

## Regular City Council Meeting

City Hall

January 19, 2026

Mayor Ferguson opened the Regular City Council Meeting at 7:00pm and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Others Attending are:

Council: Kerri Baird, Jeff Davis, Mike Duval, and Leonard Woehler.

City Staff: Hope Mosness, Clerk/Treasurer, Jim Lippert, City Attorney, and Kris Novotny, Public Works Director

Public: Lee Andreas, Barb Selk, Linda Brunckhorst, Lainey Stenberg (Boulder River Watershed Association), Anita Dore, AJ Lorenzen, Angie Moen, Justin Arlian, Barbara Clark, Ryan M Coffman (Republic Services), Lowell Watson, Pat Hansen, and Aaron B Freed.

Councilman Woehler made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 5<sup>th</sup> Regular City Council Meeting, seconded by Councilman Davis. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council.

Councilman Duval made a motion to approve the FY25 Audit Report, seconded by Councilwoman Baird. Morgan Scarr from Amatics CPA Group presented the FY25 Audit Report for the City of Big Timber. Public Comment: AJ Lorenzen asked if enterprise funds can only be used on enterprise activities. Is it ok for the city to use percentages to divide the interest earned? Was testing done on invoices for equipment that was bought to make sure they were purchased through the correct funds? Linda Brunckhorst thanked Hope for having a clean audit. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council.

Pat Hansen stated that there is a section of the sidewalk along 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue in front of Oie Motors that has been removed and it becomes difficult for those walking, or riding a scooter, cycle or wheelchair. They have to go out in the street to get around it and it's concerning because 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue is a busy street. He stated it has been this way for months and needs to be fixed. Lowell Watson from Oie Motors explained that last year they had the roof replaced on the building and the gutter came off where the drain goes through the sidewalk. The gutter company has never come back to fix the issue so the sidewalk remains unfixed. He went ahead and poured the concrete on Friday and is waiting for the sidewalk to be poured in the spring. He is trying to determine if the state is responsible for it, but either way he will make sure it gets done. Mayor Ferguson thanked Lowell for fixing the problem so quickly. Councilman Woehler thanked Pat for making the Council aware of this. He says it is a problem throughout town and wonders if having the owners responsible for the sidewalks should be changed. He would like to revisit the 50/50 sidewalk program.

Ryan Coffman from Republic Services stated that 3 of the 4 doors at the transfer site have been replaced. The last door is scheduled to be repaired on January 30<sup>th</sup>. They have had to go through four contractors to finally get this done. He will make sure that barricades are put up to minimize damage to the doors. He would like to schedule the Spring Cleanup Day in June and combine it with the Hazardous Waste Day, and a recycling day. They will have a BBQ along with it. Republic Services has approved the amendment for the increase in the county weight credit and needs clarification from Jim on the term of the Performance Bond. Jim will send something to Ryan. He thanked the community, Hank, Monica, and Hope for communicating and making sure everything is being done correctly. Public Comment: AJ

Lorenzen asked if the recycling containers can be labeled. He also stated that Friends of Dornix Park picked up a lot of trash and asked Ryan if Republic would give a donation. Ryan stated that he met with Sweet Grass Recycle Fund and he has magnetic signs being made that show what can be recycled and they will be put on the recycling containers. Ryan directed them to their website to fill out a form for a donation.

Hope Mosness gave an update on the Workers' Compensation program through Montana Municipal Interlocal Authority (MMIA). She stated that MMIA is ending their program at the end of FY26 and the City of Big Timber will need to find another carrier for workers' compensation coverage. Two options available are the Montana State Fund or through another carrier found through an insurance agent.

Mayor Ferguson presented the Council Committees and who would serve on them for 2026. He noted that he added back in the Labor Management committee and also a City Hall Building committee.

Councilman Woehler made a motion to untable election of the council president, seconded by Councilman Duval. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council. Councilman Davis made a motion to nominate Councilwoman Baird as the Council President, seconded by Councilman Woehler. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council.

Councilman Woehler made a motion to approve the support for the Boulder River Watershed Association grant application letter, seconded by Councilwoman Baird. Lainey Stenberg, the coordinator for the BRWA which is run through the Sweet Grass Conservation District, is applying for a \$100,000 Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks grant from the Trail Stewardship Program to fix the road up by McKell's Canyon four -mile up to the first bridge that is down the Main Boulder Road. She is asking the City of Big Timber to attach their name in support of the letter. There is no financial obligation by the city. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council.

Councilman Davis made a motion to approve the Dornix Park Agreement, seconded by Councilwoman Baird. Jim Lippert stated that he needs to amend the language in the Dornix Park Agreement. Councilman Woehler made a motion to reconsider and table the Dornix Park Agreement, seconded by Councilman Duval. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council. Public Comment: Angie Moen stated that there is a leash law in Dornix Park. She is concerned because their insurance policy went up and worries what will happen if they are unable to find an insurance policy that will cover dog bites. Jim explained that if Friends of Dornix Park doesn't have the insurance, the city is taking on the risk if there is a dog attack or bite. It is the council's decision as to what they want in the agreement.

Councilman Davis made a motion to untable the snowplowing policy, seconded by Councilman Duval. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council. Councilman Davis stated the current policy states that we plow when snow accumulation is at 6". He added that many residents have come to him and would like it to be lowered to 4". He would like to have the streets committee meet with Kris to look at other issues with the snowplowing policy. Councilman Woehler said he has had residents ask him what the employees are doing when the snow is falling. If there is snow during working hours they should go ahead and plow. Public Comment: AJ Lorenzen says we need to have a lot of discussion on the policy. He stated that this last winter he got stuck twice because the berm was so big. He also has a rental house in town and the renter's car was plowed in and she missed work. He said a 12" berm is standard. He shared a picture of what happens when the snow is not plowed. He thinks the area around the post office should be cleared, not just plowed. He stated that all the streets should be plowed when it meets the standard. There are a lot of people's primary parking areas that are in alleys and they should be plowed. He is happy the city is getting a committee together to discuss it. He said it's easy to add a snow gate to the grader to use around driveways. There should be a phone number for people to call when someone is stranded in the snow. He said the city should also consider an ice policy. Linda

Brunckhorst reiterated that there should not be berms in front of a driveway that are insurmountable and there should be a number to call as well. Justin Arlian stated that sometimes plowing can make things worse. It's a catch-22. Mayor Ferguson asked the council to consider the cost of additional plowing. Councilman Davis made a motion to approve to change the snowplowing policy from a 6" depth to a 4" depth, seconded by Councilman Duval. Councilwoman Baird stated that we should lower it for a year and then reevaluate. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council.

Councilman Duval made a motion to approve the claims for the second half of December, seconded by Councilman Davis. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council.

Public Comment: AJ Lorenzen stated that the flags at City Hall are in bad shape. Mayor Ferguson stated that new flags have been ordered.

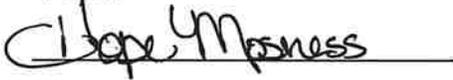
Council Concerns: Councilman Woehler asked how the council committees work. Mayor Ferguson explained that two Councilmen can meet together and it is not a quorum. Jim Lippert added that three councilmembers would make a quorum.

There being no further business to go before the Council, Councilman Woehler made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:40pm seconded by Councilman Duval. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council.



Justin Ferguson, Mayor

ATTEST:



Hope Mosness, Clerk/Treasurer