

## Public Hearing and Regular City Council Meeting

City Hall

June 1, 2026

Mayor Ferguson opened the Public Hearing at 7:00pm and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Others Attending are:

Council: Jeff Davis, and Mike Duval. Len Woehler attended via phone. Kerri Baird was absent.

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

County Staff: Undersheriff Ron Swanson

Public: Angela Selby, Mike Shirley, Meagan Hennekens, Barb Selk, Mark Curry, Bill Warwick, Linda Brunckhorst, and Lauren Dillon.

Mayor Ferguson read Resolution 1052: A Resolution of the City of Big Timber, Providing for the Amendment of the Budget for Fiscal Year 2025-2026.

Public Comment: None

Mayor Ferguson closed the public hearing at 7:05pm and opened the Regular City Council Meeting.

Councilman Duval made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 18, 2026, Regular City Council Meeting, seconded by Councilman Davis. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council present.

Undersheriff Ron Swanson stated that there were 352 complaints, 9 cases, and 33 citations for the month of May 2026. They had two rescues in May and two people were arrested for felony aggravated assault. Both are in jail. The Department of Justice gave them a brand-new fingerprint scanner machine. They are in the process of hiring one dispatcher and one deputy. Discussion took place on junk vehicle removal. Undersheriff Swanson will get some clarification on the ordinance and will look into what needs to be done.

Kris Novotny, Public Works Director, stated that Bomber Mountain Demo is expected to be here June 15<sup>th</sup> to demolish City Hall. Pool opened today, however there is a leak and they are having to add water to keep the water level up. Kris is working on getting estimates and hoping to replace the pool liner this fall. If the weather cooperates, they will burn the burn pile within the next few weeks. Streets are being patched and the contractors are finished with the street paving project. There were change orders to the contract and they will go before the City Council at the next meeting. Kris is going through the change orders. Communication devices for the Water Treatment Plants went down this weekend and one of them at the shop needs to be replaced. They are doing three-hour checks through the evenings to make sure everything is going well. If so, then they will just shut the plant down at night until the device is replaced. Public Comment: Linda Brunckhorst asked if there was a schedule for street sweeping. Megan Hennekens owns a home on E 8th Ave and said that with the new street paving more water is pooling in front of her house and others than before. She stated that the project seems unfinished to her. She said there were no notices given about the street paving and she had to cancel appointments because she couldn't get out of her driveway. She asked if a gutter was going to be installed or a drain. Kris stated that the driveway will be built up with gravel and dirt brought in along

the grass and they are working their way through all the blocks that have been paved. Mayor Ferguson and Kris both agreed that communication to the residents who are affected could be better. Mayor Ferguson stated that he has been communicating with Montana Department of Transportation in Billings about traffic control at 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue and McLeod Street. He would like input from the Sheriff's Department on their recommendation. This will be discussed at the next regular city council meeting.

Councilman Davis made a motion of informal consideration for all remaining agenda items, seconded by Councilman Duval. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council present.

Ryan Coffman did not attend the meeting. Hope Mosness stated that Ryan told her that because of the new Memorandum of Understanding for the county credit weight, the performance bond needs to be done all over again. Mayor Ferguson asked if the city could set an amount for the performance bond. Jim stated that we could concede an offer of \$120,000 for the County weight credit and go from there. He said the credit amount changes each month and doesn't understand how that would change the amount of the cost of the bond. The council agreed that Mayor Ferguson should contact Ryan to see what can be done. Jim Lippert will draft a letter to the Public Service Commission for the council to consider at the next meeting. Public Comment: Mark Curry asked if the problem was with Ryan or with Republic Services.

Linda Brunckhorst stated that the Montana on a Mission week of Service is August 3 – August 8, 2026. They collect projects to help people that are in need in the community. The Montana on a Mission dump day will be August 8<sup>th</sup>. It will not be free to the community. There are 20 boxes around town to put project ideas in. They had 248 volunteers last year and over 1300 volunteer hours.

Mayor Ferguson presented the council with a letter for Mike Shirley's medical marijuana dispensary and cultivation operation. Mike Shirley stated what requirements are necessary for him to submit to the state each year to continue his business. The mayor stated he checked with the Sheriff's Department and there have been no issues with Mike's business. Councilman Woehler made a motion to approve Mike Shirley's letter for license renewal for his business, seconded by Councilman Davis. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council present.

Mayor Ferguson read Resolution 1052 again including the correction in the first whereas paragraph. Councilman Davis made a motion to approve Resolution 1052: A Resolution of the City of Big Timber, Providing for the Amendment of the Budget for Fiscal Year 2025-2026, seconded by Councilman Duval. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council present.

The council discussed a maximum budget for the new City Hall building. Councilman Woehler said that a budget of \$1.9 million would be sufficient for the plans that have been done. He felt that it would cost \$360-400 a square foot for the office space, but the warehouse space would be less per square foot. He feels that by doing the warehouse space now it will save us money in the future if we need to expand. He also stated that the Senior Pantry should be included in the space as a service to our community. He would like to send out the preliminary engineering plans to get ballpark figures from contractors. Councilman Davis and Councilman Duval agreed that a budget of \$1.5 million would be enough. Councilman Duval wants to keep the cost down. Councilman Davis does not agree with spending \$2 million for a building that does not benefit the community in any way. He talked with Councilwoman Baird and they discussed the possibility of building something that had more than just offices, but a recreation center as well. He would be willing to go spend more on a building like that because it would benefit the community. Public Comment: Lauren Dillon stated that the conversation feels shortsighted to pick a price out of the sky. She suggested putting out our ideas and getting prices back before making a decision. She doesn't agree that it's just a place to pay bills, but shows how the city cares about its

citizens and helps with pride. She would like to see the city have a master plan and get others involved. Bill Warwick thinks it's a good idea to come up with a price first. He thinks the city needs a vision. Mark Curry stated that he thinks there are more important things our town needs like sidewalks and curbs rather than a city hall building. He thinks the city needs to define what it wants to be. Councilman Davis made a motion to set a maximum budget for a city hall building at \$1.5 million, seconded by Councilman Duval. Motion carried with Councilman Davis and Councilman Duval voting aye. Councilman Woehler voted nay.

Councilman Woehler made a motion to build a new city hall building, seconded by Councilman Davis. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council present.

City Attorney, Jim Lippert, presented the engagement letter from Cusick and Michael Law Firm to represent the city in Montana Water Court. He stated that he did not see anything objectionable in the letter. Councilman Duval made a motion to approve the acceptance of the engagement letter from Cusick and Michael Law Firm for the water rights adjudication, seconded by Councilman Woehler. Motion carried with unanimous vote of the Council present.

Councilman Duval made a motion to approve Claims, Payroll and Overtime for May 2026, seconded by Councilman Davis. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council present.

Public Comment: Linda Brunckhorst asked the status of the upcoming free dump day and hazardous waste day. Councilman Davis thanked the Public Works department for what they do for the community. Lauren Dillon would like to know who to call about street sweeping on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue so people can ride their bikes. There is a lot of gravel. She asked if there is a way to make the public aware of a plan for the water/streets projects that are needed.

There being no further business to go before the Council, Councilman Woehler, made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:45pm seconded by Councilman Davis. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council present.



Justin Ferguson, Mayor

ATTEST:



Hope Mosness, Clerk/Treasurer