

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 #1670 on Monday February 3, 2025, in the Council Chamber at Libby City Hall.

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm by Mayor Williams.

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

Announcements: Mayor Williams announced the city has been awarded the \$40,000 RRGL Planning Grant for the wastewater PER and that the next meeting will be Tuesday, February 18th due to the holiday.

Approve minutes for Regular Council meetings #1669 held January 21, 2025:

Councilor I Smith **MADE A MOTION** to approve the minutes, Councilor Burger **SECONDED**.

Councilors Berke, Burger, I. Smith, and K. Smith voted **FOR**.

MOTION PASSED.

Committee Reports:

Administrator: Administrator Sikes reported he had returned to Helena and the brief went well explaining why Libby needs the grant and answered questions from the Long-Range Planning Committee. Currently working on closing out ARPA pot B, a minimum allocation grant, used for the Bar Screen, sewer mains, and plant controllers and FCC gave Libby a new frequency because Police and Streets Crew were stepping on each other, FCC had authorized 40 watts but had to dial it back to 5 watts so there would be no interference with Canada.

Streets: Administrator Sikes reported there was a water main issue on Louisiana & 6th that is being repaired and prepped for future main replacement. Another water main issue on Pioneer Road has been repaired. First and Montana Lift is now backed up with rubber gloves, trying to narrow down the cause. Mr. Sikes gave an update on current Streets department maintenance and upcoming snow plowing.

Police: Chief Ercanbrack reported there were 194 in January, responding to 5 assaults, 9 disturbances, 5 calls for threatening, 2 drug or alcohol related, 8 deaths, 5 mental health, 38 welfare checks or walk throughs, 5 juvenile 12 suspicious activity, 10 crashes, and 41 traffic stops. Councilor K. Smith inquired with the Crisis Team being in limbo, is that affecting folks.

Chief said the hospital has been doing a good job of mitigating that and able to administer treatment for anyone they take in that is having a mental crisis.

Finance: Clerk/Treasurer Monigold reported the audit for fiscal year 24 is nearly complete, one of the last needs list was given to the auditor and since the City falls under a Federal audit this year, the audit must be submitted by March 31st.

Local Government Study: DC Orr, Study Commission Chair, Reported the Study Commission is working its first phase, examination of local government, form and foundation of local government, and to determine whether we have the best form of government for Libby and how it is functioning. Mr. Orr explained there has been great public involvement at the last meeting and the Commission is getting better organized. Some areas of interest they heard were about water/sewer rates and affordable housing. Mr. Orr began reading what he plans to put in his minority report. Councilor K. Smith asked Mr. Orr if it was all discussed at the Local Government Committee. Mayor Williams approved the Point of Order and asked if that was discussed during the Government Study, Mr. Orr stated it was what he was putting in his minority report. Mayor Williams told Mr. Orr to get to the point of what was discussed at the meeting or sit down.

Public Comment on Non- Agenda Items:

None.

Old Business:

Blackburn's Request for lease at Riverfront Park:

Mayor Williams stated she had intended to put the item into the Building Committee for the need of a concentrated discussion, Mr. Taylor has agreed. Personally, Mayor Williams is not in favor, due to the large size property request, low rent willing to pay, and potential conflict for other users.

The council agreed it should go into the Building Committee.

New Business:

County's Request for City to donate one acre of land for Animal Control:

Administrator Sikes expressed his concerns and encouraged Council to be hesitant about giving this property away.

Mayor Williams explained after researching minutes from the 70's, there has never been a contract, other than a verbal agreement that the City had the land, and the County had the building, so they combined the two.

Attorney Chisholm explained it isn't usual for someone to own a building on someone else's land, so unless there is documentation, it would be presumed the building belonged to the city as well. Mr. Chisholm explained the legal processes for donating property and recommended, if choosing

to move forward, to have a letter of intent in place stating property would transfer upon successful approval of the grant and should not be transferred prior to any funding for the construction of a new building.

Councilor I. Smith abstained from discussion because on County payroll, the rest of Council and Mr. Sikes discussed their concerns, thoughts, and ideas about donating the property.

Councilor K. Smith suggested talking to the County about swapping property that would be beneficial to the City and expressed the importance of supporting animal shelter.

John Bebee commented there should be a policy to deal with these things to simplify them and expressed the importance of the agreements going through the proper process.

Caroline Buckner commented in agreement to a property swap and inquired about the money given to the County for animal control, while using city property, inquired who pays the taxes and upkeep on the building and expressed disapproval to donate to the County.

DC Orr commented the County has always taken advantage of the City, the City should get something in return. Mr. Orr expressed his disapproval of donating land to the County.

The council majority agreed with a land swap and discussed the type of written response that should be sent to the County.

Mayor Williams stated a letter will be put together and sent to the County for comments.

Approve all claims received to date:

Councilor I. Smith **MADE A MOTION** to approve all claims received to date and Councilor Berke **SECONDED**.

Councilors Berke, Burger, I. Smith, and K. Smith voted **FOR**.

MOTION PASSED.

Approve all business license applications received to date:

Lexy Cleaning and Lina's Cocina.

Councilor Berke **MADE A MOTION** to approve all business license applications received to date and Councilor I. Smith **SECONDED**.

Councilors Berke, Burger, I. Smith, and K. Smith voted **FOR**.

MOTION PASSED.

Unfinished Business:

Discussion to amend Libby Development Fund Policy and application process:

Mayor Williams stated there have been discussions about how to and what to spend the money, suggested getting back to addressing the actual policy.

Councilor K. Smith believes Council could not come to an agreement and was hung up on was using it for historical buildings. Suggesting leaving as written, it is open for interpretation and should be somewhat broad for Council to make a decision.

Councilor Burger suggested removing grants and loans from the policy and using the funds in the community where it would be the most beneficial.

City Attorney Chisholm commented the Council has identified several areas that they thought could be improved upon and may be a little vague. Instead of being vague, what would they like wording to say?

Councilor K. Smith recommended from the plan that has identified projects downtown for the \$25,000 grant, create a list of projects to implement and see what other funds are available to pursue those projects and use the Community Development fund to leverage and make the money last longer.

Councilor Burger expressed the need for a grant writer - community outreach position to benefit the city and identify those grants and express the importance of getting the policy updated.

Councilor K. Smith mentioned the Port Authority hired an Executive Director who may still perform some community development and as Executive Director of KRDC in the future the City may be able to work again with KRDC to pursue those funds.

The council discussed KRDC.

Councilor I. Smith supports the idea of a city grant writer or community outreach position that knows the specific need of the city.

General Comments from Council:

Councilor Burger commented she was confused about the committee reports, having members of Council that sit on other committees that bring back information to Council to give a brief update. Such as, Kristin is the representative for the city on the Board of Health and reports to Council, Ms. Burger recommends the Council representative give the Study Commission report.

ADJOURNMENT:

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

Councilors Berke, Burger, I. Smith, and K. Smith voted **FOR**.

MOTION PASSED.

Mayor Williams adjourned the meeting at 7:45pm.

Mayor Peggy Williams

Attest: _____

Clerk/Treasurer Leann Monigold