

**CITY OF COLUMBIA FALLS
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
HELD NOVEMBER 18, 2024**

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

ROLL CALL: Councilor King via Zoom, Councilor Lovering, Councilor Piper, Councilor Price, Councilor Robinson, Councilor Shepard and Mayor Barnhart.

Also present: Interim City Manager Shrives, City Clerk Staaland, City Attorney Breck via Zoom and Police Chief Stephens.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

CONSENT AGENDA: Councilor Piper made motion to approve the consent agenda, noting all claims appeared to be in order, seconded by Councilor Price with council voting as follows. Ayes: Robinson, Shepard, King, Lovering, Piper, Price and Barnhart.

Approval of Claims - November 18, 2024 - \$442,491.03

Approval of Payroll Claims - November 8, 2024 - \$109,546.38

Approval of Regular Council Meeting Minutes - November 4, 2024

A PIF payment plan agreement made between Howard Range, of 300 1st Street W. and the City of Columbia Falls.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Change Order #2 to the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project

This Change Order adds an additional cost of \$58,198.75 to the project. One of the requirements of SRF funding was that the project must follow the requirement of using American Iron and Steel. When the project was bid, the project did not have the American Iron and Steel requirement.

Once it was decided to utilize SRF funding, the city requested costs from the contractor to add American Iron and Steel to the contract price. The contractor went back to their supplier and asked for revised costs to include American Iron and Steel to the project. Those are the new costs that are in Change Order #2 said Shrives.

The contract increase to the project is \$58,198.75. This will change the project costs from \$4,280,000. to \$4,338,198.75.

Interim City Manager Shrives recommends approval of Task Order #2.

Councilor Lovering motioned to approve Change Order #2 to the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project, seconded by Councilor Shepard with council voting as follows. Ayes: Shepard, Lovering, Piper, Price, Robinson and Barnhart. Nay: King

Selection of Executive Recruiting Firm for the City Manager Search

A Request for Proposal (RFP) was issued by the city to fifteen executive search firms. Nine proposals were submitted to the city. The hiring committee was provided the proposals and after the members completed their review, two firms were chosen. The hiring committee asked City Manager Shrives to conduct reference checks and an interview with the two firms, Clear Career Professionals LLC and CPS HR Consulting. After completing the interviews and his analysis of each firm, City Manager Shrives provided the results to the hiring committee. After review by the hiring committee, their recommendation was to move forward and negotiate a contract with the firm Clear Career Professionals, LLC.

Mayor Barnhart said he was on the hiring committee with Councilor Robinson and Councilor King and they reviewed all proposals and came up with the same conclusion as City Manager Shrives.

Councilor Piper motioned to approve Clear Career Professionals, LLC as the recruiting firm for the City Manager search, seconded by Councilor Lovering with council voting as follows. Ayes: King, Lovering, Piper, Price, Robinson, Shepard and Barnhart.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ex-Officio - Local Government Review Study Commission

This appointment is to fill the council Ex-Officio position on the Local Government Review Study Commission. John Piper said he would like to serve as the Ex-Officio on the Local Government Review Study Commission.

Councilor Lovering made motion to appoint John Piper as the Ex-Officio - Local Government Review Study Commission, seconded by Councilor Price and the motion carried unanimously.

Flathead County Solid Waste Board and Board of Health

These appointments are to fill the Solid Waste term thru 12/31/25 and the Board of Health term from 01/01/25 thru 12/31/27.

Mayor Barnhart said he currently serves on both boards and is happy to renew his terms as he enjoys contributing to both Boards.

Councilor Shepard motioned to appoint Mayor Barnhart to the Flathead County Solid Waste Board and Board of Health, seconded by Councilor Robinson and the motion carried unanimously.

Acceptance of Saint Richards Subdivision Water Main Extension and release of letter of credit

On June 29, 2023, a Subdivision Improvement Agreement (SIA) was entered into between the City of Columbia Falls and the Boys and Girls Club of Glacier Country Inc. All requirements that were to be met are outlined in the SIA. Additionally, a requirement of the SIA was a guarantee of funds in the sum of \$239,342. That guarantee was provided in the form of an Irrevocable Letter of Credit provided by Freedom Bank.

The work has been completed by the Boys and Girls Club of Glacier Country Inc. and the Public Works Director has provided a letter outlining that all requirements of the SIA have been met. With the acceptance of the infrastructure, the City Council will also need to approve the release of the Letter of Credit for return to Freedom Bank and the Interim City Manager will provide a letter notifying the bank of the release of the irrevocable Letter of Credit.

CITY OF COLUMBIA FALLS CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES HELD ON NOVEMBER 18, 2024

Councilor Lovering motioned to accept the Saint Richards Subdivision Water Main Extension, seconded by Councilor Robinson and the motion carried unanimously.

Councilor Robinson made motion to release the Letter of Credit, seconded by Councilor Lovering with council voting as follows. Ayes: Lovering, Piper, Price, Robinson, Shepard, King and Barnhart.

REPORTS / BUSINESS FROM MAYOR & COUNCIL

Councilor Price inquired about the Parks Committee meeting. City Manager Shrives said the Parks Committee meeting has not been scheduled yet. Public Works Director Bates will schedule the meeting soon. The topic of the meeting will be funds that are available for playground equipment.

Councilor Price asked if the Police Department will help with parking and signs during the Night of Lights Parade. Police Chief Stephens replied that is correct. He has been in contact with the Lions Club concerning pedestrians in the road way. We also have permission from BNSF to stage the parade on BNSF property.

Mayor Barnhart asked if the city can ensure the Christmas tree lights are operable before the Night of Lights Parade. City Clerk Staaland said she has contacted JD Thinning and he will make sure the lights are on before the parade starts.

Mayor Barnhart said years ago the Jaycees use to post flags of the 12 holidays throughout town. Mayor Barnhart said nobody posts the flags anymore. Mayor Barnhart would encourage a civic group to start the program up again. Councilor Price said she believes the Lions Club has the flags and she will bring it up at the next meeting.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

City Manager Shrives asked Kelly and Justin how the sound is through Zoom, they both replied they could hear fine. Staff is working on the sound system and has done some adjustments with the existing sound and will continue researching microphones for each station.

City staff has looked into the 15 minute parking on Nucleus Ave. Staff has a call into the state and are waiting to hear back from them. There used to be a downtown business improvement district, which may be a route to go, along with putting business owners in charge of managing employee parking said Shrives.

The stop sign on 3rd Ave. E. has been reviewed by staff and the small stop sign is for the bike lane only, it is not a street sign. The crosswalk will be addressed by the street department when weather permits.

The new Finance Director Jessica Rice started today and we are looking forward to having her on board.

Councilor Robinson said the City of Whitefish is looking into hiring a lobbyist. Robinson would like to know why they are hiring a lobbyist and why the City of Columbia Falls doesn't. Shrives said the city utilizes the League of Cities and Towns. He will follow up with Dana in Whitefish as to why they feel the need to hire a lobbyist.

Mayor suggested having the Legislative Committee set up a meeting with the Senator Dave Fern and Representative Lyn Bennett. City Manager Shrives said he will work on it.

CITY OF COLUMBIA FALLS CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES HELD ON NOVEMBER 18, 2024

MISCELLANEOUS

Correspondence

ADJOURN

Councilor Lovering motioned to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Shepard and the meeting was adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

Mayor

City Clerk