

Regular City Council Meeting

Carnegie Library

Sept. 7, 2021

Mayor Karlin opened the meeting at 7:00pm and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Others Attending are:

Council: Justin Ferguson, Ken Rockeman, and Daniel Thomasson were present. Leonard Woehler was absent.

City Attorney: Jim Lippert

City Staff: Nadine Stosich, Clerk/Treasurer, Kris Novotny, Public Works Director

City/County Staff: Page Dringman, City/County Planning Office, Sheriff Alan Ronneberg

Public: Barbara Selk, Lee Andreas, Mike Shirley, Angela Selby, Chad Bauer, Robert Curry, Don Moss, Ryan Coffman.

Press: Iain Woessner

Councilman Rockeman gave the Invocation.

Councilman Thomasson moved to approve the minutes of the 8/16/21, 2021-2022 Budget Public Hearing & Regular City Council Meeting, seconded Councilman Ferguson. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council present.

Sheriff Ronneberg reported that the total calls were down for the month of August with 419 complaints. They opened 21 cases total and wrote 29 citations. On the first day of school, the sheriff's department received 3 referrals from CPS which made the first day a little rough. Trainings for dispatchers and officers are continuing to take place. The new school officer is loving his job and doing well at it.

Kris Novotny, Public Works Director reported that the water system usage is down because it is getting a little cooler. One small pump is going out (back wash pump - \$3300) at the water treatment plant. Pumps have been switched around to make it work until the new one arrives in approximately 12 weeks. Sewer cleaners, True Pipe, will be here next week to clean and camera another section of town. There are plans to continue with this cleaning, some every year, until all of the town is done. 3rd Ave is done and looks great!

Ruthie Johnson asked the Council to consider making changes to the utility charges in the Dribnenki Trailer Court. She is now paying the base rate for six units, plus water usage from a 1" line that services all six of those units. She would like the Council to come up with a better way of billing multiple units that are serviced with the same meter. The Council decided that some investigative work needs to be done before a decision can be made. This topic will be discussed again in the October 4, 2021 Regular City Council Meeting.

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Page Dringman from the City/County Planning Office asked the Council to consider a Certificate of Survey for Ryan Dees. In 2017 the city agreed to vacate a right of way off highway 191 and Busha Street but no other details were given. Page urged the Council to consider passing a Resolution each time one of these requests come up. It would be beneficial to require the requestee to file an amended plat along with quick claim deeds to avoid a disconnect between the deeds and the surveys. For this situation only, Attorney Jim Lippert encouraged the Council to approve the filing of the retracement survey for Ryan Dees and direct Jim to prepare quick claim deeds to transfer 10 feet from the center of the alley to the adjacent landowner. Councilman Ferguson moved to approve the filing of the retracement survey and direct Jim to file a quick-claim deed on that abandoned alley, seconded by Councilman Rockeman. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council Present.

Mayor Karlin presented Ordinance #488 and read said ordinance for the 2nd reading. Councilman Thomasson moved to approve ORDINANCE #488 – AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BIG TIMBER, MT CREATING 5-7-1 TO 3, AN ADDITION TO THE BIG TIMBER, MT CITY CODE, seconded by Councilman Rockeman. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council present.

Councilman Ferguson contacted Susie Osbourn, the transportation compliance officer with the Public Service Commission. He discovered that the Council, if they choose, can file a formal complaint against Republic Services. Councilman Thomasson reported that he and Councilman Woehler met with Demetrius, the Big Timber Transfer Site Manager. Demetrius explained why problems have been occurring which is mostly due to employee shortages. Demetrius was then asked to work on a phone calling system that would advise the Citizens of Big Timber when changes to the routes are made.

Don Moss, Republic Service's General Manager for the Southern half of the State of Montana, reported that Big Timber is very important to Republic Services, and they are committed to resolving all issues that relate to the collection of garbage or the transfer station. He assured the Council that he is fully aware of the problems that we have been having as of late. He offered 100% turnover of employees and a large Covid impact as an explanation for these problems. Republic has struggled with local job applicant interest, so have had to use drivers from Billings which resulted in shorter working hours and "training being done on the fly". Don wanted the Council to know that Big Timber is discussed in the Billings office every morning at 8:00am. Don committed to,

1. Reorganizing and cleaning up the Transfer Station with the electrical work and repositioning of the scale house completed by Sept. 20 or that week.
2. They will install a camera that will eventually be hooked up to a network that can be monitored from various locations and they expect that to be completed by middle to the end of September.
3. The DEQ complaint was addressed very quickly and was officially closed on Aug. 30, 2021. Republic prides themselves in environmental compliance and take these complaints very seriously.
4. Every morning and at the close of business, the transfer site employee will police the facility and ensure that it is clean.

5. Republic is working and making progress on plans to promote positions that are available in Big Timber. Bob Curry, Billings Operations Manager, intends to include City Staff in some discussions on the best ways of promoting jobs in Big Timber.
6. The communication and accountability process has been restructured and will be implemented in short order to ensure that the facilities and routes run the way that the contract dictates.
 - a. There will be a daily record of who is inspecting the facility both AM and PM with notes of the required attention kept and may be shared with the City upon request.
 - b. Illegal dumping will be noted on the daily record as well and reported to the city.
 - c. Proper training will be conducted with the drivers of the Big Timber contract, so that they will understand the routing and service schedule.
 - d. Changes to the schedule, per the contract – if changes need to be made “on the fly”, the city will be notified immediately. If permanent changes need to occur, the city will be notified two weeks prior to the changes. This communication will come from either Demetrius Jones or Bob Curry.
 - e. They will develop a communications plan with the city to make sure that all requests will be taken care of in a timely manner, including deliveries, extra pickups, and routing issues to ensure that the service is taken care of the day that it is required.

Councilman Thomasson suggested that republic run an ad in the newspaper, letting the public know what has been going on and why, the changes they plan to make, a phone number to call with complaints and job openings.

Public Comment:

Page Dringman would like the Council to consider an ordinance on marijuana. The planning office has received many calls with questions regarding Big Timber’s regulations on store fronts. She would also like the Council to think about how to handle delinquent utility bills, whether it be filing a lien on those properties or reporting the delinquencies to the IRS and having charges added to tax bills. She is concerned that at the present time, there is no way of making these delinquencies know to potential buyers if the seller chooses to withhold the information.

Councilman Rockeman moved to approve the claims, payroll, and overtime for the month of August, seconded by Councilman Thomasson. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council present.

There being no further business to go before the Council, Councilman Thomasson moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:01pm, seconded by Councilman Ferguson. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council present.

Rolland Karlin, Mayor

ATTEST:

Nadine Stosich, Clerk/Treasurer