

**CITY OF COLUMBIA FALLS
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
HELD AUGUST 02, 2021**

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.

Also present was City Manager Nicosia, City Clerk Staaland, City Planner Mulcahy, and Detective Denham.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made by Councilor Karper, Seconded by Councilor Piper and the motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA:

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

Approval of Claims - August 2, 2021 - \$210,110.03 - June and July

Approval of Payroll Claims - July 23, 2021 - \$137,469.84

Approval of July 19, 2021 Regular City Council Meeting Minutes

Approval of Flathead County EMS Memorandum of Agreement - 21/22 FY

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS/PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Mayor Barnhart read the following hearing notices:

Request to Change the Zoning from CR-5 (Two Family Residential) to CRA-1 (Multi-Family Residential) and Request for a Conditional Use Permit to Construct 36 units of Apartments in the Columbia Falls Zoning Jurisdiction:

Request to change the zoning from CR-5 (Two Family Residential) to CRA-1 (Multi-Family Residential) in the Columbia Falls Zoning Jurisdiction:

The applicant, Toby Gilchrist, is requesting a zone change for 302 Meadow Lake Boulevard from the current CR-5 two-family designation to a CRA-1 multi-family residential designation. The applicant amended the application that was reviewed by the Planning Board in February. The vacant property is approximately 2.5 acres in size and is located approximately ¼ mile north of Highway 2 on Meadow Lake Blvd. The property is described as Assessors' Tract's 2BDEA and 2BDAEA of Section 7, Township 30 North, Range 20 West, P.M.M., Flathead County.

Request for a Conditional Use Permit to construct 36 units of Apartments in the Columbia Falls Zoning Jurisdiction:

The applicant, Toby Gilchrist, is requesting a Conditional Use Permit to construct 36 units of apartments in two buildings, eighteen units in each building. The applicant amended the application that went before the Planning Board in February. The proposed two-story apartments will access Meadow Lake Blvd at the intersection with Best Way. The vacant property is approximately 2.5 acres in size and is located approximately ¼ mile north of Highway 2 at 302 Meadow Lake Blvd. The property is described as Assessors' Tract's 2BDEA and 2BDAEA of Section 7, Township 30 North, Range 20 West, P.M.M., Flathead County.

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Mayor Barnhart asked for the staff report presentation:

City Planner Mulcahy delivered Staff Reports CZC-21-05 and CCU-21-02 and recommended adoption of the Findings of Fact and approval of the zone change and conditional use permit. Mulcahy reported the Planning Board denied the zone change due to traffic concerns back in February, 2021. The applicant has amended their application to address the concerns brought up in the February hearing and provided a Traffic Impact Study (TIS) with this application. Mulcahy said the developer contacted School District #6 to confirm the bus service will be picking up the children and transporting them to school. Mulcahy said there was also concern with the entrance to the apartments and Best Way intersection not lining up so the applicant redesigned the entrance to be in line with the Best Way intersection. Mulcahy said at the July 13, 2021 Planning Board meeting the Planning Board recommended approval of the Zoning Amendment and the Conditional Use Permit with four added conditions. Mulcahy noted there are three written public comments included in the packet. Mulcahy said the neighbor to the North wanted to see fencing around the property and is concerned with long term liability of getting pedestrian ways on Meadow Lake Blvd.

Mayor Barnhart asked for the applicants' presentation:

Aaron Wallace, resides at 265 Foxtail Way, professional consultant, said the applicant is proposing 2 - 18-plex apartments. He noted the following items: parking will be consolidated to the center of the site, the apartments will be utilized for long term rentals, the buildings will be 15 to 20 feet off the property line, and the site will be fenced. Wallace noted that there are a lot of trees on the property and the applicant would like to retain as many as they can. Wallace noted that there is a foot path around the perimeter of the property along with a tot lot play area for resident children.

With no further Public Comment Mayor Barnhart opened and closed the Public Hearing at 7:16 p.m.

Councilor Piper motioned to approve Staff Report CZC-21-05 as Findings of Fact, seconded by Councilor Shepard with Council voting as follows. Ayes: Fisher, Karper, Lovering, Piper, Shepard and Barnhart.

Councilor Fisher made motion to approve Staff Report CCU-21-02 as Findings of Fact, seconded by Councilor Lovering with Council voting as follows. Ayes: Karper, Lovering, Piper, Shepard, Fisher and Barnhart.

Public Hearing - 2021-22 FY Preliminary Budget - Continued until Final Adoption

City Manager Nicosia reported that the City received the Certified Taxable Valuations and the 2021 Total Market Value rose 22.17%. The good news is the Taxable Value of Newly Taxable Property is a 28.12% increase generating approximately \$46K in tax dollars. There are also tax valuation increases in the Urban Renewal District and both Industrial Park TEDD's. Nicosia reported that the Taxable Value less Incremental Taxable Value went up 15.55% so the maximum mill levy calculation would drop 16.88 mills. Nicosia said she will put together scenarios on mills for the August 16, 2021 council meeting. Nicosia noted that the mill levy resolution will have to be adopted at the first meeting in September. Nicosia discussed Council goals and priorities that are being incorporated in the preliminary budget along with the operating needs of each department. Mayor Barnhart asked how the Resort Tax funds will impact the 22 FY budget. Nicosia said the City will collect the funds for 9 months, beginning Oct 1st, and will apply the funds in the 22-23 FY pursuant to the ordinance, 55% public safety, 25% tax reduction and 14% public infrastructure.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Martha Road Traffic Complaints Follow Up

City Manager Nicosia reported on the process that was utilized for traffic calming evaluation: Education, Enforcement, Engineering and Evaluation. Nicosia noted that the City Code refers to the State standards, which incorporate the Federal transportation standards, without describing the process in detail. Nicosia said the City has utilized the federal/state standards when responding to the Martha Road Traffic Complaints. The City has directed traffic enforcement, applied traffic calming striping, put out the Traffic Cart and met with WGM traffic engineers to review the national traffic safety process. Nicosia thoroughly went through the Traffic Cart results noting that speeds have been reduced 3-4 miles an hour.

Detective Denham reviewed his detailed follow up analysis report. Denham said after the lines were painted the speed went down drastically. With extra patrols continuing, speed is reducing and Denham noted that he is pleased with the outcome.

Nicosia said the next step is to complete the engineering and evaluation with a final report to Council as well as discussing a Special Improvement District with the property owners with respect to installing sidewalks. Nicosia reported that letters will be sent to the property owners to start the discussion on installing sidewalks and getting driveways paved.

ORDINANCES / RESOLUTIONS:

Second and Final Reading - Ordinance # 809 - An Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Columbia Falls, Montana, Establishing the Columbia Falls Urban Renewal Area, 2021 Expansion, Creating the Columbia Falls Urban Renewal District, 2021 Expansion and Adopting the 2021 Columbia Falls Urban Renewal District Plan with a Tax Increment Financing Provision Pursuant to Title 7, Chapter 15, Parts 42 and 43 of the Montana Codes Annotated

Motion made by Councilor Fisher to adopt Ordinance # 809 on the second and final reading, Seconded by Councilor Shepard with Council voting as follows. Ayes: Fisher, Karper, Lovering, Piper, Shepard and Barnhart.

First Reading - Ordinance # 810 - An Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Columbia Falls, Montana, Amending the Columbia Falls Zoning Map from CR-5 Two Family Residential to CRA-1 Multi-Family Residential for the Property Described as Assessors' Tracts 2BDEA and 2BDAEA Of Section 7, Township 30 North, Range 20 West, P.M.M., Flathead County, Montana

Motion made by Councilor Lovering to approve the first reading of Ordinance #810, seconded by Councilor Piper and the motion carried.

Resolution # 1855 - A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Columbia Falls, Montana, Approving an Application for a Conditional Use Permit by Toby Gilchrist to Construct 36 Units of Apartments in Two Buildings on Property Described as Assessors' Tracts 2BDEA and 2BDAEA of Section 7, Township 30 North, Range 20 West, P.M.M., Flathead County

Motion made by Councilor Karper to adopt Resolution # 1855, Seconded by Councilor Lovering with Council voting as follows. Ayes: Fisher, Karper, Lovering, Piper, Shepard and Barnhart.

REPORTS / BUSINESS FROM MAYOR & COUNCIL

Councilor Piper said with the expansion to the west of town, can we get something done with paving or road repairs at the green box site. Nicosia said she will speak to Dave Prunty about it.

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Councilor Shepard said he has been on the Planning Board for a long time and is impressed with the developers on the multi-family project going the extra mile to visit with the neighbors and change their applications to help with solutions.

Shepard said he was involved in the Governor's Cup golf tournament and met with state officials who are very familiar with Columbia Falls, they consider us to be one of the up-and-coming cities.

Councilor Lovering asked if the street sweepers were going to be out soon due to the debris after the storm.

Nicosia replied yes, they will be out.

Lovering said after reading the comments about the North Fork Road and the County saying they do not have the money to pave or fix the road is frustrating.

Councilor Fisher thanked City staff and Detective Denham for the quick and thorough response on addressing the Martha Road complaints.

Mayor Barnhart asked if the City will be painting the newly surfaced 6th Ave W. Nicosia said staff will be painting it very soon and are reviewing with the engineers. Mayor Barnhart inquired about painting crosswalks on 6th. Nicosia said crosswalks will be part of the analysis, noting that marked crosswalks require vehicles to heed the right of way to the pedestrian.

Mayor Barnhart said City staff and council have talked about encouraging sewer hookup and paving, and if the City can help offset with some incentive. Nicosia said based on Council goals, there is a place holder within the TIF as most of them are in the district.

Mayor Barnhart asked if there somewhere the Council can suggest to help getting the North Fork Road paved. Council discussed talking to Commissioner Abell to look at funding such as special gas tax money for North Fork Road.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

City Manager Nicosia presented the current well pumping report, noting the water system is pumping about 2.5 million gallons per day, about 1,800 gpm, and does not need to go into water restrictions. Nicosia noted that if the third well was not in place, the City would have had to institute some water restrictions.

Nicosia noted that the framing for the bell in front of the Fire Hall was rotten and the City was fortunate to get it replaced immediately, before Heritage Days. The contractor added steel on the top to prevent wood rot.

Nicosia also noted that the Park rules in municipal code will require an amendment so Hoerner park hours match the other park hours.

Nicosia also reported:

The City Pool will close on August 15, 2021, due to staff returning to school and team practices.

The City video is being created by Chris Peterson and a draft will be available for Council review very soon.

The draft Comprehensive Transportation Plan is being prepared for the presentation to the public later this fall with the goal to adopt the plan in October/November.

MISCELLANEOUS

ADJOURN

Councilor Lovering motioned to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Shepard, the meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Mayor

City Clerk