

Stevensville Town Council Meeting
Minutes for
THURSDAY, MAY 23, 2019
7:00 PM

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
Mayor Dewey called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm
Roll Call: Mayor Dewey, Council members Barker, Holcomb and Michalson were present. Staff and members of the public were also present.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
All rose and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Approval of Minutes
 - a. April 4, 2019 Committee of the Whole Meeting
Council member Holcomb made the moved to approve the April 4,2019 Council Meeting Minutes. It was then Seconded by Council member Michalson. The Mayor called for the vote and all voted "Aye." The motion passed, unanimously 3-0.
4. Approval of Bi-Weekly Claims
 - a. Approval of the Bi-Weekly Claims (15183 - 15186, \$2,596.09)
Council member Holcomb made a motion to approve the Bi-Weekly Claims #15183 - 15186, totaling \$2,596.09. It was then Seconded by Council member Michalson. There was discussion between the Mayor and Council about the gas tax and professional services.
5. Administrative Reports
6. Guests
 - a. Montana Department of Transportation - Stevensville Projects
Josh Bennet presented on the 3 projects: Lost Trail and Stevensville. The Stevensville project will be split into 2 seperate projects, for a total of 3 projects. The Lost Trial Project will be starting approximately June 17th and will last approximately 4 weeks. Then they will start paving the town of Stevensville approximately July 15th. This project will take place mainly during night hours. Overall, construction should be completed about the middle of August.
7. Correspondence
Mayor Dewey read 2 Correspondence not included in the packets:
Email to the council from Mark Harris
Mayor Dewey read the email which stated that Mark had attended the Meet and Greet for council candidates representing Ward 2. He was concerned that Candidate Crews does not admit to any difficulties working with the current mayor or staff. He continued to express that other candidates would be qualified for the temporary council position as well. Mayer Dewey continued to read the response Councilman Michalson gave to his concerns via email to Mr. Harris.
Letter from Headwaters Wellness Center
Mayer Dewey read a letter dated May 22, 2019, containing numerous letters of urgency requesting the council to work collaboratively with the mayor, putting personal feelings aside, in support for council applicant Vick.
 - a. Ms. VanTassel Resignation Letter
Mayor Dewey read the Resignation Letter dated May 13, 2019, with an Effective May 17, 2019.
 - b. Email from Dan Clark, Director of the MSU Local Government Center, regarding Town Clerk vacancy and Council meetings
Mayor Dewey read an email dated May 15, 2019. The local government center is a tool to strengthen capacities of local government units and provide training, technical assistance and

research to elected and appointed administrative officials. He was concerned that the town council of Stevensville recently cancelled its meeting, claiming he, Dan Clark from the local government center said that they could not have a meeting without a clerk. This action resulted in the mayor cancelling all future meetings of the council until the issue could be clarified. He expressed, the language used was an attempt to use the local government center as a “weapon” as a continued battle at the Stevensville town hall and the government center strives to take an unbiased side. In the last 11 years, he does not recall ever being directly asked if a council should cancel a meeting because a town clerk is unavailable. He has often mentioned in trainings that by law, it is the duty of the clerk to attend all meetings of the council. Town clerks are important to the function of city government and its operations but by no means in their absence do all operations stop. He was not unaware of any reference in the MCA prohibiting town council meetings when a town clerk is absence; The law states: “It is the duty of the clerk to attend all meetings, not a requirement that meetings must have a clerk present to take minutes in order to proceed.”

8. Public Comments

No public comments.

9. Unfinished Business

- a. Discussion/Decision to set a Committee of the Whole Meeting to discuss the Town of Stevensville Fire Department and Stevensville Rural Fire District Interlocal Agreement Council member Holcomb made a motion to set a committee date meeting on May 30th 7pm to discuss the Town of Stevensville Fire Department and Stevensville Rural Fire District Interlocal Agreement. It was Seconded by Council member Barker.

Mayor Dewey called for public comment.

Anderson, verified it included the lease for property located at 280 Buck St. and it was confirmed, yes, it does includes the property.

Mayor Dewey called for the vote and all voted “Aye.” The motion passed unanimously, 3-0.

- b. Discussion/decision: Selection of applicants to interview for Ward 2 Councilmember vacancy Council member Michalson made a motion to suspend council rules and move to New Business item: (f.) Discussion/decision - appoint a candidate to fill the vacant Ward 2 Council position. The motion was Seconded by Council member Holcomb.

Mayor Dewey called for any public comment:

Russ Sandy, Comment on election.

The vote was called: Council member Barker “No,” Holcomb “Aye,” Michalson “No” The motion failed, 1-2.

Mayor Dewey then asked if the council would like to continue to interview a candidate on unfinished item b. as we are past the 30 day deadline. Council member Michalson then requested to reconsider his vote on the previous question. There was no objection from council.

Mayor Dewey followed by again, calling another vote, starting with Council member Barker “No,” Holcomb “Aye,” Michalson “Aye”

The motion passed 2-1, this time, therefore the council will move to New Business item (f.)

Council member Holcomb made a motion to appoint candidate Dempsey Vick to fill the vacant council seat for Ward 2. Councilman Michalson then Seconded the motion.

Council member Barker explained that her decision will be based on several community members’ comments that she has received and therefore, her vote will be based on what everyone wants.

Mayor Dewey continued to call for the vote: Council member Barker “No,” Holcomb “No,” Michalson “No.” All votes “No” with the motion failing 3-0.

Mayor Dewey asked the council how they would like to proceed with the appointment of a council member for Ward 2, the response given by the council was to re-advertise for the

position. The Mayor requested a 10 minute recess to consult in the attorney on how to proceed, council will continue @ 8:00pm.

Mayor Dewey resumed the council meeting and he, indeed contacted the attorney during the break for direction. The attorney believes that we can re-advertise for the position. Council reassured that they will be following council rules, dating the new posting with tomorrow's date because of the time this evening.

Council member Michalson continued with making a motion to re-advertise council seat for Ward 2, vacated by council member Phillips. Council member Holcomb Seconded the motion. Mayor Dewey called for public comment

Jan Perrin, 503 Charlos

Jan was concerned about re-advertisement

Mayor Dewey called for the vote, Council member Barker "Aye," Holcomb "Aye," Michalson "Aye." The motion passed with a 3-0 vote.

10. New Business

a. Bid Opening – Auditor Proposal

Mayor Dewey presented one proposal for auditing purposes from the current auditor, Armstrong & Associates. The audit would cover the fiscal year ending in June 30,2021. The audit would commence January 2022 with submitting the final audit June 2022 with a price of \$15,000.00.

b. Bid Opening – Town Attorney Proposals

Mayor Dewey presented 2 proposals to the council, consisting of current attorney, Brian West, with a bid of \$105.00 per hour. The second bid was from attorney, Scott Owens, with a bid of \$80.00 an hour, plus \$250 monthly for insurance and training.

c. Discussion/decision: Temporary appointment of a Town Councilmember to fulfill the duties of Town Clerk relating to Council meetings and the taking of minutes.

The Town Clerk's duties, as far as writing up council minutes temporarily, are allowed to be filled by a council member at the time of council if no Town Clerk staff is available. After discussion, Council is interested in any staff available to write up the meeting minutes, even if this includes overtime.

d. Discussion/Decision regarding temporary compensation for administration during the Finance Officer and Town Clerk recruitment, hiring and onboarding

Mayor Dewey explained to the council that the applications for Finance Officer are due May 31st, while the applications for Town Clerk are due 2 weeks after that, June 7th. He continued to explain that office staff will be short for the next several weeks. The mayor explained to the council that someone needs to handle the recruitment, hiring and training of the new office staff. He explained that someone needs to be compensated for the work expected at Town Hall. After much conversation between the council and mayor, as to why it is reasonable to pay someone for the work being done, the compensation requested by the mayor is: current compensation for Mayor, with an additional \$25 per hour for the financial Officer and Town Clerk, including the current work being done, as well as training the new hires for the positions.

Mayor Dewey asked for any public comments:

Few public comments on approaching a past employee about potential, temporary job interest, which would also include training.

Motion on the floor is to increase the Mayor's compensation \$25 with the absence of the Finance Office and Town Clerk for the recruitment, hiring and onboarding, not to exceed 30 hrs per week. Council member Holcomb then Seconded the motion.

Mayor Dewey called for the vote starting with Council member Holcomb "No," Michalson "No," Barker "Aye" The motion failed with a 2-1 vote.

The Mayor refused to do "free work" in which the council expects to be done without compensation. The council wants Town Hall to be open and staffed, and the bills to be paid, yet there is no one to do the work other than the mayor.

Revote: Council member Holcomb "Aye," Barker "Aye," Michalson "No." The motion passed with a 2-1 vote.

- e. Discussion: Interview of applicants for Ward 2 Councilmember vacancy
- f. Discussion/decision - appoint a candidate to fill the vacant Ward 2 Council position
- g. Discussion/decision: Special Event and Alcohol Use Permit for Western Heritage Day

The town event is planned for June 29th. Vendors will be on West 3rd. The event volunteer coordinators are requesting permission from the the town to allow alcohol open-beverages on East 3rd St. which will be fenced off and security will be on the premises. They are also requesting the approval of fireworks afterward. After speaking with the Fire Chief, he didn't see any danger with this. Council member Barker made a motion to approve the special event permit for Stevensville Heritage Days, including alcohol use and a fireworks display, with the approval that Fire Chief Motley signs off on the fireworks display. Council member Holcomb Seconded the motion.

Mayor Dewey called for public comment

Chief Motley explained to the council that he is fully certified to set off these particular fireworks.

Discussion on The Bitterroot Star sponsoring Heritage Days this year and private security has always been hired for the beer garden area.

Mayor Dewey called for the vote starting with Council member Holcomb "Aye," Michalson "Aye," Barker "Aye." The motion Passed unanimously with a 3-0 vote.

11. Executive Report

Mayor Dewey explained that Laura Miller was hired as the Deputy Clerk and will begin training on all the utility billing for the next few months by Denise Phillely. The plumbing and electrical has been completed in the park restrooms, and other fixtures have been ordered. There is now LED lighting in the restrooms. The pool heater will be installed by a plumber; Shooting for a June 10th opening day for the pool. Melissa Henderson has been hired as the pool manager. With the resignation of the Financial Officer, the budget will take longer this year. Public input on the budget will be approached a little differently this year. Community Clean-up was held April 28th. The kiosk is well underway as a project and will be a successfully executed project in the near future. Public Works is working diligently on getting the cemetery ready for Memorial Day. The Finance Officer position has been posted, applications are due 31st, no applications have been received to date. The vacant Town Clerk position has not received any inquiries as well. A special events permit was issued in the beginning of the month for the Farmer's Market. Chief Marble's work is appreciated for Officer Palmer's return yesterday, including the town's compassion. The Mayor is proud and grateful for a community such as Stevensville. The Mayor encourages for citizens to review the budget. The Mayor ended on referencing to a hockey game, the interviews after the game included players not necessarily losing the game to the last score but loosing because of performance in the previous 3 periods of the game. In life, sometimes we get screwed and loose, but if we move on to compete, perfecting our game, we can move on to play at the Stanley Cup.

12. Town Council Comments

13. Board Report

Council member Michalson commented on behalf of the airport board report. New hangars and taxing ways were discussed.

14. Adjournment

Mayor Dewey adjourned the meeting at 9:05 pm.