

APPROVED MINUTES

Libby City Council held a public hearing Monday, December 5, 2022, at 6:00pm in Council Chambers at City Hall to review and solicit public comment on the proposed City of Libby Growth Policy updates prior to the City Council Passing a resolution of intention to adopt the draft document.

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Williams called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

The Pledge of Allegiance was completed and Roll Call commenced. Present were Mayor Peggy Williams, Councilors Gary Beach, Melissa Berke, Zach McNew, Kristin Smith, and Brian Zimmerman, Administrator Samuel Sikes, and City Clerk-Treasurer Leann Monigold. Councilor Hugh Taylor arrived at 6:10pm.

Joel Nelson presented a visual presentation of the City of Libby Growth Policy draft #2 documents and explained the public meeting was to go over updates and changes, go through public comments, and receive City Council direction of ways to modify the resolution of intention prior to the City Council adoption. Mr. Nelson went over the table of contents to show what is included in the Growth Policy.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Mayor Williams explained there seems to be some misunderstanding of annexation. The planning boundary map shown in the Growth Policy is not an annexation map, at this time there is no plan to do any large annexations especially in some of the outlying areas that would be beyond where the City could provide service. Services include water, sewer, city police protection, and streets.

Tish Silva, 275 Westland Rd, stated lives off Snowshoe Rd and is not for annexation where she lives.

Benjamin Valencourt, 1004 Wisconsin Ave., stated having other property outside city limits and is aggravated and unclear about the boundary line on the map after hearing several different things and is against annexation.

Gail Burger, 302 California Ave., requested other agencies and organizations that have done a lot of beautification work in the city receive recognition in the Plan.

Christian Gunther, Iron Rd., stated there seems to be disparity with annexation about not being planned but possible. Have not heard anything about infrastructure. Mayor Williams explained for any annexation the city would have to be able to provide services that include water, sewer, streets, police protection, and plowing, those kinds of services.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS: Councilor Smith wanted to clarify what the Growth Policy means, to put the public at ease, explained the City of Libby has had a comprehensive plan that was started in 1972. In 2010 the plan was updated, according to state law, municipalities have to anticipate for their growth so a boundary was figured in about 1 mile outside city limits to anticipate there is going to be growth. The City does not annex without the provision of services, the two must go hand-in-hand and most time when the city annexes is because someone has requested to be annexed. The Growth Policy covers multiple sections of the community such as economy, housing, and land use, among others, in order to plan what the next 10-year horizon might be and how to actively engage the entire community to keep the city moving forward and address problems as they arise.

Councilor Beach explained in order to maintain the services for the city and to secure future funding from the grants received the Growth Policy document is part of that required packet for different funding agencies. A Growth Policy must be kept up to date in order to apply for funding for future projects.

Councilor Smith stated the city has a Capital Improvement Plan in place which anticipates where those needs and upgrades to our systems are and is not extending services to areas where it is no needed.

Councilor Zimmerman explained Libby is one size but has to look to the future into what may or may not happen. In 2032 another Growth Policy Plan will be put together for more possible future changes. The city is not looking to annex anyone or anything but needs to be prepared if something like a subdivision started and requested to annex, they are responsible to extend the infrastructure to tie into the city services. The grant monies the city applies for are to help upgrade failing water and sewer systems currently within the city, not to extend services.

Mayor Williams agreed with Ms. Burger's comment, organizations like Libby Area Business Association (LABA), Garden Club, and others need to be listed as having contributed to Libby.

WRITTEN COMMENTS: Beth Archer- EPA highlighted pages 40, 41, and 84 for suggested updated word changes and word removal in the Growth Policy. Councilor Smith agreed to the recommended changes to pages 40 and 41 and to keep page 84 as is.

Chamber of Commerce submitted a letter, Councilor Smith stated it was much appreciated and very helpful and positive. Council discussed the Chamber letter and possible changes to add to the Growth Policy.

Dorian Boling submitted a comment about annexation.

Jon Shipley submitted a comment about annexation.

Annette Gallioto submitted a comment about sidewalks and bike trail.

Jesse Haug , County Planning Board, noticed the Community Health Center (CHC) was not identified in the policy. Council agreed they need to be added to the Growth Policy.

Jennifer Nelson submitted an email with corrections to the minutes from the October 24th Planning Board public hearing.

COUNCIL COMMENT: None.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Williams adjourned the meeting at 6:57 pm.

Mayor, Peggy Williams

Clerk-Treasurer, Leann Monigold