



Montana's Sunrise City

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

Public Safety Committee Meeting 5/26/26

May 26, 2026 4:30 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=89062409255>

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

1. Call to Order

The Public Safety Committee Meeting was called to order at 4:30pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was stated by all present.

3. Roll Call

Committee Members Present:

City Officials/ Staff Present:

Committee Members Present: Kauffman, Rasmussen, Creek, and DiFonzo standing in for Buxbaum.

City Officials/ Staff Present: Mayor Norby, Interim Clerk/Treasurer Lange, PWD Hintz, FM/BI Rasmussen, Chief Kraft, and Interim CAO Chamberlin.

4. Correction or Approval of Minutes

Motion was made to approve the April Public Safety Committee Meeting Minutes.

Motion made by DiFonzo, Seconded by Kauffman.

Voting Yea: Kauffman, Rasmussen, DiFonzo

Voting Abstaining: Creek (not in attendance at time of voting)

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.

Via Zoom: James Falcon (Sidney Herald), Forrest Sanderson (City Planner), Melody Woolf, Misty Brown, Jennifer Gillis, Heidi Sykora, Jeff Reagan, Drea Powers, Shannon Lee, Michael Fasano, Dana Avedisian, Allison Smith, and Brittany Sefton.

6. Monthly Reports

a. April 2026 Police Department Report

Chief Kraft provided his April 2026 Police Department Report.

b. April 2026 Fire Run Report

FM/BI Rasmussen provided his April 2026 Fire Run Report.

c. April 2026 Compliance Report

PWD Hintz provided the April 2026 Compliance Report on behalf of Compliance Officer Schroeder.

7. New Business

a. Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Discussion

City Planner Forrest Sanderson (via Zoom) discussed extra-territorial jurisdiction authority and zoning powers available to the City outside of the municipal boundaries.

City Planner Sanderson explained that zoning is the primary legal mechanism available for the City to regulate land uses beyond city limits. He stated the City could potentially establish zoning authority up to one mile outside city limits, provided the City completed updates to the Growth Policy and followed the statutory process required under Montana law.

Discussion focused heavily on concerns regarding proposed saltwater disposal facilities and oilfield-related development near the City limits. Committee members expressed concern regarding long-term impacts on infrastructure, groundwater, growth planning, and future residential development areas.

City Planner Sanderson explained implementation of extra-territorial zoning would require:

Estimated startup costs for implementation were discussed, indicating the process could potentially exceed \$100,000 depending on the scope of the work performed.

Discussion also occurred regarding the City's current participation in the Board of Oil and Gas hearing in June in Billings concerning proposed saltwater disposal facilities near Sidney. City Planner Sanderson stated he previously submitted correspondence outlining City concerns regarding proposed facility locations and their proximity to planned growth areas and infrastructure investments.

No formal action was taken regarding extra-territorial zoning authority.

b. Kratom Ordinance Discussion

Alderwoman Rasmussen moved the kratom ordinance discussion forward on the agenda due to the number of virtual attendees participating in the discussion.

Interim CAO Chamberlin explained the City currently has limited authority regarding regulation of kratom products because the City operates under general powers authority and must rely on authority granted by the Montana Legislature. She further stated the City will continue monitoring potential legislative action and developments at the State level.

Several members of the public attending virtually addressed the Committee regarding kratom products, including distinctions between natural kratom leaf products and synthetic or semi-synthetic products. Discussion focused heavily on “7-OH” synthetic derivatives and concerns surrounding respiratory depression, addiction, and mislabeled products.

Speakers discussed regulatory approaches utilized in other states and communities. Several individuals provided personal testimony regarding their use of natural kratom products for chronic pain management, opioid withdrawal, PTSD symptoms, alcohol cessation, and anxiety management. Speakers emphasized the distinction between natural kratom products and synthetic products being sold under similar branding.

Discussion also occurred regarding current efforts in other Montana communities, including Manhattan, Billings, and Bozeman, to explore possible regulation or bans related to kratom products. Interim CAO Chamberlin reiterated that self-governing municipalities have broader regulatory authority than Sidney currently possesses under its general powers structure.

No formal action was taken on the kratom discussion.

c. Fireworks 2026

Discussion occurred regarding fireworks restrictions and fire conditions throughout Richland County. Fire Marshal Rasmussen reported Richland County was currently under a burn ban and noted extremely dry conditions, elevated temperatures, and increasing wildfire activity throughout the region.

Fire Marshal Rasmussen explained the County had not yet made a final determination regarding fireworks restrictions but indicated those discussions would likely occur closer to the Fourth of July holiday. Discussion also occurred regarding whether the City should consider banning fireworks sales in addition to use if restrictions become necessary.

Discussion also occurred regarding the possibility of allowing the organized public fireworks display at the Richland County Fairgrounds while restricting personal fireworks use, depending on future weather and fire conditions. The fairgrounds is not within city limits so not City jurisdiction.

Motion was made to forward fireworks to the City Council for continued discussion and possible future action.

Motion made by DiFonzo, Seconded by Rasmussen.
Voting Yea: Kauffman, Rasmussen, Creek, DiFonzo

d. Speeding in school zones

Discussion occurred regarding speeding concerns near school zones, particularly near West Side School and the high school. Committee members discussed possible enforcement efforts, including increased police presence during school arrival and dismissal times to improve visibility and public awareness.

Police Chief Kraft discussed possible traffic calming options including speed bumps, elevated crosswalks, additional signage, and traffic flow improvements.

Discussion also occurred regarding recent changes to yield signs near West Side School. Chief Kraft explained the sign changes were made to better align with federal traffic control standards and to improve traffic flow and safety around the school. Committee members discussed differing opinions regarding the prior yield sign configuration and whether the changes could impact speeding concerns near the school.

Additional discussion occurred regarding pedestrian safety, school crosswalk visibility, and the placement of additional school zone speed limit signs near the high school.

Motion was made to recommend yield sign changes and further discussion at the next City Council meeting.

Motion made by Rasmussen, Seconded by Kauffman.
Voting Yea: Kauffman, Rasmussen, Creek
Voting Nay: DiFonzo

8. Unfinished Business

None.

9. Comments and Questions from the Committee

None.

10. Adjournment

at 5:43pm.

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.