

MCA 2-3-212. Minutes of meetings. Minutes must include without limitation: (a) the date, time, and place of the meeting; (b) a list of the individual members of the public body, agency, or organization who were in attendance; (c) the substance of all matters proposed, discussed, or decided; and (d) at the request of any member, a record of votes by individual members for any votes taken.

APPROVED MINUTES

The Libby City Council held regular meeting #1673 on Monday, March 17, 2025, in the Council Chamber at Libby City Hall.

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Mayor Williams.

Present were Mayor Williams, Councilors Melissa Berke, Gail Burger, Ethan Kolp, Kristin Smith, Hugh Taylor, Brian Zimmerman, Administrator Sam Sikes, Clerk/Treasurer Leann Monigold, and (via Zoom) City Attorney Dean Chisholm.

Announcements: None

Committee Reports:

Administrator: Administrator Sikes reported no permits were sold in January, but one remodel permit for \$322 was sold in February. Year-to-date (fiscal year), 21 permits have been sold for a total of \$33,383, which is above the 4-year average for the end of February (\$22,455). Mr. Sikes reminded everyone that the building fund is self-sustaining and separate from the general fund. Mr. Sikes announced due to reduced plowing and employment costs, the city will be able to use those extra funds to upgrade the fire suppression system at City Hall, costing \$18,542.

Lights/Streets/Sidewalks: Councilor Zimmerman announced he sent over the formal recommendation from the committee for the Sooter request on City Service Road. He is waiting to put all that into motion for the public hearing and any legalities.

Public Comment on Non- Agenda Items: None

Old Business: None

New Business:

Approve April 4th Mineral Avenue Street closure for Red, White and Brews:

Sherri & Jon Roberts, owners of Red, White, and Brews, requested a street closure on April 5th for a 406 Block Party, 8am-9pm on Mineral Avenue from 2nd St. to 6th St. It was explained that every business along Mineral has been invited and most are participating, porta potties have been ordered for the event, and they will have event insurance. All businesses not on Mineral Ave. are encouraged to participate also, even if it is a booth or something similar.

Mayor Williams reminded them of requirements for street closure; they must have insurance, which was mentioned, they are responsible for all trash, and the barricades will be dropped off, but they are responsible for placing them and putting them back on the trailer.

Councilor Zimmerman **MADE A MOTION** to approve the street closure and for April 5 from 2nd Street to 6th Street, 8am to 9pm, Councilor Berke **SECONDED**.

Councilor Smith **ABSTAINED**.

Councilors Berke, Burger, Taylor, and Zimmerman voted **FOR**.

MOTION PASSED.

Approve Igniter's Car Club request for annual Street Closure & Noise Variance Request, August 15 and 16:

Gary Rantala, President of the Igniters Car Club, requested a street closure with noise variance for August 15th from 6pm to 9pm and August 16th from 6am to 3pm. They will take care of the garbage, have their own barricades, and have event insurance.

Councilor Zimmerman **MADE A MOTION** to approve the Street Closure & Noise Variance on August 15 and 16th for the Igniter's Car Club, Councilor Burger **SECONDED**.

Councilors Berke, Burger, Smith, Taylor, and Zimmerman voted **FOR**.

MOTION PASSED.

Libby Volunteer Fire Department, 2025 Volunteers Convention (update) – Steve Lauer:

Steve Lauer, Libby Volunteer Fire Chief, provided an update on the 2025 Volunteer Fireman's Convention, scheduled June 12th – 14th. The convention will include golf, training sessions, a barbecue, and a banquet, with a hopeful attendance of 100 people. Most of the activities will take place at the Memorial Center area. They have received approval to also use the parking area next door to the Memorial Center, 12 vendors and 15 instructors have been scheduled so far. Mr. Lauer would like to get together with Justin as he plans street sweeping and would like to help with that for the different areas of events. Chief Lauer asked Mayor Williams to join them Friday morning to welcome the attendees and thank them for joining us. Mayor Williams expressed her appreciation and said she would love to join them.

LoggerTown Baseball Club request to help fund Remp's Fields improvement project (discussion):

Kelly Morford, Logger Town Baseball Club, explained their club and in coordination with Libby Youth Baseball are making improvements at Remp Fields for the upcoming baseball tournament being held June 14th and 15th. There are 16 teams who signed up, and they are hoping to make this an annual event. Mr. Morford provided a list of planned improvements, the cost, and a list of businesses with the amount they will be donating. Total cost of improvements will be \$13,964,

To date, \$5,500 in funding has been secured, \$3,014 in pending grant is approval, leaving a funding gap of \$4,450. Mr. Morford requested the council to consider funding \$1 to \$4,450 to help spruce up the fields.

Councilor Zimmerman expressed his delight at the pending grant funds to cover the cost of the fence safety cap and agreed it was a great project they were putting together.

Councilor Smith supported the request and believed it aligns nicely with the Community Development Fund, it is a match, not a total amount, and the match is not less than 50%.

Mayor Williams stated the request would be added to the April 7th agenda for approval. Mr. Morford said he should know about the safety cap grant by April 7th and be able to dial in the amount that will be needed.

Justin Williams commented in support of the request, emphasizing the positive impact of the baseball program and the upcoming tournament.

Approve committee procedure update to Council Policy and Procedures:

Councilor Smith **MADE A MOTION** to approve the Committee Procedure to Update Council Policies and Procedures, Councilor Zimmerman **SECONDED**.

John Bebee expressed his gratitude to Council for addressing the issue and expressed the importance of committee rules. Mr. Bebee inquired whether committees must follow City Council rules, policy seems to be unclear for committees.

DC Orr urged the council to further review the document to ensure compliance with Montana law, particularly regarding meeting conduct and minute-taking.

Councilors Berke, Burger, Smith, Taylor, and Zimmerman voted **FOR**.

MOTION PASSED.

Approve Ordinance 2053, Distracted Driving (second reading):

Mayor Williams read Ordinance 2035 preamble.

Councilor Smith **MADE A MOTION** to adopt Ordinance #2053, of the city of Libby, Montana, Ordinance adding a new chapter to title 10 – vehicles and traffic entitled “Distracted Driving” and adding definitions to 10.04.020, Councilor Berke **SECONDED**.

Councilor Smith acknowledged Council had discussed the potential for the State Legislature passing a similar bill and recognized it should not hold up the City’s own Ordinance, if it needs to be rescinded, they can rescind it and mentioned this copy has the corrections that were adopted at the first reading.

Councilor Burger inquired about the phrase referring to government, fire agencies, and emergency responders, but does not specify on duty. Mayor Williams stated she believes the

Chief has addressed that in the past. Councilor Burke was curious if it was specified in the Montana Code, if it's only for when in duty.

DC Orr strongly disagreed with the ordinance process, alleging there was a violation of oath of office, official misconduct, and tampering with public records and doesn't believe it should move forward.

John Bebee expressed thanks for striking a specific item from the ordinance and acknowledged the potential for a state law to supersede the local ordinance.

Councilors Berke, Smith, and Zimmerman voted **FOR**. Councilors Burger and Taylor voted **AGAINST**.

MOTION PASSED.

Approve all claims received to date:

Councilor Zimmerman **MADE A MOTION** to approve all claims received to date, Councilor Berke **SECONDED**.

Councilors Berke, Burger, Smith, Taylor, and Zimmerman voted **FOR**.

MOTION PASSED.

Approve all business license applications received to date:

311 Mineral LLC dba Copy This Send That, Custom Wood Working, Helen Tequila's dba Po Sam's, Helping Hands Montana LLC, and Katscan.

Councilor Zimmerman **MADE A MOTION** to approve all business license applications received to date, Councilor Smith **SECONDED**.

Councilors Berke, Burger, Smith, Taylor, and Zimmerman voted **FOR**.

MOTION PASSED.

Unfinished Business:

Discussion to amend Libby Development Fund Policy and application process:

Council discussion on the Community Development Fund draft application and guidelines.

Councilor Burger suggested remove unneeded details in the application like payroll, income, property taxes. Councilors Berke and Burger agreed the application would not be just for businesses, it could be groups or organizations.

Councilor Burger expressed a preference for partnerships rather than grants, like the baseball situation.

Councilor Smith emphasized the need to finalize the policy before refining the application.

Amendments were discussed, including removing references to a specific fund amount, striking the line "No new loans to area business will be granted," and replacing the term "infrastructure" with potentially "enhance City's appearance and functionality" or similar language.

Mr. Sykes provided information on past expenditures from the fund tracking, about \$8 million in projects since the fund began. Councilor Smith suggested only going back within the last 10 years to get an idea of the project within that time frame.

Councilor Berke believes the request for the baseball fields is a perfect example of how to spend the funds. By having reoccurring tournaments with multiple sports, it would help the whole town, hotels, restaurants, gas stations, etc. and benefit the community.

The potential use of the fund for a grant writer was also mentioned.

General Comments from Council:

Councilor Taylor commented the Study Commission had met last Wednesday and appointed Mr. Backen the spokesman and would like to request a spot on the Council Committee reports, requesting that item be added to the agenda for Council to vote on.

Mayor Williams announced on Tuesday, June 17th Libby will be hosting the Municipal Summit put on by the Montana League of Cities and Towns, MMIA, and Local Government Center and explained the Summit is a training opportunity.

Mayor Williams explained the recent retreat attended in Hamilton for the Tree Boards and the need to look at updating our ordinances regarding tree boards, explaining what a tree board does. And reminded everyone Arbor Day is April 25th.

ADJOURNMENT:

Councilor Zimmerman **MADE A MOTION** to adjourn, Councilor Smith **SECONDED**.

Councilors Berke, Burger, Smith, Taylor, and Zimmerman voted **FOR**.

MOTION PASSED.

Mayor Williams adjourned the meeting at 8:52pm.

Mayor Peggy Williams

Attest: _____
Clerk/Treasurer Leann Monigold