

**CITY OF COLUMBIA FALLS
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
HELD OCTOBER 07, 2024**

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

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Councilor Robinson motioned to approve the agenda, seconded by Councilor Price 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 Piper with voting as follows. Ayes: Piper, Price, Robinson, King and Barnhart.

Approval of Claims - October 7, 2024 - \$136,685.00

Approval of Payroll Claims - September 27, 2024 - \$177,236.89

Approval of Final Payroll Claims Sept. 17, 2024 - \$3,411.98

Approval of Regular Council Meeting Minutes - September 16, 2024

Director of Finance Job Description

Approval of Change Order - Skatepark

NEW BUSINESS:

Appointment of Chief of Police - Chad Stephens

City Manager Shrives said he would like the Mayor to present Chad Stephens a certificate of appointment as the new Chief of Police. Shrives said staff will administer oath of office at a later date when Chief Stephens family arrives so they may be in attendance.

Councilor Piper made motion to appoint Chad Stephens as the Chief of Police, seconded by Councilor King and the motion carried unanimously. Mayor Barnhart presented Police Chief Stephens with a certificate of appointment.

Police Chief Stevens said he has worked for the Yakima Police Department for the last 30 years. Chief Stephens said he is super excited to be here in Columbia Falls and is looking forward to this opportunity. Stephens thanked Sergeant Rice for taking on the Interim Chief of Police position and assisting in his transition. Rice has done a fantastic job said Stephens.

Mayor Barnhart recognized Sergeant Rice's excellent job as the interim Police Chief position for the last couple months.

Disposition of Surplus Property - 2002 Ford F350

Interim City Manager Shrives said this vehicle is older and has problems with the engine which would most likely be costly to repair. Staff recommends to surplus the property.

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Councilor King motioned to surplus the 2002 Ford F350, seconded by Councilor Piper and the motion carried.

REPORTS / BUSINESS FROM MAYOR & COUNCIL:

Councilor Price asked if the city has heard back from Flathead County on spraying noxious weeds in town. City Manager Shrives said he was unsure where they were on the process but would check into it.

Councilor Price asked if council sent the letter concerning the Post Office property upkeep to Post Office. City Manager Shrives said yes, the city cc'd the Columbia Falls Post Office on the letters that were sent out.

Mayor Barnhart reported the sign explaining the three forks of the river at Rivers Edge Park is close to falling into the river. Mayor Barnhart said citizens are good about keeping their dogs in voice control or on a leash in the park.

Mayor Barnhart said between the Dollar General Store and Napa there are weeds well over 2 feet tall. Can the city make contact with the owner of the property and let them know they are out of compliance. Mayor Barnhart said we pay the county to spray weeds for us, can the city make sure they are spraying.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

Interim City Manager Shrives said at the September 27th council meeting it was reported there was a broken slide at Marantette Park; staff has taken the slide out of commission while they search for replacement parts. The plaque on the ground at Horine Park will be trimmed up for better visibility.

Regarding the damaged telephone box at Columbus Park, the phone company has been notified multiple times, but they have not responded, the next step is to send a letter to the company.

City Manager Shrives said he met with the hiring committee (Barnhart, Robinson and King) last week to review the Request for Proposal for the Executive Search Firm for the City Manager candidate search. After further research and phone calls he made some minor changes to the proposal. Shrives said he discovered some firms offer a limited search, where the city would potentially handle reference checks and any follow up. Councilor King asked if that would change the proposal. Shrives replied yes, it may and the city will make sure to ask specific questions. The plan is to send the request out tomorrow and stick to the timeline said Shrives. Mayor Barnhart asked when the city reviews the request for proposals will that be just the City Manager or will it be the hiring committee. Shrives said he would like the hiring committee to go through them with staff.

City Manager Shrives said he needs approval from council for Membership and Voting Member for the Montana Resort Tax Association.

Councilor Piper made motion to approve Interim City Manager Shrives for Membership and Voting Member for the Montana Resort Tax Association, seconded by Councilor King and the motion carried unanimously.

MISCELLANEOUS REPORT

Police Chief Stephens said there was a subject that was plaguing the community with property crimes. With great department involvement the suspect was located; two city officers hiked to the discovered area and apprehended the individual who was then charged with several crimes.

Chief Stephens said the stop sign project near the high school is complete, all signs are in place.

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Mayor Barnhart asked if the police department collected and returned the stolen items. Chief said they collected some items but the issue is tracing them back to the owners. Mayor Barnhart gave kudos to the officers involved.

MISCELLANEOUS

Police Department September Activity Report

Fire Department August Reports

Fire Department Sept. Reports

ADJOURN: Councilor King motioned to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Robinson and the meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Mayor

City Clerk