



Montana's Sunrise City

115 2nd Street S.E., Sidney, Montana - 406-433-2809

Budget and Finance Committee Meeting 6/9/26

June 09, 2026 5:30 PM

Committee meetings are held in a hybrid format, allowing both in-person and Zoom participation. Councilmembers will attend in person unless remote attendance is necessary. Consistent with the Montana Constitution's Right of Participation and Right to Know, the City is committed to open and accessible meetings. Public participation via Zoom or phone is available using the information below:

Zoom

Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/7130805898?pwd=tJpmtgBdGbsjBXS0EAU50ANb4u7h3l.1&omn=83241083533>

Call: 1-346-248-7799 **Meeting ID:** 713 080 5898 **Passcode:** 4332809

1. Call to Order

Chair Christensen called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was stated by all.

3. Roll Call

Committee Members Present:

City Officials/ Staff Present:

Committee Members Present: Christensen, Buxbaum, and DiFonzo

City Officials/ Staff Present: Mayor Norby, Interim Clerk/Treasurer Lange, and Interim CAO Chamberlin

4. Correction or Approval of Minutes

a. May 12th, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Motion was made to approve.

Motion made by DiFonzo, Seconded by Buxbaum.

Voting Yea: Christensen, DiFonzo, Buxbaum

5. Public Comment/ Visitors

Your opportunity for the public to address the Committee on items not included on the agenda, no action will be taken during this time.

None.

6. Monthly Reports

a. Clerk/Treasurer's Report

Interim Clerk/Treasurer Lange presented a Treasurer's Update summarizing ongoing projects and activities within City Hall. She reported that significant effort is currently focused on development of the FY 2026-2027 budget and completion of employee evaluations utilizing the City's newly revised evaluation process. She noted that the updated evaluation forms have been well received and that a majority of evaluations have already been completed.

Interim Clerk/Treasurer Lange also reported she and Interim CAO Chamberlin are working with Fire Marshal Rasmussen to improve permit tracking and reporting processes through updates to the City's permit tracking spreadsheets.

She further reported that she, Mayor Norby, and Interim CAO Chamberlin would be attending a Municipal Summit in Wolf Point on June 16 and that she would also attend a Montana State Fund Safety Workshop on June 17. She noted that City Hall continues to experience significant seasonal activity and that pool pass sales have been exceptionally strong, with more than 540 individual passes sold to date.

Committee members expressed appreciation for the Treasurer's Update format and indicated they would like to continue receiving similar reports in the future.

7. New Business

a. FY25-26 Budgeted Transfers

Interim Clerk/Treasurer Lange presented the annual budgeted transfer schedule. Discussion included transfers related to snow removal, street maintenance, parks, and special improvement districts. Staff explained that snow removal revenues are initially collected with street maintenance assessments and are subsequently transferred to the appropriate fund based on actual revenues received.

Motion was made to approve.

Motion made by Buxbaum, Seconded by DiFonzo.

Voting Yea: Christensen, DiFonzo, Buxbaum

b. FY 25-26 Budget vs Actual-Expenditures

Interim CAO Chamberlin reviewed budget-to-actual expenditure reports with the Committee. She explained that the reports were intended to provide a more detailed look at expenditures by object while staff continue budget development for the upcoming fiscal year. She noted that no significant expenditure concerns had been identified at this time, although some coding

corrections would be completed before year-end, including reallocating legal service expenses among the appropriate funds.

c. FY 25-26 Budget vs Actual-Revenue

The Committee also reviewed current revenue reports. Interim CAO Chamberlin reported that revenues were performing well and that property tax collections were currently at approximately 94% of budgeted revenue. She highlighted strong collections in several assessment funds, including street maintenance and garbage assessments. She further noted that oil and gas tax revenues had exceeded budget estimates and would support the budgeted transfers planned for the current fiscal year. Water and sewer revenues were also tracking closely with projections.

Discussion occurred regarding the timeline for FY 2026-2027 budget development. Interim CAO Chamberlin explained that Public Works and Public Safety budget presentations would occur prior to presentation of the full preliminary budget and that taxable valuation information would not be available until later in the summer.

d. MT Tourism Development Grant

Interim CAO Chamberlin provided a brief update on the Montana Tourism Development Grant. She explained that the Budget & Finance Committee will serve as the primary committee overseeing grant implementation and that future updates and project-related decisions will be brought before the Committee as work progresses.

8. Unfinished Business

a. 2026 Employee Handbook Update

The Committee continued its review of the revised Employee Handbook. Interim CAO Chamberlin explained that while the handbook contains additional policy coverage compared to prior versions, it has been streamlined and rewritten in a more concise and user-friendly format. The handbook will be provided to all employees as part of orientation and ongoing personnel administration.

Motion was made to approve.

Motion made by Buxbaum, Seconded by DiFonzo.

Voting Yea: Christensen, DiFonzo, Buxbaum

b. Employee Evaluation Policy 2026

The Committee reviewed the Employee Evaluation Policy. Interim CAO Chamberlin reported that the updated process is functioning well and that supervisors have responded positively to conducting evaluations within the chain of command structure. Employees have also expressed appreciation for receiving evaluations from direct supervisors who are most familiar with their day-to-day performance.

Discussion also occurred regarding employee goals and methods for evaluating performance in positions where measurable objectives may be more difficult to establish. Interim CAO Chamberlin explained that some goals are department-wide while others are individualized based on employee duties and responsibilities.

Motion was made to approve.

Motion made by DiFonzo, Seconded by Buxbaum.

Voting Yea: Christensen, DiFonzo, Buxbaum

c. Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy 2026

The Committee reviewed the Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy. Discussion occurred regarding testing procedures, employee rights, retesting opportunities, and the City's current testing provider. Interim CAO Chamberlin explained that employees have the opportunity to request retesting if circumstances warrant and that positive test results are handled in accordance with established procedures and individual circumstances.

Motion was made to approve.

Motion made by Buxbaum, Seconded by DiFonzo.

Voting Yea: Christensen, DiFonzo, Buxbaum

d. Conflict of Interest and Ethics Policy and Form

Interim CAO Chamberlin noted that the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Policy had already been approved by the City Council and no further action was required.

e. FY26-27 Payroll:

Superintendent positions Exempt

2.9% COLA

No Merit Increase

No Drug Task Force Officer Position

The Committee reviewed the proposed FY 2026-2027 payroll budget. Interim CAO Chamberlin explained that the proposal includes a 2.9% cost-of-living adjustment, no merit increase for the fiscal year, conversion of superintendent positions to exempt status, and elimination of the dedicated Drug Task Force Officer position. She noted that Chief Kraft supported removal of the Drug Task Force Officer position and that overall payroll costs reflected a decrease in the General Fund compared to prior projections.

Discussion occurred regarding healthcare costs, staffing changes, and internal posting of the new Public Works Operations Manager position. Staff indicated that recruitment efforts would begin internally before considering external applicants.

Motion was made to approve.

Motion made by Buxbaum, Seconded by DiFonzo.
Voting Yea: Christensen, DiFonzo, Buxbaum

9. Comments and Questions from the Committee

Committee Member DiFonzo requested information regarding Constitutional Initiative 134 and its potential impact on municipal property tax revenues. Interim CAO Chamberlin explained that the measure would have limited annual property tax growth to 2%, significantly below recent inflation rates. She noted that, based on preliminary calculations, the City could have experienced substantial revenue losses if such limitations had been implemented. During discussion, it was noted that the initiative effort had reportedly been withdrawn and would not proceed.

10. Adjournment

at 6:00pm.

Meeting Guidelines

- We ask that all participants be respectful and courteous.
- Please direct comments to the Council as a whole.
- When speaking, please state your name for the record.
- Be mindful of others by keeping comments concise and avoiding repetition.
- The presiding officer may guide speaking time to help the meeting run smoothly.
- Disruptive behavior may result in removal from the meeting.