



**AGENDA
CITY OF LAUREL
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2024
6:30 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

WELCOME . . . By your presence in the City Council Chambers, you are participating in the process of representative government. To encourage that participation, the City Council has specified times for citizen comments on its agenda -- once following the Consent Agenda, at which time citizens may address the Council concerning any brief community announcement not to exceed one minute in duration for any speaker; and again following Items Removed from the Consent Agenda, at which time citizens may address the Council on any matter of City business that is not on tonight's agenda. Each speaker will be limited to three minutes, unless the time limit is extended by the Mayor with the consent of the Council. Citizens may also comment on any item removed from the consent agenda prior to council action, with each speaker limited to three minutes, unless the time limit is extended by the Mayor with the consent of the Council. If a citizen would like to comment on an agenda item, we ask that you wait until the agenda item is presented to the Council by the Mayor and the public is asked to comment by the Mayor.

Any person who has any question concerning any agenda item may call the City Clerk-Treasurer's office to make an inquiry concerning the nature of the item described on the agenda. Your City government welcomes your interest and hopes you will attend the Laurel City Council meetings often.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call of the Council

Approval of Minutes

Correspondence

Council Disclosure of Ex Parte Communications

Public Hearing

1. Public Hearing on Water and Sewer Rate Increase

Consent Items

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

*The Consent Calendar adopting the printed Recommended Council Action will be enacted with one vote. **The Mayor will first ask the Council members if any Council member wishes to remove any item from the Consent Calendar for discussion and consideration.** The matters removed from the Consent Calendar will be considered individually at the end of this Agenda under "Items Removed from the Consent Calendar." (See Section 12.) The entire Consent Calendar, with the exception of items removed to be discussed under "Items Removed from the Consent Calendar," is then voted upon by roll call under one motion.*

Ceremonial Calendar

Reports of Boards and Commissions

Audience Participation (Three-Minute Limit)

Citizens may address the Council regarding any item of City business that is not on tonight's agenda. Comments regarding tonight's agenda items will be accepted under Scheduled Matters. The duration for an individual speaking under Audience Participation is limited to three minutes. While all comments are welcome, the Council will not take action on any item not on the agenda.

Scheduled Matters

Items Removed From the Consent Agenda

Community Announcements (One-Minute Limit)

This portion of the meeting is to provide an opportunity for citizens to address the Council regarding community

announcements. The duration for an individual speaking under Community Announcements is limited to one minute. While all comments are welcome, the Council will not take action on any item not on the agenda.

Council Discussion

Council members may give the City Council a brief report regarding committees or groups in which they are involved.

Mayor Updates

Unscheduled Matters

Adjournment

The City makes reasonable accommodations for any known disability that may interfere with a person's ability to participate in this meeting. Persons needing accommodation must notify the City Clerk's Office to make needed arrangements. To make your request known, please call 406-628-7431, Ext. 2, or write to City Clerk, PO Box 10, Laurel, MT 59044, or present your request at City Hall, 115 West First Street, Laurel, Montana.




File Attachments for Item:

1. Public Hearing on Water and Sewer Rate Increase



Dear Customer,

We are reaching out to inform you about important updates to the City of Laurel's water and wastewater rates, based on a recent comprehensive rate study. Our rates need to be updated to address several key issues, including:

-  Increasing operational costs; the City has not increased rates since 2015, and since then, our costs have increased
-  Urgent maintenance and upgrades for our aging infrastructure
-  Ensuring every customer covers the cost of their water and sewer service

The City Council carefully considered these changes. A public hearing to share more information about these rates is scheduled for December 17, 2024, with a vote on the proposed rates within 30 days.

The results of the rate study recommended a change to how we charge for water. The water rates structure will change to prioritize affordable and equitable rates, and encourage water efficiency. We're moving to a tiered water rate structure. Under this model, the cost per gallon increases as usage rises, which encourages conservation and ensures that high water users contribute more to support the system's additional capacity needs. Many customers may find themselves in the higher tiers during the summer months and in the lower tier during the winter months.

These rate changes are a necessary step towards achieving a balanced and efficient rates structure and will ensure we can continue providing safe and reliable water and sewer services for generations to come.

We appreciate your support as we continue to work to be a stronger and more resilient water utility and community. The following page includes details of the new rates structure. Note that our billing system is not changing, only our rates are. If you have any questions about these new rates or would like assistance with understanding your bill, please contact our customer service team at (406) 628-4796.

Sincerely,

Dave Waggoner

OUR PRIORITIES



Minimized
Customer Impacts



Affordability



Revenue Stability



Fairness



Long-Term
Planning

EXAMPLES OF THREE RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS WITH 3/4" METERS WITH DIFFERENT WATER AND WASTEWATER USAGE AND ANTICIPATED IMPACTS ON THEIR BILLS

Indoor Use 4,000 Gallons of Water 3,000 Gallons of Wastewater	Average Use 6,000 Gallons of Water 3,000 Gallons of Wastewater	Summer Use 15,000 Gallons of Water 3,000 Gallons of Wastewater
Water: Monthly Increase of \$0.10 Sewer: Monthly Increase of \$9.54 Total Change: \$9.64	Water: Monthly Decrease of \$0.74 Sewer: Monthly Increase of \$9.54 Total Change: \$8.80	Water: Monthly Increase of \$0.94 Sewer: Monthly Increase of \$9.54 Total Change: \$10.20

Water Rates Structure

Water

Monthly Minimum Charge/Base Charge, \$ per Bill

Meter Size	Existing	Proposed
<i>Inches</i>		
3/4"	\$32.61	\$32.61
1"	\$56.11	\$56.11
1.25"	\$85.57	\$85.57
1.5"	\$121.86	\$121.86
2"	\$215.28	\$215.28
3"	\$478.86	\$478.86
4"	\$852.82	\$852.82
6"	\$1,915.49	\$1,915.49
10"	\$5,291.82	\$5,291.82

Includes capital charge of \$8 per EDU

Volume Rate

\$ per 1,000 gallons

Threshold	Existing	Proposed
Residential		
0 - 1,000	\$0.00	\$2.17
1,001 - 5,000	\$2.86	\$2.17
5,001 - 10,000	\$2.86	\$2.71
10,001 - 20,000	\$2.86	\$3.26
Over 20,000	\$2.86	\$4.34
Commercial		
0 - 1,000	\$0.00	\$3.27
Over 1,000	\$2.86	\$3.27
Industrial		
0 - 1,000	\$0.00	\$4.02
Over 1,000	\$2.86	\$4.02

Sewer Rates Structure

Meter Size	Existing	Proposed
<i>Inches</i>		
3/4"	\$29.24	\$29.24
1"	\$52.34	\$52.34
1.25"	\$81.29	\$81.29
1.5"	\$116.96	\$116.96
2"	\$208.77	\$208.77
3"	\$467.84	\$467.84
4"	\$835.39	\$835.39
6"	\$1,879.84	\$1,879.84
Multi	\$29.27	\$29.27

All Usage	Rate, \$ per Kgal	Rate, \$ per Kgal
	\$5.27	\$8.45

Includes capital charge of \$10.00 per EDU

