

APPROVED MINUTES

The City Council held Council Meeting #1649 on Monday, March 18, 2024, in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

Call to Order:

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was completed, prayer was by a representative of the Church, and roll call commenced. Present were Mayor Williams, Councilors Gary Beach, Melissa Berke, Kristin Smith, Hugh Taylor, Brian Zimmerman, Administrator Sam Sikes, Clerk/Treasurer Leann Monigold, and (via Zoom) Councilor Ian Smith, City Attorney Dean Chisholm.

Mayor Williams welcomed all those present.

Approve minutes of City Council meeting #1646, held February 5, 2024, and special meeting held February 13, 2024.

Councilor Zimmerman **MADE A MOTION** to approve minutes of City Council meeting #1646, held February 5th and special meeting held February 13th, Councilor Berke **SECONDED**.

Councilors Beach, Berke, I. Smith, K. Smith, Taylor, and Zimmerman voted **FOR**.

MOTION PASSED.

Announcements: Mayor Willaims reminded everyone on April 8th there will be a Public Hearing on the water and sewer rate increases with a more complete explanation of why the city needs to be able to do those increases.

Committee Reports:

Administrator: Administrator Sikes reported 3 building permits were sold in January for a total of \$856, 1 new roof, 1 major remodel, and 1 for three foundations for buildings. In February 3 permits were sold, 1 pole building, 1 roof, and 1 regular building. 22 permits have been sold for the year for a total of \$12,286. Last year at the same time 33 were sold for a total of \$25,000.

Ordinance: Councilor K. Smith announced the Ordinance will meet Wednesday the 20th to review the draft changes for recreational vehicles at noon in Council chambers.

Lights, Steets, Sidewalks: Councilor Beach announced a meeting will be held in the next few weeks to discuss some parking downtown.

Building: Councilor Taylor announced he will try to schedule a meeting before the end of the month.

Zoning: Councilor K. Smith announced the Zoning Commission and Planning Board meetings are scheduled on the 25th starting at 6pm

Cemetery/Parks: Councilor Berke and Streets Supervisor Justin Williams met with the Youth Baseball and High School Baseball. Mr. Williams reported there was a meeting at the ballpark over by the cemetery to discuss the wants and needs for the fields, discussing what the city can do and not able to do. The City will make repairs on the bleachers to make them safe for everyone to use, do some grading to get rid of the mud holes and bring in some fresh rock to get a nice path in and out of the fields, place sand in the t-ball field, sand for the High School's pitching warmup area, and build a couple of small pads for port-a-potties. They discussed the gate on Croteau that has been left wide open time after time and felt it was in everyone's best interest to go to a two-lock system. The city has a lock, they have a lock, the City control keys, they control keys and that gate opens when there's games and is closed when there is not. Also, discussed being able to try to control access off the east side and trying to find a way to keep people from driving in and around when they don't need to be.

Irrigation was a big discussion; they will cover the cost of the sprinkler heads and Mr. Hibbs will assist them to get them laid out and installed. The control box was discussed because it is a long system that runs from the park, cemetery, and into the ballfields. Someone is changing the times at the ball fields and when other sprinklers are running at the same time on the large system it drops the water pressure leaving inadequate sprinkling for all areas. A lock will be placed on the control box so there can be positive control and only certain individuals will have access to the control panel.

The city will place a couple of older metal garbage cans on either end to help keep garbage getting scattered around, they will be responsible for all garbage cans and the dumpster.

There will be another meeting on April 3rd at 6:30pm at the ballfields if anyone would like to come.

Wildlife: Councilor Taylor announced the meeting was rescheduled and will be held Thursday, March 21st at 6:30pm.

City County Board of Health: Councilor K. Smith reported there was one variance request for a septic system that was denied, the staff gave some annual reports that covered programs they have, what they have been doing, and how successful they have been. They are largely grant funded, so those reports are requirements for those grants.

Park District Manager of Projects: Tony Petrusha reported, developed, and published a plan to transfer county park and recreation facilities to the operational control of the Libby Park District. The 'Get Outdoors Libby Initiative' Plan describes the actions needed to get the Park District Board of Directors moving forward to assume Parks and Recreation management.

Developed framework for three memorandums of understanding with Lincoln County, Libby Park District and Port Authority for transfer operations and maintenance of recreation property to Park District.

Received \$20,000 grant from LOR Foundation to fund the Libby Swim Pond design. Design and material take-off and pricing is complete.

Received \$47,000 grant from Lincoln County Credit Union for the purchase of equipment and liner for Libby Swim Pond. Material delivery is ongoing.

Confirmed the final alignment with USFS for 12 miles of the Snowshoe trail and entered the Environmental Assessment pre-review process. EA will be a delay unless a contractor is used in lieu of USFS to perform assessment review.

Purchased new trail map signs for J. Neils, and Port Authority Park trails.

Began Pioneer Park, Bike Track design and approval, design, and construction cost to hopefully be funded by a LOR Foundation grant.

Submitted Natural Resources Damage (NRD) grant abstracts to Montana Department of Justice for the following projects: Balsam Street Sidewalk, Norgard Trail and parking area, Interim funding for Recreation manager, Turtle Pond trail development.

Unsuccessful grant applications to Trail Stewardship grant, Recreational Trail program grant, Treacy project grant.

Councilor K. Smith inquired if he would be able to get together with the folks about the ballfield to help identify some recreational funding for the girls' softball. Mr. Petrusha thought that would be a wonderful idea.

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items:

DC Orr, 1117 Nevada Ave., commented he had attended the Health Board meeting and spoke to them about his views of the CARD clinic.

Old Business: None

New Business:

Approve closing Second Street between Highway 37 and Mineral Avenue for 1st annual Cruise for Kids fundraiser on August 3rd, 10am to 7pm:

Nichole Chameleon and Tammy Brown with a nonprofit organization OUR KIDS requested a street closure to have a 1st annual Cruise for Kids. They described the type of vehicles they hope will attend and the route of the poker ride. The event will end at the VFW and request to have that section of 2nd Street closed for the purpose of safety, parking motor bikes, and to keep it contained.

Councilor Beach recommended to make sure LVA knows about the street closure because that is a straight route to the Hospital.

Councilor K. Smith **MADE A MOTION** to grant the street closure on August 3rd from 10 to 7 for Our Kids, Councilor Zimmerman **SECONDED**.

The City Crew had no concerns. Organizers requested the use of barriers and would be available to pick them up if they could schedule a time.

Councilors Beach, Berke, I. Smith, K. Smith, Taylor, and Zimmerman voted **FOR**.

MOTION PASSED.

Libby Volunteer Fire Department, 2025 Volunteers Convention:

Fire Chief Steve Lauer wanted to inform Council the Fire Department will be hosting the upcoming 2025 Volunteer Convention and will be held June 12th through 14th, 2025, a Thursday, Friday, Saturday event. Will be getting together with Justin next spring to plan for street cleaning, lawn mowing, just general cleanup of areas for the community. Hoping to have a lot of volunteer departments along with their families and spouses throughout the state. The facilities being used will be Fireman's park on Thursday night for barbecue, Friday, Fred Brown Pavilion is reserved for the dinner, and Saturday, Memorial Center for a banquet. Chief Lauer explained what things will be offered during the convention.

Average attendance from experience is 50 to a couple hundred, hoping to have about 150 attend the convention in Libby.

Approve all claims received to date:

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

Councilors Beach, Berke, I. Smith, K. Smith, Taylor, and Zimmerman voted FOR.

MOTION PASSED.

Unfinished Business:

Update to Libby Development Fund Policy and application process:

Councilor K. Smith explained the draft revision she had provided along with the meaning of the different color highlighted areas, underlines, strikeouts, additions, and subtractions from changes Council had previously discussed.

Mayor Williams began reading from the beginning of the document to let the Council decide if they agree.

Mayor Williams explained if the \$3 million given to the hospital remains in the document, then the total amount stated needs to be changed to \$11 million because that was not include the \$8 million given to the City.

A decision was made to strike the hospital reference at leave it at \$8 million.

Mayor Williams continued to read and pointe out the question under “Purpose” that was not answered was “non new loans to area businesses will be granted.”

The council discussed allowing new loans and how that process would work if allowed.

Councilor K. Smith suggested adding “The city may establish a revolving loan fund to be available.”

The council agreed that would be a good statement to add to the document.

Mayor Williams continued reading the “Objective” and discussed adding a current dollar amount.

The council discussed whether to add a dollar amount and how to use the fund for loans or interest.

Attorney Chisholm suggested before making that decision, first looking at the type of projects Council would want to fund, giving examples.

Councilor Berke suggested she would like to see the fund be able to be used to help the folks with the baseball fields to be able to host tournaments or similar ideas for other sports, stating the smaller grants would definitely help the community as well, not just the big loans.

The council discussed how the funds should be used and with the multiple decisions to be made that section they decided to take time to digest what they have discussed and return to that section at a late date.

Mayor Williams continued to read “Use of Funds.”

Councilor K. Smith suggested clarifying the last sentence, instead of “already competed projects” change it to say, “expenses already incurred.”

Mayor Williams read “Project Eligibility and Review.”

The council discussed whether to keep control of the fund or use another agency. Discussing pros and cons.

Council agreed to the draft language under “Project Eligibility.”

Mayor Williams suggested waiting for the next meeting to give everyone a chance to answer the question loans vs. grants and how to approach that. Also, suggestion taking a look at the draft application to help give direction on grant vs. loan.

DC Orr, 1117 Nevada Avenue, suggested reaching out to other communities that have similar funds to see what they have done to make it successful.

General Comments from the Council:

Adjournment:

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

Councilors Beach, Berke, I. Smith, K. Smith, Taylor, and Zimmerman voted **FOR**.

MOTION PASSED.

Mayor Williams adjourned the meeting at 8:03 PM.

Mayor Peggy Williams

Attest: _____

Clerk/Treasurer Leann Monigold