in Columbia Falls. Nicosia said the City has only had one resident that has used the service but the \$8,500 on their leaking water line.

Nicosia noted that the legislature has some interesting bills including HB 395 that would not allow any zoning decisions to be made during a public emergency, such as the current pandemic. Nicosia submitted the City information to the MLCT to be included in the testimony. Nicosia noted that while the City had approved some planning/zoning decisions, the process was still open and available to the public.

Nicosia reported on the CFAC meeting, noting that the HHN did a fantastic job on summarizing the meeting. The testing is complete and the parties are now working on preparing the cleanup order which will be released for public comment in July. At the meeting they announced Manager Mike Cirian is retiring and they introduced Ken Champagne as his replacement.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

Deputy City Attorney Stephanie Breck updated council on the Cahill Board of Adjustment appeal.

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MISCELLANEOUS

Finance Report - January 2021

Police Activity - January 2021

Fire Dept. Activity Report – YTD

ADJOURN

Mayor Barnhart

City Clerk Staaland