

APPROVED MINUTES

The City Council held a Public Hearing on Monday, August 23rd, 2021, in the Council Chambers at City Hall to solicit public comment on a low-income housing project on Commerce Way.

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Mayor pro tem Williams.

The Pledge of Allegiance was completed, and Roll Call commenced. Present were Mayor pro tem Williams, Councilors Gary Beach, Rob Dufficy, Kristin Smith, Hugh Taylor, and Brian Zimmerman, and City Clerk/Treasurer Samuel Sikes.

Mayor Williams welcomed all and read over the agenda speaking to the low-income rental housing project on Commerce Way as proposed by Cabinet Affordable Housing and introduced Cassidy Kipp.

Cassidy Kipp gave a Power Point presentation which covered the 24 proposed units and the green construction techniques that will be used, including low flow water appliances, non-toxic chemicals, and heavy insulation. Cassidy went over the income ranges that would be eligible and spoke of the assistance that would be provided on site.

Councilor Dufficy asked what income would be considered eligible, and Cassidy stated that it would be 50% of Libby's median, \$24,850, which would be \$12,425.

Vincent Backen, 427 Thomas, gave the opinion that people should not be in low-income housing for 30 years and asked where the people would be coming from to rent the units and why Cabinet Affordable Housing was giving the presentation. Cassidy explained that Infinity, a private company, would be a third party landlord in charge of the rentals and explained that Cabinet Affordable Housing was in Libby to elicit public comment as required for tax exemptions adding that there were no additional mill levies or taxes being placed on Libby's residences.

Jennifer Nelson, 1026 Washington, and Cassidy discussed that this housing was for families and not for seniors. It was explained that housing is considered 2 heartbeats per room for occupancy and that the entire complex would be placed on one 4.1 acre parcel. Discussion continued that city services would not be free and that the only thing that the city would miss out on would be the property taxes and that the ground maintenance would be part of the rent. Jennifer voiced the opinion that the units were too spread out to maximize the land usage.

Zack McNew, Country Club Road, gave support to the project while voicing the concern that the housing would become for seniors and not for families as intended.

Mayor Williams, upon no further public comment, turned to the City Council for questions.

Councilor Zimmerman and Cassidy discussed that HUD requires two heartbeats per room in Montana housing and that, although not perfect, this still maintains the vision of a single parent and child in the units while explaining that 6 to 8 people in a unit would be unrealistic. Cassidy stated that studies of Libby have shown that 1 and 2 bedroom units are the most needed.

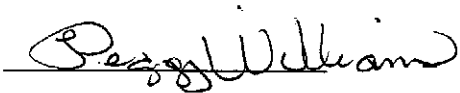
Councilor Smith asked what the current family size was in the latest census to which Cassidy was unsure.

Mayor Williams entered a letter, received from an anonymous source, into the record opposing the project.

Gerald Fritts, Cabinet Affordable Housing, thanked the Council for the time and cleared up the point that there are two types of housing which are senior and family. Senior housing has age restrictions and family housing does not preclude seniors.

Councilor Smith wished Cabinet Affordable Housing, as a current employer of single women with children, good luck.

Mayor pro tem Williams adjourned the meeting at 6:34pm.



Mayor Peggy Williams

Attest;



Clerk/Treasurer Samuel Sikes