

**REGULAR CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION MEETING**

August 07, 2023

9:00 AM

City Hall



CITY OF MILLS
EST. 1921

Mayor:

Leah Juarez

Council President:

Sara McCarthy

Council Members:

Cherie Butcher

Brad Neumiller

Tim Sutherland

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor opened the work session at 9:00am.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Mayor:

Sips Coffee Lease

One Cent Discussion: Permanent 5th Cent

Mayor talked about the Sips Coffee Lease. She stated that it passed P & Z meeting last week and we have a draft lease in place. She is going to pay for utilities. She will be responsible for the fees associated with the property and must have insurance. The City Attorney drafted the lease and he stated it will be for 5 years. The lease amount has not been decided on yet. It is a small piece of property and she is paying around \$500 to \$600 dollars in Glenrock and Douglas. The owner of Sips Coffee has not suggested any amount yet. The Attorney stated that he wants to finalize the lease and send it over for her to review. When she leaves the property she must restore it to the way she had received it. The Mayor stated that there were two suggestions from the P & Z Meeting, saying that there needs to be a visible sign when turning right onto Wyoming Blvd from the street. The next was her property is a slight triangle and she has to have bushes per our ordinance and they will cause a problem with the lot. If she cannot put bushes in she will need to do some sort of landscaping. Councilman Butcher stated that she can have planter pots that will look nice and not take up so much room. Councilman Neumiller stated that he has not seen a sight plan for this. Can he please get a copy of the site plan. The City Attorney will get a copy of the lease out to the owner of Sips today.

Mayor saved the permanent 5th cent till last so the people in the room could explain what is happening and what they want from us. Kim Devore explained that she formed a group about 2 years ago explaining the 5th cent and how it brings businesses and the community leaders together for better support. She stated that the 5th cent has been in place since 1974. It has had a 60 to 70% approval each time. The question is where this money goes. In the past, this money was for fun things, but with the short fall of funds for the municipalities they have had it use to keep their budget a float. We need 4 out of the six municipalities in our area so we can pass this and keep it going. Many say that we should let the voters decide. We need to have a good marketing campaign to explain to the people what the money is used for. Kim is on the SLIB board. The 6th cent is possibly right behind. If we make the 5th cent permanent then the 6th cent will be added on. Councilman McCarthy stated what will this do for our funding through SLIB? Tasma Powers who is from the Wyoming Sports Ranch stated that if you are not willing to help yourself then the state will make it hard to help you. Basically, that if your municipality does not support the one cent then the state will not help out. They want to see that the municipality is doing its share to help out their community and then the state will see that and help out to. We need all municipalities to support this. Mayor asked what the economic tax is. Pat Sweeny stated that is has been in place for many years. This tax is to fund economic development. The tax is ¼ %. SLIB wants to see what each municipality is doing to help themselves. What are you willing to do

to help yourself out. The 6th cent was voted down. Bar Nunn, Evansville and Mills did not support it. We can just extend the 5th cent without making it permanent. The economic tax is not done by each municipality it has to be county wide. The challenge is if you push for the 5th cent to permanent then try to add the economic tax, both will fail. This would be a heavy lift to try and will be painful for the communities but it is essential. Pat Sweeny stated that the state has funded a lot of community centers and they have helped as much as possible. But if we do not show our support for the 5th cent then we are sending a message to Cheyenne that they do not want to hear. Kim stated that the businesses in the community pay a big chunk of the sales tax. It is not our residents. Justin from Advance Casper, stated that if you can get more out of the 4th cent then I will drive you to Cheyenne to tell them that. The 5th Cent will help improve the business and the communities in which we grow in. Kim stated that there is no tax on food or fuel with the 5th cent. Over time we will have the 5th cent and the 6th cent and the economic tax. With all this our communities will thrive and the business will grow. This of course will not happen right away. If we tried all that they all would fail. They would like to have Mills support in this. Mayor stated we don't get a lot of money from the 5th cent. Casper get a lot. It goes off the population and we don't have a huge population. Joanne True stated that Natrona County has never passed the 6th cent. There is some other communities that have. What might need to happen is that if the 5th cent is permanent and then the 6th cent and the ¼ tax is added the residents should be able to pick how they want to spend the money. Leave it to the voters to see what they would like to spend the money on. Keith Tyler stated that it comes down to good governance. The first 25 years was an amenities tax and then in the 1980's everything went downhill. Most municipalities had to use the 5th cent to pay for equipment and big items. The 5th cent is a dependable revenue source for all. Midwest and Edgerton are in the process of passing the 5th cent in an ordinance. It will take 3 readings to pass. Joanne just wants us to think about it and if you need any more information please reach out. The City Administrator stated that we need to educate our residents on this tax. Councilman Neumiller stated that we need it. Everything is going up. I am afraid the residents will not respond well to all the increases. Like what we are doing with our water rates. Mayor stated that she does not want to be strong armed into this. She understand the importance of it, but will the residents think that. They need to vote for this tax.

2. Community Development Director:

Park Names

The Community Development Director stated that the park names closed on Friday. She stated that the name of the park that got the most votes was McCarthy Acres. It had 11 votes and 4 votes were family. The second place one was Robertson Heights Park with 5 votes and then Grove with 4. There was not that many that voted. She stated that we need to decide quick on a name since the sign needs to be made. The building inspector stated that Rocky Mountain knows the park as Robertson Hills Park. Keith Tyler stated that the residents in the area wanted the park and that is why I donated the land. I think the name should be what the area is known as. The Council liked the Robertson Heights Park.

3. City Administrator:

Rate Increases

The Public Works Supervisor talked about the rate increases that he would like council to look over. He went over what we charge right now and what he would like to go up to. Right now we charge \$9.45 for the first 1500 gallons. He stated that he would like to raise it to \$11.00 for the first 2000 gallons. Then it would be \$4.00 for each 1000 gallons after that. We have always been lower than Casper. We will not raise anything in sewer. But we will raise commercial sanitation to when business lease our dumpsters it will be a 20% increase. He also stated that we have about 126 meters that needs replaced. It cost around \$800.00 to buy a 2 yard dumpster. Raising the fee we can have them paid off faster. The Mayor stated that we need to be charging like Casper does. I would like to see the \$4.50 for each 1000

gallons used. The City Administrator stated that we will look into some other options and have them ready for the work session tomorrow night.

Councilman McCarthy stated that she went to the ribbon cutting for the house that will house homeless kids. It is a super nice house. The Mayor stated that she told the owners of the house that we can help out with cabinets and whatever they need. Kim Devore stated that Jonah Bank is helping them get funds. They will get a \$80,000 check and some federal funds to help with this project. She stated that Jonah Bank would love to help as well.

ADJOURNMENT

AGENDA SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

Mayor adjourn the work session at 10:31pm.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, persons who need accommodation in order to attend or participate in this meeting should contact City Hall at 307-234-6679 within 48 hours prior to the meeting in order to request such assistance.


City Clerk, Christine Trumbull

