

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING October 8, 2019 6:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Council meeting was held Tuesday, October 8, 2019, in the City Hall Conference Room at City Hall, 17 S. 8th Street, Miles City, Montana. Mayor John Hollowell called the meeting to order. Council Members present were Brant Kassner, Ken Gardner, Dwayne Andrews, Rick Huber, Austin Lott, Kathy Wilcox and Susanne Galbraith. Council Member John Uden was excused.

Also present were City Attorney Dan Rice, Police Chief Doug Colombik, Fire Chief Branden Stevens, Public Utilities Director Tom Speelmon, Planner in Training/Historic Preservation/Urban Renewal Officer Ally Capps, Human Resource/Payroll Officer Linda Wilkins, and City Clerk/Minute Recorder Lorrie Pearce.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Hollowell led the Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF COUNCIL & COMMITTEE MINUTES

City Council Minutes: 9/24/2019

- ** *Councilperson Galbraith moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of September 24, 2019, and seconded by Councilperson Gardner. The motion passed by unanimous consent, 7-0.*

SCHEDULE MEETINGS

The following meetings will be held in the City Hall Conference Room:
Human Resource Tuesday October 15th @ 5:30 pm
Planning Committee Tuesday October 15th @ 6:00 pm

REQUEST OF CITIZENS & PUBLIC COMMENT

Citizens Doug and Diane Brody, 220 South Merriam expressed their dissatisfaction on the street project that is going on in their neighborhood. They explained that there was no notice as to the work and or its progress on the project. One day Mr. Brody had to hurry and move his vehicle out of their driveway because there was a crew of people working in his yard. They were given two days to remove their rock garden and other plants, which meant hiring someone to help. Also, the working crew graded and exposed roots on a hackberry tree, and they wondered if it would come back next year. They were also wondering why the sidewalk is going to be six feet wide, cause the American Disability Act states a minimum of three feet and a maximum of five feet. They asked the City to consider a five-foot sidewalk.

APPOINTMENTS

Urban Renewal Agency Board- Dr. Kenneth Stein

** Councilperson Galbraith moved to accept Doctor Kenneth Stein appointment to the Urban Renewal Agency Board, seconded by Councilperson Kassner. The motion passed by unanimous vote 7-0

PROCLAMATIONS

None

STAFF REPORTS

Branden Stevens- Reported the following:

- Battalion Chief position has been filled (Johnny Hoskins)
- Safety Officer has returned to work on light duty
- The grant that was submitted for a new tender truck was unsuccessful

- Tower 19 has transmission issues and it is getting worse. He is having a specialist look at it
- CFR-1 has mechanical issues and will be used in an emergency only
- Ambulance 26 exhaust issue has been fixed
- The self-contained breathing apparatus trailer will be delivered in December
- This was fire prevention week and the theme was “Not every hero wear’s a cape, plan and practice your escape”

Administrator Capps-The Urban Renewal Agency’s annual report has been published and available for all to review.

CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS

Susanne Galbraith went to the fire prevention training and it was well thought out.

Rick Huber had a tour of the 911 office. Supervisor Lyne Anderson did a good job in showing him around.

Ken Gardner received a call from a citizen that was wondering when the hole will be filled in at 211 Cottage Street.

MAYOR COMMENTS

Mayor Hollowell reported that he had met with County Attorney Wyatt Glade to discuss the City’s need of a prosecutor. Since an agreement cannot be met before October 31st, an interview has been set up to hire one to directly work for the city.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

None

BID OPENINGS

None

BID AWARDS

None

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

- A. **RESOLUTION NO. 4290 – A Resolution Approving a Revised Collective Bargaining Agreement Between the City of Miles City and the Local No. 283-A Union**

** *Councilperson Kassner moved to approve the Resolution, read by title only and seconded by Councilperson Gardner.*

Mayor Hollowell said the personal day is already paid for, and he was told it would not cause any overtime payout. Councilperson Galbraith and Huber wondered if it did not work out, if it can be taken out of the agreement at a later date. They were concerned that it would cause extra overtime pay and affect the budget.

**** On roll call vote, the motion passed, 7-0. Resolution No. 4290 passed.**

- B. **RESOLUTION NO. 4291 – A Resolution Approving a Revised Collective Bargaining Agreement Between the City of Miles City and the Local No. 283-B Union.**

**

Councilperson Lott moved to approve the Resolution, read by title only and seconded by Councilperson Wilcox.

Councilperson Galbraith was very concerned at giving the police officers a longevity increase. She explained that the 19/20 budget was passed with \$83 to the good and as of September 30th the cash in General Fund was (-\$196,000). She did not feel good voting for the increase because she did not know where the money would come from. Since the budget was so tight, the City should not be spending money that was not approved in August.

Chief Colombik explained that in the last two years the force has lost 60 percent of their employees. In the last five months he has lost six officers. There will always be overtime and the force will always face the problem of being short of officers. He felt the present force is a solid group of individuals, and overtime cannot be helped. Previous wage increases have helped keep more officers, but he can not control the little things that make officers leave.

Sergeant Sloan explained that the longevity increase to the new officers will convince officers to stick around and the City's cost will decrease in five years. The longevity program will help the City retain officers and not pay as much on sending new officers to the Academy. This would save an abundant amount of money. Through the last few years at least \$80,000 indirect costs have been spent for fire year Academy training, and once the training is complete the officers move. The \$80,000 does not include wages and overtime.

HR Officer Wilkins clarified that the longevity it is not \$750 per month, it is 1 percent of \$750 per year. Currently the first four years amount to a 7-cent increase per hour (State Statute) plus an additional 5-cents. In the new contract the 5-cents is eliminated. An additional bump of \$2.06 is also received by officers completing their probationary period. The \$12,000 impact is caused by the older employees, (three of them) and there should be a saving to those staff that are in a lower longevity year of \$18,000. This comes from not getting 12 cents per year. Councilperson Galbraith asked if the newer police wages already had the longevity added in this fiscal budget year. Ms. Wilkins said it was, so the \$18,000 saving is inflated. The big hit will be when the new officers come upon the five years longevity.

Sergeant Sloan said that the agreement with the Mayor and union was that no wages would be cut for current officers in the one to five-year category. The officers in the one to four category wages will stay the same, but any new officers will only receive the 7-cent longevity for the first four years of employment. The big hit will be when the new officers come upon the five years. The benefit is that the City is not sending new officers to training and the City will benefit from the experience they have.

Mayor Hollowell said the initial \$12,000 will hit the budget now, but next year the City would feel the full benefit. It is an effort to retain officers. It is a gamble and hopefully it will pay off. The City can hope and believe there will be an increase in revenue next year to cover the additional cost.

**** On roll call vote, the motion passed, 4-3 with Councilperson Galbraith, Gardner and Huber voting no Resolution No. 4291 passed.**

C. Approval to Write off a Total Amount of \$1,211.00 for Ambulance Fund

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Councilperson Galbraith moved to approve the ambulance write offs, seconded by Councilperson Andrews and passed unanimously, 7-0.

D. Approval to Send a Total of \$1,382.53 to Collections for Water Department

****** Councilperson Galbraith moved to approve sending \$1,382.53 to collection for the water department, seconded by Councilperson Andrews and passed unanimously, 7-0.

E. Approval of September Claims

****** Councilperson Huber moved to approve the September claims, seconded by Councilperson Wilcox and passed unanimously, 7-0.

ADJOURNMENT

****** Councilperson Wilcox moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilperson Lott and passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:08 p.m.


John Hollowell, Mayor


Lorrie Pearce, City Clerk