

**CITY OF COLUMBIA FALLS
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
HELD APRIL 04, 2022**

REGULAR MEETING – 7:00 P.M.

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

ROLL CALL:

Councilor Fisher, Councilor Karper, Councilor Lovering, Councilor Piper, Councilor Shepard and Mayor Barnhart. Absent: Councilor Robinson.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Councilor Lovering motioned to approve the Agenda, seconded by Councilor Karper and the motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Councilor Shepard motioned to approve the Consent Agenda noting that all claims appeared to be in order, seconded by Councilor Fisher with Council voting as follows. Ayes: Shepard, Fisher, Karper, Lovering, Piper and Barnhart.

Approval of Claims - April 4, 2022 - \$69,273.86

Approval of Payroll Claims - April 1, 2022 - \$78,627.78

Approval of Payroll Quarterly Expenses - March 31, 2022 - \$16,350.28

Approval of Special Payroll - March 23, 2022 - \$9,767.96

Approval of March 21, 2022 Regular City Council Meeting Minutes

Approval of Easement for Public Access and Utilities - Cottage Apartments, LLC and City of Columbia Falls and Authorize City Manager to Execute

Adoption of Deck Monitor Job Description

VISITORS/PUBLIC COMMENT (Items not on agenda)

Tanna Friske resides at 2100 Drift Water Way, said she has concern of the growth rate and the cost of living in Columbia Falls. Ms. Friske inquired if the city has a plan for teachers coming to the area and no availability of affordable housing. Ms. Friske asked if there were grants available for community housing. Nicosia said the City has partnered with the Northwest Montana Community Land Trust to work on affordable housing. As a smaller city we do not have a certified housing authority nor does our community automatically qualify for Community Development Block Grant because of the income requirements noted Nicosia. Friske said as far as development goes, does the City Planning Board and City Council have to approve things so quickly. Councilor Shepard said there is not a City in the state that can keep up with growth. Mayor Barnhart said it is on our forefront and we have had many discussions.

APPOINTMENTS:

Appointment - Probationary Volunteer Firefighter - Kyle Dolph

Fire Chief Weeks said Kyle Dolph has extensive experience in both wildland and structural firefighting including Firefighter I. Since submitting his application he has attended several trainings as an observer and would be a

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great addition to the Fire Department. Fire Chief Week and City Manager Nicosia recommend approving Kyle Dolph as a Probationary Volunteer Firefighter.

Councilor Piper motioned to approve Kyle Dolph as Probationary Volunteer Firefighter, seconded by Councilor Lovering and the motion carried.

City Clerk Staaland administered Oath of Office to Mr. Dolph.

Public Hearing - Request for a Preliminary Plat for a 10-Unit RV Park:

The Columbia Falls City-County Planning Board held a public hearing for the following item at their regular meeting on Tuesday, March 15, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. at the Council Chambers of City Hall, 130 6th Street West, Columbia Falls, Montana. The Columbia Falls City Council will hold a subsequent hearing on Monday April 4, 2022 starting at 7:00 p.m. in the same location.

Mayor Barnhart read the hearing notice and requested the presentation of the Staff Report:

Request for a Preliminary Plat for a 10 Unit RV Park:

The applicant, Clark W Griz LLC is requesting Preliminary Plat approval to construct a 10-Unit RV Park for property at 201 Highway 2 East, Columbia Falls. The property is zoned CB-2 (General Business) which allow RV Parks as a permitted use. The proposed RV Park is adjacent to the Columbia Falls RV Park. The property is described as Lot 3 of the D & G Subdivision in Section 8, Township 30 North, Range 20 West, P.M.M., Flathead County.

City Planner Mulcahy delivered Staff Report CPP-22-01. This project did go before the Planning Board on March 15, 2022; they reviewed the application with discussion primarily around parking. The applicant is asking for a reduction in the parking count, subdivision regulations require 2 parking spaces per unit and the applicant would like to propose one and a half spaces per unit, which is more in line with a motel. The Planning Board had concerns with full size vehicle such as trucks or SUV's with a bike rack and requested City staff work with the applicant to address the concern. Therefore on recommendation #2 there is 6 groups of parking areas within the site that allow for larger vehicles.

Mayor Barnhart asked if there were any questions for staff. Councilor Fisher asked if there is an onsite manager. Mulcahy said there is a residential unit that includes their office and will most likely include an onsite manager.

Applicant Tawnya Bingham, resides at 147 Antler Peak Lane Kalispell said they feel this is a fun project and hopes the council has reviewed the information provided. With the permanent parked RV's, people drive their own vehicles and won't be pulling RV's onto the site. They can visit the park and use one of their bikes to visit the local establishments. The owner indicated that they have a shop onsite and will have an onsite manager and plan on doing extensive landscaping on site.

Mayor Barnhart opened the Public Hearing at 7:19 p.m.

Andrea Getts resides at 236 2nd Street E. asked what happens to the trailers in the winter months. Mayor Barnhart said they may rent them year round depending on utilities and if the units are frost free.

Mayor closed the Public Hearing at 7:20 p.m.

Councilor Fisher motioned to adopt Staff Report CPP-22-01 as findings of fact, seconded by Councilor Piper with Council voting as follows. Ayes: Fisher, Karper, Lovering, Piper, Shepard and Barnhart.

Mayor Barnhart indicated that final action will occur under Resolutions.

Mayor Barnhart read the Notice of Public Hearings: - Planning Board April 12th and City Council May 2nd:

The Columbia Falls City-County Planning Board will hold a public hearing for the following item at their regular meeting on Tuesday, April 12, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. at the Council Chambers of City Hall, 130 6th Street West, Columbia Falls, Montana. The Columbia Falls City Council will hold a subsequent hearing on Monday May 2, 2022 starting at 7:00 p.m. in the same location.

Request to Amend a Planned Unit Development in the Columbia Falls Zoning Jurisdiction:

Ruis Holdings 540 Nucleus Ave LLC is requesting an Amendment to their Planned Unit Development overlay for the property located at 540 Nucleus Avenue which was the former Bank of Columbia Falls site. The owner is amending the design of the south building to allow a height of 40-feet to the top of parapet and also allow a casino in the proposed restaurant on the main floor. Otherwise, the building meets all use and dimensional requirements. The property is described as Lots 11-15 and also all that portion of the east half of the vacated alleyway lying adjacent to the west boundary line of said Lots 11-15 inclusive of Block 37 and Lot 10A of the Amended Plat of Lots 1-3 & Lots 6-10 of Block 37 according to the map or plat thereof on file and of record in the office of the Clerk and Recorder of Flathead County, Montana.

Request for an Amendment to Conditional Use Permit to Construct 36 Apartment Units in the Columbia Falls Zoning Jurisdiction:

The applicant, Toby Gilchrist, is requesting an amendment to an approved Conditional Use Permit that allows the construction of 36 apartment units in two buildings, eighteen units in each building. The proposed amendment would allow the north building to allow owners of the units to offer short term rentals of the units. The south building would remain exclusively long-term rental (30-days or more). None of the other elements of the project change with the request of this amendment and this amendment only deals with the length of stay for the north building. The property is located approximately ¼ mile north of Highway 2 at 302 Meadow Lake Blvd. The property is described as Assessors' Tracts 2BDEA and 2BDAEA of Section 7, Township 30 North, Range 20 West, P.M.M., Flathead County.

ORDINANCES / RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution # 1873 - Granting Conditional Approval of Preliminary Plat for the Urban Wood RV Park

Subdivision:

A Resolution of the City Council of Columbia Falls, Montana Conditionally Approving the Preliminary Plat for the Urban Wood RV Park Subdivision, Located at 201 Highway 2 East, described as Lot 3 of D & G Subdivision in Section 17, Township 30 North, Range 20 West, P.M.M., Flathead County, Montana.

Councilor Shepard made motion to approve Resolution # 1873, seconded by Councilor Lovering with Council voting as follows. Ayes: Karper, Lovering, Piper, Shepard, Fisher and Barnhart.

REPORTS / BUSINESS FROM MAYOR & COUNCIL

Councilor Shepard said Frontier Institute is a think tank for the upcoming legislative session, and one of their ideas is to dictate to the City the size of city lots.

Shepard said he has been in contact with prior employees from Aluminum Plant in getting statements regarding dumping on the property.

Councilor Piper said the Noise Ordinance committee met again and they have City Attorney Breck looking at other city ordinances and drafting an ordinance based on the committee's review.

Mayor Barnhart said the Fire Department has a fabulous fire training center and would like to see a big sign stating it was Columbia Falls Fire Department training center.

Mayor reported the Health Board is working through hiring a new Director. Mayor Barnhart said he would like to invite a representative from the Board come and give a presentation to council to explain the scope of the health department operations. Mayor Barnhart noted that the department has an \$8.2 million budget.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

The EDA project engineering is at 90 percent, which means the engineering can be submitted to the EDA engineers for their review. The City will move the project forward as quickly as possible.

The 2022 RAISE grant is being finalized for \$10.5 million; Nicosia noted that the 2021 RAISE debriefing session went really well and our grant about made it to the secretary's desk. The City match is \$500k.

Nicosia said she will be on a conference call with MT DOT later in the week to finalize the TA Grant engineer selection.

Police Chief Peters said the City is vetting two patrolman applicants and hope to make job offer(s) soon.

MISCELLANEOUS

Fire Department - March Activity

Correspondence

ADJOURN

Councilor Lovering motioned to adjourn at 7:32 p.m., seconded by Councilor Piper.

Mayor

City Clerk