

**APPROVED  
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING  
September 6, 2016**

The meeting was called to order @ 6:04 pm by Council Chair Brent Teske. Council Persons in attendance were Mr. Olsen, Mr. Zimmerman, and Mrs. Williams. Also in attendance were City Clerk/Treasure Audray McCollum and City Administrator Jim Hammons. Absent: Barb Desh and Mayor Doug Roll.

**COUNCIL APPOINTMENT**

Council Chair Teske opened the meeting to appoint a new Councilman to the Libby City Council. Three candidates for the position were in attendance. The candidates were Mr. Gary Neff, Mr. Dennis Souther and Mr. Gary Beach.

Council Chair Teske asks the candidates to joint City Administrator Jim Hammons in the back and they would be summoned one at a time to express their interest in why they would like to be on the Libby City Council.

The first candidate to speak was Dennis Souther. Mr. Souther said he has lived in the area for the past 40 years. He served in the military for 4 years. He is retired and felt it was a good time to get involved with the City and that he has no agenda.

Members of the Council then were allowed to asked Mr. Souther questions. Mr. Zimmerman asked what was the most important to Mr. Souther about serving on the Council. Mr. Souther answered by saying that it was important to him to see that all the residents are treated fairly. He mentioned that our community was made up of mostly retired people and it is important to watch were the spending goes.

Mr. Olsen asked what his interest was in being on the council. Mr. Souther said he was retired now and he felt it would be a go activity for him because he had the time to serve. Mr. Olsen asked how he learned about the opening on the council which he replied he had read in the paper about the resignation of Dejon Raines.

Mr. Olsen asks Mr. Souther if he had any working relationships with the Council or the Mayor, to which he answer he does not. Mr. Olsen asks Mr. Souther if he had any other commitments that would interfere with his time on the Council, and he replied no. Mr. Olsen then asks how many Council meetings and committee meetings has he been to this year and his response was zero.

Mr. Olsen asks what you have done to prepare yourself for the Council. He said he has not done anything to prepare himself for the Council. Mr. Olsen asks if Mr. Souther has every set on any City Councils before and what are his long term goals. Mr. Souther said no he has not and that it

would take a while to learn what was going on and that he would probably run for office when the term expired.

Ms. Williams made a comment to Mr. Souther about his business on California Ave, saying it was very attractive and that if he was on the Council what does he feel would be the role of the Council in economic development. Mr. Souther said that business owners should make their property look the best they can. He said from his perspective some of the businesses don't try to make their business look the way they should.

Ms. Williams ask if he had any experience in zoning or land issues since he was a builder. He said he has no experience with those types of issues.

Next to address the Council was Mr. Neff. Mr. Neff talked about how his family came here to work on the Kooconusa dam project. He said he has been in and out of the Libby most of his life. He moved to Libby permanently about 6 years ago to take care of his mother.

He praised the local teachers and school systems for the job they have done on working with his grand children. He said he has three reasons for being on the City Council. One, to serve the community for what they have done for him. Two, was to set and example for his grand children. And the third, was because of anger. He brought up the cemetery and that he spoke with the commissioners about the county forming a cemetery district and he said the county was not interested because they don't trust the City to keep their word.

He also commented on the Council agenda and said he has not seen anything that is important being worked on.

Mr. Zimmerman asks his question again, if there was any one specific thing that should be addressed if he was chosen for the Council. Mr. Neff said the first thing that comes to mind is cohesiveness. He said he feels he could bring cohesion to the Council.

Mr. Olsen asks him how he heard about the availability of the Council seat. He said he was at the Council meeting when he heard Council Person Raines was going to resign. Mr. Olsen asks if he had any working relationships with the Council or Mayor. Mr. Neff replied no, none. Mr. Olsen asks how many Council and committee meetings he has attended this year. All but two Council meetings and one committee meeting.

Mr. Olsen asks how he has prepared himself for a council seat. Mr. Neff replied that when he was on the Council before, he spent a lot of time going through Council procedures and ordinances and since then he has been coming to every meeting. He mentioned coming down to City Hall and getting information from the City Clerk and the City Administrator.

Mr. Olsen asks about a long term plan, do you want to fill the seat for a year or do you plan on a long term. Mr. Neff said whether he is appointed tonight or not he plans on running for an

elected position, for the next twelve years. Mr. Olsen asks if he has served on any other Council to which he replied just this one.

Ms. Williams asks Mr. Neff how he sees the role of the council in economic development. Mr. Neff response was that the job of the City government was not to create jobs, but to build the City up. The Cities purpose is to keep the infrastructure running and to improve it.

Mr. Neff referred to helping the Port Authority with some of their infrastructure needs. He said we should be planning years out to start putting City water mains on Port property. He said long term we should look at annexation of Woodway Park. He said we should be planning ahead to replace water mains instead of just going from one emergency to another.

Ms. Williams asks what expertise he brings to the Council. He said he has a BS in water quality, and has worked in this field a lot. He said he understands the working of the sewer and water plants and he could run them.

Last to speak was Mr. Beach. Mr. Beach said he lived in the Libby area off and on since 1989. His father was in the military and he was born in Germany. His dad moved here and that's how he ended up in Libby, graduated from Libby High School in 1995, and then joined the military.

After coming back home to take care of his ailing father, he went to work for Stimson Lumber Co. until it closed in 2002. He said he has seen the Libby economy go full circle from when it was doing well in the 80's to where it is today.

He said he has about eleven years in a supervisory role with five of those years dealing with budgets. He said he has worked on multimillion dollar construction projects mostly with infrastructure in water and sewer. He also mentioned he has had a lot expertise in safety training and has been doing this for four or five years.

He said moving Libby forward was a priority; everyone needs to come together as a group to fix the things in Libby.

Mr. Zimmerman asks what he sees as the number one thing he would work on if appointed. Mr. Beach said we need to move forward in a positive way. Mr. Beach mentioned that we have to change the image of the city. The stigma of the asbestos, the issues with the Council. These are things we need to work on to move forward.

Mr. Olsen asks how he heard about the opening on the Council. Mr. Beach said he was here and heard the Dejon was going to resign her position on the Council and read about it in the paper. Mr. Olsen asks if he had any working relationships with the Council or the Mayor. Mr. Beach stated that he worked on a water project with this company that was working for the City. He mentioned that the Mayor, Jim Hammons, and Barb Desch came to the construction meetings. Mr. Olsen asks if his work would interfere with his time he need to spend on the Council. Mr. Beach replied he did not think so. Mr. Olsen asks how many Council meetings and committee

meetings he has attended this year. Mr. Beach said a handful of Council meetings, maybe three or four and no committee meetings.

Mr. Olsen asks if he has done anything to prepare himself for the position. Mr. Beach said he has done some reading and studied some. He mentioned he has been working in other communities that have been changing and moving forward. Mr. Beach said that if he was appointed he would like to look into how these communities are working to moving forward.

Mr. Olsen asks if he is interested in a long term commitment or just trying to fill a seat. Mr. Beach said he would learn a lot in the term and that he would be committed. Mr. Olsen asks if he has ever set on any other Councils and he replied no. He did mention that he has been on different boards before.

Ms. Williams asks Mr. Beach what he sees as his role for economic development as a Council person. Mr. Beach replied that he did not think the City should dictate the day to day business, but he said if you walk down Mineral Ave it is depressing to see the business that are gone. He said it would take some time to look in to why a business fails, how the City can encourage new business to come to town. He believes the City should do whatever it can to attract new businesses through incentives.

Ms. Williams asks what areas of expertise he would bring to the Council. Mr. Beach replied that he has a lot of back ground in construction, a lot of supervisory experience, and can read infrastructure plans.

Council Chair Teske opened the meeting up to comments.

DC Orr spoke first saying there were three good candidates. He said he worked with Dennis Sounther for 30 years. He said he did not know Gary Beach very well, but he subjected himself through the scrutiny of an election, that takes a lot of guts. Gary Neff earned his respect because he never held a grudge, and he served on the council before and does his homework. Mr. Orr said you need someone that can hit the ground running.

Rob Hubbard said he second what DC Orr said, and that it is clear that if we want to move Libby forward, out of the three candidates, that Gary Neff should be the one sitting there. He is down at City Hall on a daily basis looking into the issues to help the Council become more educated. Mr. Hubbard said that Gary Neff has nothing to gain except to push Libby forward.

Mr. Hubbard mentioned that Gary Neff was the only one that was competent and qualified for the position. He said "I ask you to put Libby first and put Gary Neff in the open City Council position because he is the clear choice for the job".

Arlen Mc Gill commented that he didn't know the City was looking for a supervisor's position. He said there was information going around that you have already picked Mr. Beach and that

he hoped it was not true. Mr. Mc Gill also stated some concerns that Mr. Beach works out of town a lot and that he would not be able to attend meetings.

Council Chair Teske then opens the floor for nominations for the Council seat. Mr. Olsen nominated Gary Neff for the seat. Mr. Teske asks if there were any other nominations. Ms. Williams then nominated Gary Beach. There were no more nominations.

Council Chair Teske then asks for the vote. First, asking for votes for Mr. Neff. Mr., Olsen voted for Mr. Neff. He was the only vote. Then he asks for votes for Mr. Beach. Ms. Williams and Mr. Zimmerman voted for Mr. Beach.

There was discussion from the public for Mr. Teske to vote. He said he did not want to vote unless there was a tie. Mr. Orr said to Mr. Teske that he is a Council person and should vote. Mr. Teske said he would and that he would vote for Mr. Beach, making three votes for Mr. Beach.

Mr. Beach was brought out and was sworn in by taking the Oath of Office, from Council Chair Teske.

Meeting was adjourned @ 6:52 pm.

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Brent Teske, Council President

Attest; \_\_\_\_\_

Audray J. McCollum, City Clerk/Treasurer