

Public Hearing and Regular City Council Meeting

City Hall

November 17, 2025

Mayor DeBoer opened the Public Hearing at 6:00pm and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Others Attending are:

Council: Kerri Baird, Jeff Davis, Justin Ferguson, and Leonard Woehler.

City Staff: Hope Mosness, Clerk/Treasurer, Jim Lippert, City Attorney, Misti Titeca, Library Director, Judge Jessie Connolly, Page Dringman, City/County Planner, Norene Brown, Animal Control Officer, and Shawn Smith, Public Works Operator

Public: Denise Winjum, Mark Curry, Lee Andreas, Michael Shirley, Angela Selby, Mark Norem, Peter D. Fox, Jacque Scott, AJ Lorenzen, Ron Thomas, Negel O'Connor, Justin Arlian, Lauren Dillon, Colter Todd, Kirk J. Stephens, Lynda Carlson, Pam Stene, Dan Astin, and Sally Owen-Still

Mayor DeBoer presented the different options for the new city hall building:

1. New Modular Building on existing lot
2. New Building on existing lot
3. Purchase Mark Norem Building
4. Purchase Montana Taxidermy Building

Councilman Woehler then introduced two additional options:

5. Keep the back half of the existing structure and build a new front half
6. Use the basement of the library for city hall - *refer to additional summary*

Peter Fox, President of the Library Board of Trustees cited Montana Code Annotated 22-1-3 which states that the library board of trustees has the "exclusive control of the construction or lease of library buildings, and the operation and care of the library." Both he and library director Misti Titeca expressed that there is a lot of public activity in the library and the meeting room in the basement and that having city hall in the basement would not work logistically. Judge Jessie Connolly suggested that the city have a meeting with the county to see if they could find available space for city hall. She stated that if they purchased the Norem building she would love to see a court space for city and justice court. Mayor DeBoer stated he is in favor of purchasing the Mark Norem building as it is move-in ready and has room for everything we need and also room to grow. He worries about saddling the city with debt by only building part of it now and worries what costs will be in the future. Councilman Woehler would like to see a new building stating that this is a once in a lifetime opportunity to create continuity downtown, and have a cohesive design that looks forward to the future. Councilman Ferguson stated that up to this point the city has spent \$150,000 and he would like to see written documentation from the state inspector on the condition of the old city hall building. He would like us to save or salvage the old shop and build a new building on the front. He is against buying the Mark Norem building and the Montana Taxidermy building.

Public Comment: **Modular Building** – Shawn Smith spoke in favor stating modular buildings are good looking and solid. Lauren Dillon spoke against a modular stating there should not be a modular building downtown. **New Build** – Kirk Stephens, Colter Todd and Justin Arlian spoke in favor of a new building to

look to the future and growth of Big Timber. There will be plenty of parking and we could build it in phases as needed. Colter stated if we want an icon for the city, it will cost money, but it boils down to what the public wants. Mark Curry added that we need to look at the option that will give people a reason to come off the interstate and then stay and spend money in Big Timber and we have the opportunity to do that with City Hall. He used Red Lodge as an example of what could be done in Big Timber. Lauren Dillon stated although she would love to see a new building, the cost is just too much.

Mark Norem Building – Lauren Dillon spoke in favor of this option citing it is a beautiful building that is downtown and fills all the city's needs. Kirk Stephens, AJ Lorenzen, Justin Arlian, and Shawn Smith spoke against this option citing the age of the building, limited parking available, rise in insurance and utility costs, and the city should not be landlords. **Montana Taxidermy Building** – AJ Lorenzen spoke in favor of this option stating it is an attractive building with the option to add on if needed. Lauren Dillon was not in favor of this option. **Keep Back Half/Build New Front Half** – Ron Thomas stated we should use the existing lot because we already know what we have and feels the city just wants to spend money. Jacque Scott spoke against this option stating if we are going to use the existing lot it needs to be a new building toward McLeod Street with parking in the back.

Mayor DeBoer closed the public hearing at 7:11pm and opened the Regular City Council Meeting.

Councilman Ferguson made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 3, 2025, Regular City Council Meeting, seconded by Councilwoman Baird. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council.

Sally Owen-Still from Friends of Dornix Park asked permission to do repairs and maintenance to the buildings at Dornix Park (see attached packet information). The Friends of Dornix Park will pay for the repairs and maintenance, and they will use a licensed contractor. Public Comment: AJ Lorenzen stated that Dornix Park is a great addition to the community and the number of people using it is increasing. Councilman Woehler made a motion to approve the Dornix Park repairs and maintenance as stated, seconded by Councilman Davis. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council.

Jim Lippert presented the contract agreement for the transmission main and overflow line relocation at Whistle Creek. He stated that the current Memorandum of Understanding is not an enforceable contract. Councilwoman Baird made a motion to approve the Whistle Creek contract for transmission main/overflow line relocation, seconded by Councilman Ferguson. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council.

Mayor DeBoer asked the council to vote on demolishing City Hall. Councilmembers Woehler and Ferguson would like to see documentation of what part of the City Hall building is condemned and considered a Level 3 by the state inspector. Public Comment: Jacque Scott suggested having the state inspector come and tell them the condition of the building. AJ Lorenzen stated he would like to see the state's decision in writing. Justin Arlian stated he would like to demolish city hall. Mark Curry asked if there is a tax break or grant to help cover the cost of the demolition. Councilwoman Baird made a motion to demolish the city hall building, seconded by Councilman Davis. Motion carried with Councilmembers Baird, Davis, and Woehler voting aye. Councilman Ferguson voted nay.

Mayor DeBoer asked the council to make a decision on the new city hall building. Councilman Woehler made a motion to build a new building in phases on the existing city lot, seconded by Councilman Ferguson. Councilman Davis stated that the city will not receive any taxes or money from building a new building. He added that he has a hard time spending \$2 million dollars on a new building when it will not benefit city government in any way, and while there may be more people stopping in Big Timber none of that money will go to the city. Public Comment: Pam Stene wants to see a spot for Senior Pantry at the new city hall. She stated that they have no money to operate and have only been given money to pay rent for a year. Mayor DeBoer would like to see the city continue to provide a space for the Senior

Pantry. Councilman Woehler made a motion to withdraw his first motion, seconded by Councilman Ferguson. Councilman Woehler made a motion to table the decision on the new city hall building, seconded by Councilman Davis. Motion carried with Councilmembers Baird, Ferguson, and Woehler voting aye and Councilman Davis voting nay. Councilman Woehler will talk with Greg Bunton about putting a phased plan together for a new building.

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

Public Comment: Mike Duval stated that there was a public poll put out on Facebook about city hall and maybe the city should put out a poll or a mailing. We are spending a lot of money to build a city hall so it might draw some more public opinion. Jacque Scott stated that most surveys are not returned and we don't know if the people who voted on Facebook are actual city residents.

Council Concerns: Councilman Ferguson stated that a constituent asked how the Dugout is sanitized after the neutering clinic. Hope Mosness stated that Laura Johnson should be contacted.

Councilwoman Baird had a meeting with Ryan from Republic Services and stated that he would like everybody to drive across the scale whether they are dumping trash or not. She thinks the line is going to be longer and we may need to open the transfer site another day. Mayor DeBoer stated we will look at the contract. Councilman Woehler would like Public Works to look at the alleys between 1st and 3rd behind McLeod St. It needs to be graded. Mayor DeBoer stated he has already talked to Kris about it.

There being no further business to go before the Council, Councilman Woehler made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:06pm seconded by Councilman Ferguson. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Greg DeBoer', written over a horizontal line.

Greg DeBoer, Mayor

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Hope Mosness', written over a horizontal line.

Hope Mosness, Clerk/Treasurer

From: Leonard Woehler <lenwoehlerdesign@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, December 5, 2025 3:07 PM
To: Hope Mosness
Subject: Summary

Hi!

Please include this summary in the minutes, thank you!

Summary of Meeting Minutes: Library / City Hall Discussion

A concept was informally explored to address Big Timber's City Hall needs by partnering with the Library. The idea was ultimately declined by the Library Board before it was formally presented, but the proposer wished to document the concept publicly because it could have offered a cost-effective solution.

Core Idea

Use existing Library space to house City Hall functions:

- Continue holding public city meetings in the current Library meeting space.
- Create office and reception areas for the two City Hall employees (Hope and Monica) in the adjacent room.
- Utilize existing ADA-compliant bathrooms and elevator.
- Maintain or even improve public access to all Library facilities.

Permanent Option

- Renovate Library spaces to permanently house City Hall.
- Sell the current City Hall property to fully cover renovation costs.
- Provide the Library with:
 - A donation from excess sale proceeds, and
 - \$700-\$1,000 per month in lease payments (up to \$12,000 annually).
- Add an additional executive meeting room by modifying existing storage space.

Temporary / Transitional Option

- Use modular office partitions instead of permanent construction.
- Salvage and rent out the back half of the current City Hall building for approximately \$1,300/month.
- City would still pay the Library \$700-\$1,000/month and keep the remaining rental income.
- This option would give the City time to plan for a future building while providing the Library with additional funds for improvements (technology, books, staff raises, solar, carpeting, lighting, etc.).
- The City would take responsibility for maintenance of the shared downstairs spaces.

Outcome

- The Library Board chose not to pursue the idea before it could be fully presented or publicly discussed.

Sent from my iPhone