

**CITY OF COLUMBIA FALLS
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
HELD APRIL 06, 2020**

FINANCE COMMITTEE – 6:30 P.M

(Barnhart, Shepard, Piper)

REGULAR MEETING – 7:00 P.M.

ZOOM MEETING ID 852 255 538

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

In attendance: Shepard, Piper, Robinson and Barnhart. Present via zoom meeting: Fisher, Lovering and Karper.

Also in attendance: City Manager Nicosia and City Clerk Staaland. Present via zoom meeting: City Attorney Breck, Police Chief Peters and City Planner Mulcahy.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made by Councilor Robinson, Seconded by Councilor Shepard.

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

CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion made by Councilor Shepard noting all claims appear to be in order, Seconded by Councilor Piper.

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

Approval of Claims - April 6, 2020 - \$62,920.25

Approval of Payroll Claims - \$77,030.27 - March 20, 2020

Approval of Payroll Claims - \$40,810.49 - March 27, 2020

Approval of Payroll Claims - \$110,877.50 - April 3, 2020

Approval of Payroll Claims - \$21,463.98 - March 31, 2020

Approval of Regular Council Meeting Minutes - March 16, 2020

Approval of KLJ BUILD Grant Update Contract

Approval of Agreement for the Columbia Falls Area Transportation Plan & Authorize City Manager to Execute

Approve Agreement with NW Community Land Trust for Home Grant Program Income Funds and authorize City Manager to sign.

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS/PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Mayor Barnhart read the following Notice of Public Hearing. **Request to establish a Planned Unit Development in the Columbia Falls Zoning Jurisdiction:**

Ruis Holdings 540 Nucleus Ave LLC is requesting a Planned Unit Development overlay for the property located at 540 Nucleus Avenue which was the original Bank of Columbia Falls. The reason for the request is that the applicant would like the top of the roof structure to be 42'-8" in height where the maximum height without a PUD is 35-feet. The proposed development otherwise conforms to all of the zoning requirements. The property is described as Lots 1-15, Block 37, Columbia Falls Townsite in Section 8, Township 30 North, Range 20 West, P.M.M., Flathead County.

City Planner Mulcahy presented Staff Report CPUD-20-01 findings of fact as modified by the Planning Board on March 10, 2020. The applicant is requesting a PUD overlay to develop a mixed use building including a gymnasium/health club along with residential uses on the second floor and residential on the third floor. All of these uses are permitted and anticipated in the Columbia Falls CB-4 zoning designation. However, the maximum height in the CB-4 zoning district is 35 feet and the applicant wishes to have roof elements that approach 42'-8" in height.

Mayor Barnhart opened the Public Hearing at 7:21 p.m.

Aaron Wallace with Montana Creative Architecture and Design said he is working with the developer on the project. Mr. Wallace said the request for the height variance will allow them to provide access to the roofs for mechanical systems, provide interesting architectural detail and roof designs and economical structure systems with a reasonable floor system. Due to an abundance of Zoom bombing, Mr. Wallace said he was happy to answer any question from the Council but would not provide more comment. Council didn't have any questions for Mr. Wallace.

With no public comment Mayor Barnhart closed the Public Hearing at 7:26 p.m. Mayor Barnhart noted the written comments received prior to the meeting are entered as part of the formal record.

Councilor Piper motioned to approve Staff Report CPUD-20-01 as findings of fact, second by Councilor Shepard with Council voting as follows. Ayes: Piper, Robinson, Shepard, Fisher, Karper, Lovering and Barnhart.

Councilor Shepard motioned to approve the PUD with the specified conditions, second by Councilor Piper with voting as follows. Ayes: Robinson, Shepard, Fisher, Karper, Lovering, Piper and Barnhart.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Resort Tax Voter Information - Effective Date

City Manager Nicosia said given the current events, Council may wish to amend the effective date to collect the resort tax to allow the tourism businesses to recover this year. If the ballot issue passes on June, 2020, Council must then adopt, after two readings, the Ordinance establishing the Resort Tax Code.

While the ballot language cannot be changed or the resort tax question removed from the ballot at this point in time (March 9th was the statutory deadline), Nicosia noted that Council can vote to amend the

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effective date for collecting the tax. This information can then be sent to the electorate in the information letter provided before the mail-in ballots are sent to the voters.

The amended notice to residents would delay the collection of the resort tax to October 2021 to provide a full year for economic recovery and a return to normal activity in the valley.

Motion made by Councilor Robinson, Second by Councilor Shepard to formally go on record that the collection date for the resort tax will be delayed until October 2021 if the ballot issue passes on June 2nd.

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

NEW BUSINESS:

Authorization to Call for Bids - Well Project

City Manager said Public Works Director Bradshaw and our engineers, Morrison and Maierle, are completing the design and required permits and the project is currently under agency review. Draft bid documents will be provided in the next week for a final internal review and Staff is recommending approval to Call for Bids on the project when the final documents are complete. We would like to start advertising in April, before the next council meeting.

Councilor Shepard motioned to approve the Call for Bids on the Well Project, second by Councilor Piper. Motion passed unanimously.

REPORTS / BUSINESS FROM MAYOR & COUNCIL

Councilor Piper said the Veterans' Home is not letting visitors in at this time due to COVID-19. The residents are still getting outdoors to get fresh air. Piper said the public has been very understanding of the situation.

Councilor Robinson thanked the Police Department and city staff for showing up and helping citizens.

Mayor Barnhart said he stopped in the Fire Department and was pleased with the work Fire Chief Weeks was doing. Mayor Barnhart said Weeks is compiling a list of all the Fire Chiefs from 1908. Mayor Barnhart would like to get Council approval to look into getting a plaque listing all the prior chiefs to put on display at the Fire Hall.

Councilor Shepard motioned to approve looking into a plaque with prior Fire Chiefs, second by Councilor Piper and the motion carried.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

Transportation Plan – On the consent agenda, Council authorized executing the grant contract with MDOT after it receives their legal and civil rights signatures. This contract provides the grant funding (\$75,000) for the Columbia Falls Urban Transportation Plan. The City requested proposals and only received one, KLJ. Their original proposal far exceeded the available funding from the MDT grant and City funds (\$50,000). The

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Columbia Falls Urban Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) will hold a virtual meeting to review the scope and proposal. The Committee will then recommend approval to the City Council. Nicosia said she is asking Council to give consent approval to execute the contract once approved by the TAC.

Councilor Shepard motioned to give consent approval to execute the contract with KLJ, second by Councilor Robinson and the motion carried.

All Tree Board meetings are cancelled in accordance with the Governor's order to not hold any "non-essential" meetings. DNRC has acknowledged that Arbor Day is cancelled and has advised the City to plant the trees as required by the agreement. Public Works Director Bradshaw will proceed with having the required trees planted as previously approved by the Tree Board.

City Attorney Breck and Nicosia reviewed the statutes and guidance concerning the City's declaration of an emergency and do not feel it is needed at this time. The county's emergency declaration provided coverage for the city. Whether or not the City is required to add the 2 mill emergency mills to next year's tax levy is still unknown. The City qualifies for FEMA reimbursement for direct expenses-primarily PPE, disinfectant and PD overtime. City Hall is closed to walk in traffic and we are providing all essential services.

Nicosia said we are working on the 2020 BUILD Grant submittal. We held the debriefing conference with the federal DOT and were very encouraged by their comments. The deadline is in May. We will be sending out requests for letters of support.

Nicosia suggested cancelling the April 20th Council meeting and look to have a regular meeting on May 4 subject to guidelines in place at that time.

OTHER REPORTS:

Police Chief Peters said his department is busy with patrol and business checks. Chief Peters said they have received about 50 masks for their departmental needs. Chief said they have a plan in place to have a joint response with other area departments to expand if need be.

ADJOURN

Councilor Robinson motioned to adjourn, second by Councilor Shepard and the meeting adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

Mayor

City Clerk