

CITY OF COLUMBIA FALLS
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
HELD OCTOBER 21, 2024

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

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilor Lovering motioned to approve the agenda, seconded by Councilor Piper and the motion carried.

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

Approval of Claims - October 18, 2024 - \$232,449.83

Approval of Payroll Quarterly Claims- October 9, 2024 - \$29,164.80

Approval of Payroll Claims - October 11, 2024 - \$114,606.25

Approval of Regular Council Meeting Minutes - October 7, 2024

Approval of Grant Agreement - MT DOC Montana Community Reinvestment Program Contract #MT-MCR-PL-25-09 and authorize City Manager to execute.

Records Destruction Document - October 8, 2024

VISITORS/PUBLIC COMMENT (Items not on agenda)

Shirley Folkwein, 285 Shooting Star Lane, is with the Coalition for clean CFAC gave City Clerk Staaland a copy of a letter sent to K.C. Becker from The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribe of the Flathead Nation. Ms. Folkwein quoted in the letter "EPA stay any decision making, including issuance of a ROD, due to inadequate Tribal consultation, including inadequate CSKT involvement in site related decisions, and specifically a failure to adequately evaluate the conceptual Preferred Alternative 4 remedy in terms of compliance with Clean Water Act surface water quality criteria and our treaty rights in fishing and fish consumption, both based in the Flathead River and its tributaries."

Ms. Folkwein said the Coalition for a clean CFAC supports and shares the CSKT's concerns with the inadequacy of the EPA's consultation with the CSKT on the proposed CFAC cleanup plan. They ask Columbia Falls Council to give serious consideration to the new findings that they set forth in the letter recently sent to the Governor and other elected officials, which is in the packet she handed out earlier.

Matt Hutcheson, 227 7th St. E. is here to voice his concern about hearing in the council chambers. Mr. Hutcheson said he has a hard time hearing what is being said at council meetings and asked if something could be done about it.

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Mr. Hutcheson said on 3rd Ave E. and 7th St. there is a crosswalk and bike path that has not been painted, and a stop sign that has been removed. Mr. Hutcheson said he would like to see the sign replace and the crosswalk painted.

NEW BUSINESS:

Probationary Volunteer Firefighter Cierra Atchley

Fire Chief Weeks said the membership of the Columbia Falls Fire Department has voted to approve Cierra Atchley as a probationary member. Cierra has attended several trainings over the past few months; she has the potential to be an asset to the department. She has completed the application process, a pre-employment physical, and background check and passed all three said Weeks.

Councilor Piper motioned to accept Probationary Volunteer Firefighter Cierra Atchley, seconded by Councilor Lovering and the motion carried unanimously.

Surplus 457 - 2001 HME

Fire Chief Weeks said the new HME pumper/rescue that is on order will eliminate the need for a heavy rescue and much of the equipment on 457 is no longer used. When 457 was purchased extrication tools were ran with a separate hydraulic pump and long hydraulic hoses, we now have battery operated extrication tools so the electric hydraulic pump and hydraulic hose reels are no longer used. Also, with the purchase of our new 4500 psi SCBAs the fill station on 457 is obsolete. It can only fill 3000 psi bottles and cannot be upgraded to fill our new 4500 psi bottles. Additionally with the new bigger capacity bottles and the fact that we have 44 bottles (22 on SCBAs and 22 spares) having a portable fill station is no longer a necessity. The new pumper/rescue has a larger body with more storage than our current engines so the other hand tools etc. that are carried on 457 will be able to be put on the new truck said Weeks.

Staff recommends to surplus 457-2001 HME.

Councilor Lovering motioned to surplus 457-2001 HME, seconded by Councilor King and the motion carried.

Surplus 431 - 1994 Type 1 Structure Engine Made by Central States

Fire Chief Weeks recommends the city sell 431 to the Blankenship Fire Department for \$16,000. Chief Weeks said he came up with this price due to the uncertainty of a final sales price through Brindlee Mountain and the fact that 431 still has the original tires from 1994. The existing tires are only rated for 55 mph and need to be replaced due to age. It would also benefit the City of Columbia Falls when we ask Blankenship Fire Department for mutual aid to have 431 responding into our district versus the current 1987 truck that they now have. The city will publish the surplus vehicle in the newspaper upon approval.

Councilor Piper motioned to surplus 431 - 1994 Type 1 Structure Engine Made by Central States, seconded by Councilor King.

Mayor Barnhart asked how much equipment will be taken off 431. Chief Weeks said everything will come off. The motion carried unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Appointment of Local Government Study Commissioners

Interim City Manager Shrives said this agenda item asks the City Council to appoint three city residents who have expressed interest in serving on the Local Government Study Commission; the individuals expressing interest are: Roger Hopkins, Connie Konopatzke and Susan Nicosia.

Staff recommends appointment Roger Hopkins, Connie Konopatzke and Susan Nicosia to serve as commissioners on the Local Government Study Commission.

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Councilor Lovering motioned to appoint Roger Hopkins, Connie Konopatzke and Susan Nicosia to serve as commissioners on the Local Government Study Commission, seconded by Councilor Piper and the motion carried unanimously.

Award Grit Classifier Bid to WTP Equipment Corporation - \$81,950.

City Manager said this project was originally put out to bid for the equipment and installation; however, we did not receive any bids. City staff then determined that the installation could be done in house except for the electrical connections. The City put out a bid request for just the equipment.

The City received 3 bids for the Grit classifier equipment. Two bids met the requirements; the first qualifying bid was from Envirodyne Systems Inc. at \$379,880. And the second qualifying bid was from WTP Equipment Corp. at \$81,950.

Staff recommends moving forward with low bidder WTP Equipment Corp. for \$81,950.

Mayor Barnhart asked if staff had a chance to discuss the price difference with the two qualifying bidders. City Manager Shrives said staff went through the bids and checked everything on the specs. and asked for the shop drawings to make sure everything was correct.

Councilor Piper motioned to award the Grit Classifier Bid to WTP Equipment Corporation - \$81,950, seconded by Councilor Lovering, with council voting as follows. Ayes: King, Lovering, Piper, Shepard and Barnhart.

Knife River Sidewalk and Parking Project Change Order #2 - Decrease \$15,309.13

City Manager Shrives said with this Change Order decrease the city will be able to close the grant out.

Councilor King motioned to approve Knife River Sidewalk and Parking Project Change Order #2 - Decrease \$15,309.13, seconded by Councilor Lovering with council voting as follows. Ayes: Lovering, Piper, Shepard, King and Barnhart.

REPORTS / BUSINESS FROM MAYOR & COUNCIL

Councilor Shepard said he hoping to be at the next meeting on November 4, 2024.

Councilor Lovering inquired about the second gate at the pickleball court.

Lovering would like the city to have a look at Mr. Hutchinson's request on the crosswalk and stop sign on 7th St. E. City Manager Shrives said he will have the street department have a look at it.

Councilor Piper said he would like to see the curb painted yellow near Posh Nails.

Piper said he would like the Public Works Department have a look at the pipe sticking out of the ground on the side of City Hall.

Mayor Barnhart asked why they were digging the street up on Nucleus. Chief Weeks said they were disconnecting service for repair.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

Service Line Repair Program

City Manager Strives said the since the program started, there are 172 customers, 20 claims serviced and an average claim cost of \$3,231. Councilor Lovering said everyone should get this service; it is inexpensive and was a great savings to her.

Flathead County has completed the weed spraying in Columbia Falls. The city also addressed the weed issue near the NAPA store.

City Manager Shrives said the sign near the river at Rivers Edge Park is being addressed.

There is a kickoff meeting for the RAISE Grant on Wednesday to start the process.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

City Attorney Breck said there was a request by an owner of a unit at 5th Street homes, who had purchased the home in a foreclosure by Habitat for Humanity. Last year there was a request to change the covenants to allow for long and short term rentals. At that time the city said no, as the homes were built with volunteer hours and donations were made based on the idea that they would be owner occupied. The request was recently made again and the city sent a letter to the home owner explaining our stance to not allow a change to the covenants allowing for long or short term rentals.

MISCELLANEOUS REPORT

Fire Chief Weeks said the Fire Department has been very busy.

Police Chief Stephens said they are working towards filling a Police Officer vacancy and it is expected to be filled soon.

MISCELLANEOUS

Correspondence

ADJOURN

Councilor Lovering motioned to adjourn at 7:33 p.m., seconded by Councilor King

Mayor

City Clerk