

**MINUTES
CITY OF LAUREL
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
TUESDAY, JUNE 07, 2022**

A Council Workshop was held in Council Chambers and called to order by Mayor Dave Waggoner at 6:30 p.m. on June 7, 2022.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

☒ Emelie Eaton
☒ Michelle Mize
☐ Vacant
☒ Richard Klose

☒ Heidi Sparks
☒ Richard Herr
☒ Irv Wilke
☒ Bill Mountsier

OTHERS PRESENT:

Kurt Markegard, Public Works Director
Michele Braukmann, Civil Attorney
Juliane Lore, City Prosecutor
Kelly Strecker, Acting Clerk/Treasurer
Stan Langve, Police Chief
Ryan Welsh, KLJ
Mckenzie Butcher, KLJ

Public Input:

Ken Olson, 1702 Groshelle Drive, invited Council to attend the Montana Firemen's Memorial memorial service this Saturday at noon. Four firefighters' names will be added to the wall. He thanked Council and the Mayor for blocking the streets during the service.

K. Dan Koch, 320 Colorado Ave., stated he had brought issues with the handicapped parking lot near the stadium before Council for the last six years. It needs better signs, and it needs to be painted.

General Items

1. Appointment of Casey Wheeler to the Vacant Ward 3 Seat.

Casey Wheeler, 1310 Beartooth Drive, briefly introduced himself to Council.

It was questioned if there was a conflict of interest in appointing Mr. Wheeler, given his father works for the City. It was clarified that it would not be a conflict of interest.

Chuck Dickerson, 501 W. 13th Street, stated he also wrote a letter of interest for the open Council seat. He has spent 20 years on Council and another four working for the City. He stated that he has known Mr. Wheeler for many years and does give his support to him, and should Mr. Wheeler be chosen, he would look forward to helping him as well.

2. Appointment of Josh Featherly to the Laurel Police Department.

Stan Langve, Police Chief, stated Mr. Featherly would be moving here on June 9th, so he is unable to be present this evening. He will be at next week's Council meeting should there be any questions.

It was questioned how new officers are trained if they are making a lateral move from another Department. It was clarified that they have the same FTO process; however, instead of needing the full 12-week program, they do a 2-week equivalency program. This program covers all Montana-specific laws; they have a year to obtain that certificate.

3. Appointment of Kurt Markegard as Building Official.

There were no questions on this appointment.

4. Appointment of Kelly Strecker to Clerk/Treasurer

There were no questions on this appointment.

5. Motion to allow Council Member Mize to be absent from the City of Laurel for more than ten days. (LMC 2.12.060)

Council Member Mize stated she would be taking a road trip for a family reunion.

Executive Review

6. Resolution - A Resolution Of The City Council Authorizing The Mayor To Execute An Extension Of The Prosecutor Attorney Contract By And Between The City Of Laurel And Lore Law Firm, P.L.L.C.

Ms. Lore briefly reviewed her work with the City over the last two years.

It was questioned if Ms. Lore were to get the appointment, how would she handle the tension between the Court staff and herself. Ms. Lore clarified that she has worked through those issues with Court staff. There has been continual improvement, and they are working very collegially. There have been a few issues that the Civil Attorney and Union needed to hash out.

7. Resolution - A Resolution Awarding The Bid And Authorizing The Mayor To Execute All Contract And Related Documents For The Project Known As The WTP Lift Well Replacement.

Kurt Markegard, Public Works Director, briefly explained to Council what a lift well is. The SED basins drain into the wet well, which was not included in the reconstruction of the SED basins. This project is to replace the old parts. Not all the water is leaving the wet well. This is part of the process of getting the mud out of the SED basins and pumping it into the ponds.

McKenzie Butcher, KLLJ, stated there were two bids. KLE was the low bidder. She is recommending awarding the bid to the contractor.

It was questioned how this project would be funded. It was clarified that the Water Fund would pay for this project.

It was questioned how the bids compared to the engineer's estimate. The engineer's estimate was \$900,030, but this project requires work within five feet of an existing building and dewatering. Some items were educated guesses.

8. Resolution - A Resolution Of The City Council Authorizing The Mayor To Execute The Agreement For Provision Of Fire Services By And Between The City Of Laurel And The Laurel Airport Authority

There was no discussion.

9. Resolution - A Resolution Of The City Council Authorizing The Mayor To Execute The Agreement For Provision Of Fire Services By And Between The City Of Laurel And Yellowstone Boys And Girls Ranch

There was no discussion.

10. Resolution - Resolution Of The City Council Approving An Application For Special Review For S2 Properties, Llc, D/B/A Your Pie, Authorizing The Sale And Consumption Of Beer And Wine On-Premises, Within An Existing Structure Located At 102 South 1st Avenue, City Of Laurel, MT.

Kurt Markegard, Public Works Director, stated a public hearing would be next week. They needed a special review due to the alcohol sales.

Parker Swenson, 4116 Corbin Drive, stated he has invested with his father. They look forward to opening Your Pie here and believe it will be a good addition to Laurel. He will be in attendance at next week's public hearing.

11. Resolution - Resolution Of The City Of Laurel City Council Granting A Variance From The City's Zoning Regulations To Allow The Property Owner To Construct An Addition On The Home At 319 3rd Avenue, Laurel Mt, Which Shortens The Twenty-Foot Setback To A Six-Foot Setback

Kurt Markegard, Public Works Director, stated next week, there will be a public hearing on the matter. The applicant will be present.

It was questioned if the permit or variance comes first. It was clarified that a variance is needed before a permit can be issued.

It was questioned where the addition would be added to the home. It was clarified that a drawing was submitted with Council's packet. The addition would be in the backyard of the property.

12. Resolution - Resolution Authorizing The Mayor To Reinstate An Encroachment Permit For Newkirk Real Estate-Montana, LLC, D/B/A Thomae Lumber.

The previous permit has expired. The permit is to allow for loading and unloading on the street. If damage is done to the street, the applicant will be required to fix the street. That street was built to withstand the loads.

It was questioned why this permit expires after five years. It was further questioned why it could not be permanent. The Civil Attorney would need to clarify that.

Council Issues

13. Garbage Capital Improvements/Rates Discussion

Council was given the attached handout comparing revenues to expenditures for Solid Waste. The City has not done a rate increase since 2015. The City residents currently pay \$14/month. County residents are paying \$35/month to various private disposal companies. City residents can produce as much trash as they choose. They also have free use of the container site. The City is required to maintain a reserve of 1.5 times that of expenses. Staff will work on determining the rate needed to keep Solid Waste healthy.

It was questioned if the container site should remain free to residents or if a flat fee should be established. It was clarified that is an option that can be explored.

Other Items

Attendance at Upcoming Council Meeting


All Council Members present will be at next week's meeting.

Announcements

The campground is open and taking reservations.

The council workshop adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Brittney Moorman
Administrative Assistant

NOTE: This meeting is open to the public. This meeting is for information and discussion of the Council for the listed workshop agenda items.



Laurel Police Department

215 W. 1st Street Laurel, Mt. 59044 • Phone 406-628-8737 • Fax 406-628-4641

Chief of Police Stanley J Langve

May 3, 2022

To whom it may concern,

I write this letter supporting retention of Juliane Lore as the City of Laurel's Prosecuting Attorney. The Prosecutor's Office is a critical role in the Criminal Justice System. They carry the heavy burden of proof to successfully prosecute those who break the law and to bring justice for the victims of crime.

In my 22 years as a Law Enforcement Officer for the City of Laurel, I have worked with all the attorneys that have filed through the Prosecutors Office for the City. I would like to share some of my observations. There is a high turnover in that position. Most, if not all, were surprised by the volume of cases presented to them for prosecution. A few have taken up the case load and worked hard. They generally stay for a short time before the experience they gain allows them to move to a more desirable position. Some have taken the position with the idea that they would be handling a much smaller case load, and it is not worth their time to properly prosecute all the cases that have come before them (an actual conversation I had with a former City Attorney). Unfortunately, there have been a few that I have had little faith in regarding their ability to properly prosecute a criminal case. One practice that was not uncommon was too effectively wipe the desk clean of back logged cases. I recognize and understand that cases need to be triaged in the Criminal Justice system, and that even small delays in the prosecution of misdemeanor cases can jeopardize the "Speedy Trial" requirement. A stable, properly supported Prosecutors Office staffed with professional individuals that possess a strong work ethic would mitigate this issue and provide the level of service that the citizens of Laurel should expect and deserve.

Juliane Lore is one of the top Criminal Prosecutors that the City of Laurel has had in decades. Captain Pitts routinely works with the City Prosecutors Office through discovery requests and shares that sentiment

as well. The rank-and-file officers of the Laurel Police Department have often expressed gratitude to have such an involved prosecutor who is willing to prosecute. My observations are that Julianne brought her knowledge and experience to the office and eagerly educated herself to the criminal process. She has open lines of communication with the officers of the Laurel Police Department and victims of the crimes that she prosecutes. Julianne has taken steps to professionalize and streamline the system. She has participated in trial preparation with officers which was unheard of in my career as an officer. There were several past City Attorneys that I would routinely bring the prosecuting attorney a copy of the case to court at the time of trial as they were not even that prepared. Julianne Lore works many more hours than she is fairly compensated for. The case load for the Laurel Police Department has been and will continue to grow expediently and that directly increases the case load of the Prosecutors Office. This is not only an increase in arrests that are sent to court but an increase in cases that are sent over for review and / or warrants. Julianne as been exceptional in speed of processing these requests. The biggest and possibly most defining attribute I can assign to Julianne Lore is her heart and passion for her work. She is truly and personally invested in the idea of Justice, and takes her cases to heart, and has shown a vested interest in the success and betterment of the City of Laurel.

A properly supported and staffed legal department, criminal or civil, is critical for the success of the City of Laurel. This is especially signified now, given the unprecedented growth occurring in and around Laurel.

Stanley J Langve
Chief of Police

Solid Waste Revenue Vrs Expenses

Year	Revenue	Expenses	Difference
18-19	898,387	869,001	29,386
19-20	908,145	748,254	159,891
20-21	935,072	955,491	-20,419
		3 year net gain or loss	168,858

FAP loan is paid off which equals more revenue loss per year

Dump Fees to the City of Billings Landfill

Year	Charges	Increase year over year
18-19	154,028	
19-20	179,996	25,968
20-21	194,555	14,559
total increase in 3 years		40,527