

Budget Work Meeting and Special City Council Meeting

Carnegie Library

August 11, 2025

Mayor DeBoer opened the Budget Work Meeting 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 and Kris Novotny, Public Works Director

Public: Lee Andreas, Linda Brunckhorst, Tony Crowder, Jacob Schurz, Buster Bullock, Jamie Hauge, Jason Hauge, Sarah Stands, Barbara Van Cleve, Kelly Kirby, Mike Shirley, Singeli Agnew, Bret French, Kristi Hogemark, Roger Sanstad, Keegan M Nashan, Dan Astin, Kirk Stephens, Dulcie Bue Clavarino, Bill Warwick, Sandra Smith, Doug Ayers, and Natasha Davis

FY26 Budget Discussion: Hope Mosness went over the final budget numbers, taxable value information from the state, and the mill levy information. The Council agreed to move forward by taking the maximum allowable number of mills – 157.82. They agreed to take out the pool liner from the expenditure budget. Hope will make those adjustments and finalize the budget for the next meeting.

Public Comment: Linda Brunckhorst asked the Council to look at the expenditure budget and see where we can make cuts.

Mayor DeBoer closed the Budget Work Meeting at 6:50pm and opened the Special City Council Meeting at 7:00pm.

Councilman Davis led a discussion with the Council on the bulk water sales. He stated that the majority of the citizens would like the city to stop selling bulk water until a policy is in place. He stated that the reason he would like the city to stop selling bulk water is due to wear and tear on the water treatment plant. He would like the city to find a way to use water that is not treated coming out of Pig Creek. He also feels that the price is too low. Mayor DeBoer stated that he is worried that by stopping all bulk water sales limits the city if there is an emergency and wants to make sure the policy is worded to reflect that. Councilman Ferguson agrees about selling the treated water as opposed to untreated water. He wished we had a site that could handle that, but we don't. He agrees the Council should have been increasing the bulk water rates but he stated that the city is still making money on the bulk water sales. He stated that the majority of the people at the last meeting did not speak, but attended to gain information. He then spoke with some of the citizens that were at the meeting and all but one were in favor of selling the water. He feels the main reason people don't want the city to sell water is because we are selling it to rich people for their golf course. He stated that he feels that by selling the water we can make money for the citizens of Big Timber. He would like us to approach Crazy Mountain Ranch to see if they will consider funding some of the city's needs such as a pool liner or paving streets. The bulk water sales to Crazy Mountain Ranch will end in September. Councilman Woehler agrees with Councilman Ferguson and added that comments on social media have not helped. We run 800,000-

900,000 gallons of water through the tank a day. The bulk water sales only account for about 6% of that. He understands the complaint that we need to have a policy in place, but also feels that the bulk water sales will help our water fund to be able to replace our infrastructure. Public Comment: Dulcie Bue Clavarino stated that she spoke with many residents and started a petition to stop bulk water sales. She stated the volume being sold is her main concern, as well as the fact that there is not policy in place, the bulk water pricing is too low, and an interim policy can be in place for emergencies. She presented a petition with 137 signatures of residents who are against the sale of bulk water. Councilman Woehler stated that those who signed the petition needed more information to make an informed decision. → Singeli Agnew said that there has been very little information put out by the Council. She stated that it is a bad decision to sell the bulk water that low. Roger Sanstad asked how bulk water sales money will help the residents. Keegan Nashan stated that Crazy Mountain Ranch has been disrespectful to their neighbors and that there are no grounds for a discrimination lawsuit and she has talked to many lawyers and none of them has said that the rich are a protected class. She felt that Councilman Woehler was disrespectful to the citizen who presented the petition. Kelly Kirby asked if there was a contract signed for the sale of bulk water. She says that we do not have a contract or a policy and that fees should be examined each year. She said you cannot fall back on discrimination; you have heard from the residents and now it's up to the council. She said without a contract we should increase the price right now. Mayor DeBoer thinks the problem that everyone has is that we are selling water to billionaires to water their golf course. He explained that this sale is temporary. We do not want to place the city in the position of a possible lawsuit. Jamie Hauge stated that because our system is available to handle the water that is being sold, she believes it is a blessing to our town for our water fund to help with preventative maintenance and replacement of water lines. She agrees that we need a policy and increase the cost of our bulk water sales. Linda Brunckhorst stated that we have 3 weeks left of this bulk water sale it is evident to her that more citizens would like to have the bulk water sales stopped and does the council really want to continue this sale for \$6,000-\$10,000. Doug Ayers stated that rivers are about half of the level they should be. He thinks guarding and conserving water should be a concern for the city as it is our most valuable resource. He hopes the policy will create a rate structure that respects the true value of the resource we have. Sandy Smith stated she believes that the biggest objection to the bulk water sales comes from unconscious bias. Buster Bullock would like the residents to know the exact amount the city has received from them for the bulk water sales. Hope stated the amount of the checks received totaling \$23,049.60 and 1,646,400 gallons of water sold. Councilman Davis made a motion to approve to discontinue the sale of bulk water with the exception of emergency services only, seconded by Councilman Ferguson. Motion passed with Councilman Davis and Councilwoman Baird voting aye and Councilman Ferguson and Councilman Woehler voting nay. Mayor DeBoer broke the tie by voting aye.

Public Comment: None

Councilman Woehler made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:45pm, 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

- * We operate our water system in the red, these sales go directly into the water fund. The sales have been reduced to 50,000 gal/day which is now about 6% of our total usage, and we used less water so far this year including the bulk sales than we did last year.

