City Administrators Report

October 1, 2012

Water Distribution System

On Wednesday September 5, 2012, Jeff Cicion and Page Pluid from Morrison & Maierle were in town to go over some of the water distribution system improvements. We spent about 4 hours going through the areas where the upgrades will take place.

There will be 5 PRV stations (Pressure Reducing Valve) installed to give the southern and western parts of town more pressure. The locations of the stations are:

1. The intersection of Forest Avenue and Plummer Road.
2. The intersection of Education Way and Parmeter Drive
3. The intersection near Idaho and 10th Street
4. The intersection near Louisiana and 10th Street
5. The intersection near Minnesota and 9th Street

These stations are built in pre fabricated boxes that are buried in the street. All the pipes and valves are in place. They will cut out a section of the old main and install the whole unit and then connect to the main. After the installation is complete the manufacturer will be on site to adjust and set the proper pressure for the system. The station will be accessed from a manhole cover in the street for any future maintenance.

New main replacement is scheduled to be put in place on 10th street and this will tie into the two PRV stations at Idaho and near Louisiana.

Street Repairs

City crews finally had a chance to use the asphalt zipper. They zipped Main between Highway 2 and 10th Street. After it was graded and rolled, the County came in and chip sealed the street. Also we were able to chip all of Mineral Ave. and an additional 5 blocks plus on City Service Road through Riverfront Park. In all we had 15 blocks chip sealed which included 6 blocks of new asphalt that was sealed.

The crew also used the zipper in alleys. This works well with the alleys that are gravel or asphalt. We did have some problems with an alley down near the end of Dakota and Minnesota. The alley has not been maintained in a long time and we brought up a lot of large rocks that cause some minor damage to the teeth on the zipper. The crews made repairs and were ready for the next project.

The Asphalt Zipper Co sent a film crew in on Thursday September 20th to do a promotional video of the zipper. They spent about 2 hours filming the crew working on Balsam between Utah and Louisiana. This street was a test for a product called “Reclamite”. It’s an oil based product that is added to water and is sprayed directly on the milled asphalt. So far the street seems to be holding up well but time will tell. After winter is over we will have a better idea if this is something that will work here in Libby.

Discharge Permit Abandonment

Ever since the Water Treatment plant was built the City has had a discharge permit for discharging the back flush water from the plant to Flower Creek. This permit is due again and after talking with Jeff at the treatment plant they have never used this option for years and don’t need to have the permit.

When the filters are back washed the water goes to settling ponds on the west side of the plant. From there it runs into a large pipe that goes down the hill to Main. On the corner of Main and Balsam there is a valve that when open redirects the water to a pipe that runs near Balsam north to Flower Creek where it empties in to the creek. The valve has been closed for years and the water flows into the storm water systems settling basin near the railroad tracks.

The new regulation that DEQ is implementing in the permit, makes it harder to stay in compliance. After talking with DEQ, they explained to me that if we cut the line that runs to Flower Creek and cap it, we don’t have to apply or update the permit anymore.

City crews dug up the line and capped it and the information along with photos has been sent to DEQ.

Departments

With Mineral Ave being chip sealed, the crews have been busy painting the fog lines, crosswalks, curbs and centerlines. This is a slow process and we hope to finish before the weather turns bad. The fresh paint on the newly chip sealed street really makes the downtown area look nice.

After the high water event this year, the waste water plant received a violation notice for pumping water into Flower Creek. We contacted DEQ when the problem first came up and they gave us the ok to do so. They felt we should have a plan in place for flooding, I explained to them it wasn’t a flooding event, but was a controlled release from Libby Dam. We sent a letter stating our position on this but have not heard back yet.

Water treatment is slowly getting back to normal with the turbidity levels. They are still experimenting with the chemicals to fine tune the problem. Also, there was an issue with the “Hydrostatic Tank” that pressurizes the Cabinet Heights area. The tank had to be drained and then pressurized again to work properly. So far it seems to be doing ok.

Campground hosts, Butch and Marlys Urdal, left for the season. They are going to Oregon and then down to Arizona where they will spend the winter. They are planning to be back next year if everything works out.

Brian Williams from NTL was in town two weeks ago to finish up some “geo tech” work for the new dam. Brian was going to use some small explosives to generate seismic readings on the rock formation but used other methods instead. They will gather all their information now and present it to the engineers for the design phase this winter.

Jim Hammons