

Stevensville Town Council Meeting
Minutes for
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2019
7:00 PM

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Roll Call: Mayor Dewey, Council members Holcomb, Gibson, Vick and Shourd. Staff and members of the community were also present.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

All rose and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Approval of Minutes

4. No minutes to be approved tonight.

5. Approval of Bi-Weekly Claims

Financial Officer reported on the claims presented, #15427-15527 which totaled \$15,083.21.

Also presented was Claim #15253 for the Fireworks, totaling \$4,501.50.

Council member Gibson asked about #15514, The Economic Development Fund Grant, Market Analysis including training for GIS software.

Council member Holcomb made the Motion to approve Claims as presented, except for #15253, 2019 4th of July Fireworks. The Motion was then Seconded by Council member Gibson. Council member Shourd asked for the reasoning behind not approving the Claim for the fireworks and Council member Holcomb said it was not approved, therefore done illegally. The payment and when the claim occurred was discussed. Legal council has advised that if we incur the expense, and it is true and accurate, we pay it. The Financial Officer suggested the best way to do the fireworks is by donation, outside of the organization. Council member Gibson was concerned with the fireworks being paid in October and would like to prevent this for this year. The attorney clarified, when the claims occur, Council needs to pay them.

Mayor Dewey called for Public Comment.

Bob Michalson, 222 Turner St.

Bob explained why he signed and cancelled the check for the fireworks, as well as the fireworks not included in last year's budget. Mr. Michalson read off MT M.C.764301 and believes the Mayor is liable for the payment of the fireworks.

The attorney will research the topic and the fireworks will be re-presented after the attorney has a response.

Sheri Dietsch, 105 Winslett

Spoke about her concerns on accountability, and reassurance in preventing this from happening again, with the fireworks being paid for when it was not in the budget.

Raymond Smith, 326 Valley View.

The fireworks issue has been bounced around for a while now. Realistically, the fireworks have already been paid; he will start raising donations for fireworks. This is a great thing for the community.

Council member Holcomb strongly suggests to Council that they put a "freeze" on spending until the budget is passed.

Mayor Dewey called for the Vote. Mayor Dewey called for the Vote. Motion Passes unanimously, 4-0.

Council member Holcomb made a Motion for the Mayor to Repay the Town for Fireworks Claim. Council member Gibson then Seconded the Motion. Council member Vick agrees to wait until the attorney has a response. Mayor Dewey called for the Vote. Council member Shourd "No," Holcomb "Aye," Vick "No," Gibson "No," Motion Fails 3-1.

Council member Vick made a Motion to Table Claim #15253 till the October 24, 2019 Town Council Meeting; It was then Seconded by Council member Gibson.
Mayor Dewey called for Public Comment.

Raymond Smith, 326 Valley View

Expressed concern as to why Council is even making action, when it was agreed that they will wait until the Town's attorney has a response to this subject. We are creating a Motion on something that does not need to happen.

Mayor Dewey called for the Vote. Council member Holcomb "No," Shourd "Aye," Gibson "Aye," Vick "Aye." Motion Passes 3-1.

5. Administrative Reports

a. Airport Manager's Report

b. Building Department Report

Included in the packet. Total permits issued in the month of September was 12, with the total fees collected in \$1583.00.

Council member Gibson asked about a business permit being a high of \$30,000. Mayor Dewey stated that was a while ago, might even have been back into that last fiscal yr; it can be looked into.

c. Finance Report

Finance Officer delivered the Finance Report. He also reported that he attended a class in Missoula this morning, pertaining to closing the books for 2019.

d. Fire Department Report

Chief Motley delivered the Fire Department Report. 81 Requests for service, as well as providing the public with a 9/11 Memorial Service. October is Fire Prevention Month.

e. Police Department Report

Chief Marble delivered the Police Department Report, with 78 calls for service in the month of September, with 26 incidents created from the calls for service. Officer T. is currently filling in for the SRO, as we do currently have applicants for the position.

f. Public Works Report

Public Works Report included 25,587,000 Gallons of water produced; 5,728,000 Waste Water treated. The pool was also winterized.

6. Guests

7. Correspondence

8. Public Comments

Stacie Barker, 104 Winslet.

Ms. Barker addressed a few concerns, including the budget and the fee associated with the budget not being turned in on time; the Mayor and the Clerk's job is to write a Resolution on the Vote passed on the Water Rate changes; there should be no further discussion on this or the Special Audit on the Agenda. She read the job description to the Mayor, of the Clerk and Treasurer, the duties of the Officers' positions, which are not being followed, as they feel they can talk whenever they want to, and transparency to the new Council is desired.

Bob Michalson, 222 Turner St.

Mr. Michalson spoke about the fireworks, and code 7-64005 Expenditures Limited to Appropriations. The fireworks were not budgeted for except for after the fact. The Jean Thomas Fund; 2-350; No money should be transferred without a Resolution or Ordinance.

Carolyn Mickens, 211 Buck

She turned in all of the notarized petitions for her alley easement, and looks forward to the Public Hearing date.

Raymond Smith, 326 Valley View

Question for the Town's attorney, is this a crime, the misuse of public funds.

Council member Gibson, reassurance that there is no fine associated with the Budget being late; Clarified, it would be an audit finding.

9. Unfinished Business

a. Discussion/Decision: Performing a special audit from May 2019 through July 2019

Since the Council has approved proceeding with an RFP process, as discussed and decided, at the Sep. 12 & 24 meetings, to conduct a special audit during the time a Finance Officer was absent, the current Finance Officer has reached out to other auditors in the state. It was suggested that our current auditors, Strom & Associated, be asked to review the time period desired and pay for the high-risk area. The desired content to be reviewed includes: all payroll, audit trails in Black Mountain Software and assignment permissions, and an audit of bank statements and ledgers. The RFP was provided in the packet, which includes the Issue date as Oct. 11, 2019. The Proposals are Due Nov. 1, 2019 and the Selection will be made at the Nov. 14, 2019 Town Council Meeting. The current Finance Officer can be reached for any additional information on the RFPs, and the current budget and most recent audit is available on the Town's website.

The publications were clarified, with a notice in the paper and a list of the State's approved auditors, and the list of standard audit items desired by Council.

Motion was made by Council member Gibson and then Seconded by Council member Vick to approve the RFP for auditing services. The time frame was verified and approved by Council; Mayor Dewey called for the Vote. Council member Shourd "Aye," Vick "Aye," Holcomb "Aye," Gibson "Aye." Motion Passes 4-0.

10. New Business

a. Discussion/Decision: Changes to Water & Wastewater Rates in FY2019-20

On September 18, 2019 Council voted to reduce the water rates and waste water operation and maintenance rates by 3%, which would be effective Nov. 1, 2019. A planned increase of 3% was adopted in 2015, and was to be in effect on Nov. 1, 2019. This action reduces the rates by 6%. This reduction will not allow the Town to support the multiple capital projects which include improvements to the Water Storage Project. It was recommended by the administration that Council reverse their decision which was made on Sep. 18, 2019 to allow the planned rates adopted by Resolution 378 and Resolution 379 to remain in effect. There is language in our Bond, that prohibits reducing the rates, we would need to inform our Bond holders.

Council member Gibson reminded everyone that on September 18, we unanimously passed the rate reduction of 3 %, which had nothing to do with the Bonds.

Council member Gibson, as per 69711, this should have been prior; Made a Motion that we publish this as soon as possible, and it needs to be a 3% decrease from this year. If this goes through after Public Hearing, and per 69711 the contact person be the attorney; The attorney and Co review the Public Notice before it is published. It was fuller explained that wages of 40% should not be coming from the Water & Sewer Funds.

The Motion was then Seconded by Council member Vick.

Mayor Dewey called for Public Comment.

Bob Michalson, 222 Turner St.

We could lower the Water & Sewer rates, as we have some of the highest in the state, and this would help the citizens on fixed incomes.

Mayor Dewey called for the Vote. Council member Holcomb "Aye," Vick "Aye," Gibson "Aye," Shourd "Aye." Motion Passes 4-0.

11. Executive Report

Mayor Dewey gave his Executive report, including the Staff and Council member Gibson attending the Mt League of Towns and Cities Conference and next week he plans on meeting with NW Energy about LED lighting. There will also be a planned fall pick up.

12. Town Council Comments

Council member Gibson wanted clarification on the upcoming meetings; Regula Scheduled meetings are the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month; 24th of October, 14th of November; The Public Hearings for the Water & Sewer, those will be separate meetings. Mayor clarified that we will do our best to consolidate meetings.

Council member Vick spoke about no longer being able to stand by and allow us to exist with the Town not having a plan to combat the implications that will occur to climate change. The current council cannot allow days to go by without a Climate Action Plan. Council member continued to ask the current council, before December 31, 2019, set in place a Climate Action Advisory Board, made up of a council member, a member of the local population, a member of the Stevensville School Board, a member of the Rural District, and a local physician.

Council member Holcomb would like to see Ms. Mickens' alley Public Hearing move forward.

13. Board Report

Council member Shourd report on the Park Board meeting, which took place last night.

14. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:36 p.m.

APPROVE:

ATTEST:

Brandon E. Dewey, Mayor

Monica Hoffman, Town Clerk