

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING October 27, 2020
6:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Council meeting was held Tuesday, October 27, 2020, in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 17 S. 8th Street, Miles City, Montana and by Zoom. Mayor John Hollowell called the meeting to order. Council Members present were Brant Kassner, Dwayne Andrews, Ken Gardner, Elizabeth Patten, Rick Huber, Austin Lott and Kathy Wilcox.

Also present were City Attorney Dan Rice, Public Works Director Scott Gray, Police Chief Doug Colombik, Public Utilities Director Tom Speelmon Fire Chief Branden Stevens, Planner in Training Ally Capps, Flood Plain Administrator/Auto Cad/Assistant PWPV, 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: 10/13/2020

****** *Councilperson Gardner moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of October 13, 2020, and seconded by Councilperson Wilcox. The motion passed by unanimous consent, 7-0.*

Finance Committee Minutes: 10/20/2020

**Finance Committee
Meeting October 20,
2020**

The Finance Committee met Tuesday, October 20, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. at the Conference Room, 17 S. 8th Street, Miles City Montana. Present were Committee Members Austin Lott, Brant Kassner and Elizabeth Patten.

Also present were: Public Utilities Director Tom Speelmon, Planner in Training Ally Capps, Mayor John Hollowell, Floodplain Administrator Samantha Malenovsky, Public Works Director Scott Gray, Police Chief Doug Colombik and City Clerk/Recorder Lorrie Pearce.

Chairperson Lott called the meeting to order.

1. Request of Citizens and Public Comment:
None

2. Review and Recommendation Regarding Covid-19 Grant Funds

Planner Capps reported that General Fund had received \$357,812.83 from the CARES Act for March 12th through August 31st. This reimbursement did not include benefits for dispatch, police and fire nor did it include fire wages. These will be reimbursed on the third cycle coming up. After a long discussion, the committee prioritized a list of items that they thought were important to put back into the budget.

- High priorities were: Pigeon control, Litigation costs, plumbing repair for City Hall basement, Architect cost for police department building, building for police department and fire department, purchasing a conference system for conference meetings, pay back Ambulance fund \$12,000 for personal protection equipment purchased and reimburse 911 board for Dispatch Supervisors wages
- Middle priorities were: Funding for the public nuisance fund, and 6-month vacancy saving for police department
- Low priorities were: Saving for snow removal cost, funding for the capital improvement fund and investing money

The list will be discussed more at the next finance meeting. The Mayor thought the City should accept the money received.

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****** *Committee Member Patten moved to recommend to Council to accept the CARES ACT dollars received, seconded by Committee Member Kassner. The motion **passed** 3-0*

3. Review and Recommendation on Purchase of Conferencing System for Public Meetings

Director Speelmon presented what he thought was the best option to buy for the conferencing system. It was as follows:

- Huddle-VC Kit, which has its own dedicated computer, 2 speakers (system can have up to 6 speakers), and a laser microphone
- Kit cost \$2,300
- Computer cost \$1,100
- Big screen television would be extra
- An electrician would need to be hired to add an electrical outlet to the conference room
- There was another system that cost more money, needed to purchase a separate computer and he thought cables would be everywhere and get in the way

****** *Committee Member Kassner moved to recommend to Council purchasing the conferencing system, seconded by Committee Member Patten. The motion **passed** 3-0*

4. Review and Recommendation to set up a Fund for Litigation Related Expenses

After a short discussion it was decided to add a new object code to the City Attorneys fund to track the litigation expenses. A budget amendment is needed.

5. Review and Recommendation Regarding Task Order With Interstate Engineering, Inc for Preliminary Work on Intake In-River Structure

No discussion, the item was approved by Council

6. Review and Recommendation Regarding Task Order With Interstate Engineering, Inc for North 7th Street Water Main Rehabilitation Project

No discussion, the item was approved by Council

7. Discussion and Recommendation on Park District Versus Public Safety Levy

Mayor Hollowell explained the difference on park district versus public safety levy. He said the park district is permanent where the public safety levy covers one specific item, so when it is done so is the levy.

Chairperson Lott thought the committee should talk about what the City is trying to accomplish, where are the problems and what are the solutions.

Director Gray presented his argument for a Park District-

- A lot of improvements need to happen; Finish building Stacey Fountain, sidewalks at Wibaux Park, restrooms at Maurice Hilleman complex, Jaycee Park and at the Bender/Soccer Park. Most of the equipment needs replaced
- Cost to rent port a potty for Stanley Field is \$4,000 to \$5,000 a year
- Fall Zone protection for the playground equipment needs updated
- Many trees need to be cut down in Riverside Park. They are old and a hazard
- Maintenance has fallen behind because the park is always the first one to be cut at budget time
- He explained cutting one day out on closing the Oasis or frog pool, will still cost the City a couple of hours of overtime to test the water
- If a district was voted in, that would allow the City to get more grants, etc.

Director Speelmon explained that in the future the City is going to need a Flood district. The thought behind that was to merge the flood levy and parks district together. He thought if the City improved the parks that it would bring others from surrounding areas to the City and spend money at local businesses. The City has the support from Miles City Improvement and thought they would be helpful in selling the idea.

Committee Member Patten said the City needs to engage it. You cannot have nice things, if you don't pay for it. If the City could show positive results with the additional money from the district, then she thought it was a good idea. She wants people to stay in Miles City.

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Mayor Hollowell recommended approving the Park District.

****** *Committee Member Lott moved to recommend to Council approving a Park District, seconded by Committee Member Kassner. The motion **passed** 3-0*

8. Review and Recommendation Regarding Potential Revenue Stream for the General Fund if Recreational use of Marijuana is Approved by the Voters

****** *After a short discussion, Committee Member Lott moved to table the conversation until further information is known, seconded by Committee Member Patten. The motion **passed** 3-0*

9. Review and Recommendation Regarding Resolution No. 4370

After a short conversation, the committee thought that General Fund could support the expense of the architect and it would be paid out of the police department fund. A budget amendment would be presented for the expense.

****** *Committee Member Lott moved recommending to Council to approve the expenses associated with Resolution No. 4370, seconded by Committee Member Kassner. The motion **passed** 3-0*

10. Review and Recommendation Regarding Splash Pad Maintenance Costs

The committee felt that the additional cost for the water would not be substantial, and the cost for maintenance would not be an issue until approximately 3-5 years from when it is built, which would be 2022. Director Gray explained that eventually a building would be needed to protect the pumps for the pad and frog pool.

****** *Committee Member Lott moved to recommend to Council to approve the splash pad maintenance costs, seconded by Committee Member Kassner. The motion **passed**, 3-0*

11. Review and Recommendation of Referral From HR Committee: Three Salary Increase Requests

Chairperson Lott said that an increase request was recommended by the Human Resource Committee and referred to finance, after having gone through the correct channels. There were no increase amounts recommended by Human Resource Committee.

The committee discussed Director Grays' request:

- Director Gray explained that he submitted his request on February 3rd, before the due date of March 13th. The date was set so the request could be discussed before budget time, but the request went to Human Resources several times. There were several issues with the process and they had to be solved before a decision was made. Now budget is set, but again the request was submitted way before budget time. He is asking for a 4% increase, which would cost general fund an additional \$500.48 a year. He had not received an increase in the last three years, and if you compare the increase to the consumer price index, it would be less than the overall cost of living for those three years. He said he could find the cuts in the Parks budget to cover the increase. He asked, if the increase was approved that it be retroactive back to July 1, 2020
- Director Speelmon reminded the Finance Committee that the Human Resource Committee recommended the request to Finance based on merit. Now it was the Finance Committees' obligation to figure out if the City could afford the raise request
- Committee Member Kassner said what it comes down to is does the Park want to spend money on wages or equipment. He felt that the increase would be permanent and there are a lot of needs in all areas of general fund
- The committee compared a 4% increase to a 2.5% increase. The 4% would cost general fund \$500.48 and the 2.5% increase would cost \$312.80

****** *Committee Member Kassner moved to recommend to Council to approve a 2.5% increase, seconded by Committee Member Lott.*

Director Gray felt that \$200 more is not a huge amount and asked the committee to approve the 4% that he is asking for.

Committee member Patten thought the request of 4% should be recommended to get the position to a level playing field, and that is what Director Gray is asking for

because he has not had a raise in three years. If we want to keep good people in Miles City, we need to take care of good people who take care of our citizens.

****** *Committee Member Patten moved to amend the recommendation to 4%, seconded by Committee Member Lott. The amended motion **passed** 2-1, with Committee Member Kassner voting no*

****** *The amended main motion **passed**, 2-1 with Committee Member Kassner voting no*

The committee discussed Administrator Malenovsky' request:

- Administrator Malenovsky explained she is requesting a \$2.00 to \$3.00 increase in her hourly wage. The spreadsheet breaks it out to include the cost of health insurance, etc. She has through the years as the Floodplain Administrator, cut her budget when asked, and found ways to come in under budget every year. She felt she could find a cost savings of \$2,000 to her budget if the request was approved. She said her position has odd jobs attached to it and there is really no other City to compare it to, but the closest one is in Glendive. If you compare wages to that position, her wages are below it.
- The committee discussed the cost difference between \$2.00 versus \$3.00. A \$2.00 increase would cost general fund approximately \$1,945 a year and a \$3.00 increase would cost approximately \$2,900 a year.
- It was discussed by the committee that the position is below the wage study and felt the wage needed to be increased to keep her working for the City, because it would be hard to replace her with the knowledge she has. Committee Member Kassner said his only concern is the money coming out of general fund. There are a lot of projects coming up that will cost the City money.

****** *Committee Member Lott moved to recommend to Council to approve a \$2.00 increase, seconded by Committee Member Patten. The motion **passed**, 2-1 with Committee Member Kassner voting no*

The committee discussed Chief Colombik request:

- Chief Colombik presented a base wage survey that he conducted in February. The survey showed the average monthly base wage from seventeen other agencies in the state. The average was \$6,341.84 compared to his wage of \$5,602.00. The average hourly base wage was \$36.58 compared to his wages of \$32.31 a difference of 13%. Chief Colombik requested that he is put under a contract for 2-3 years to implement wages up to the average of \$8,080 a month. He said if the City does not do anything that when he retires, it is going to be hard to hire anyone with experience for his position. He would like to stick it out for 5-8 more years.

****** *Committee Member Patten moved to recommend to Council to bring the wage up to average of \$6,341.84 monthly, seconded by Committee Member Lott. The motion **passed**, 2-1 with Committee Member Kassner voting no*

12. Adjournment

****** *Committee Member Patten moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Committee Member Kassner and **passed** unanimously.*

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

****** *Councilperson Lott moved to approve the minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting of October 20, 2020, and seconded by Councilperson Patten. The motion **passed** by unanimous consent, 7-0.*

Public Service Committee Minutes: 10/06/2020

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMITTEE MEETING
October 06, 2020**

The Public Service Committee met Tuesday, October 06, 2020 at 5:00pm in the City Hall Conference Room, 17 S. 8th Street, Miles City, Montana. Present were Committee Members, Dwayne Andrews, Ken Gardner, Kathy Wilcox, and Rick Huber.

Also present: Public Works Director Scott Gray, Flood Plain Administrator Samantha Malenovsky, City Attorney Dan Rice, City Planner-in-Training Ally Capps, and Deputy City Clerk/Recorder Mary Rowe.

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Committee Chairperson Andrews opened the meeting

1. Request of Citizens/Public Comment:
-None-

2. Committee Member Comments:
-None-

3. New Business:

A. Review and Recommendation on Ordinance No. 1343

Administrator Malenovsky handed out a map showing the current locations of all parking signs and explained that the Ordinance is updated to reflect current signage.

****** *Committee Member Wilcox moved to recommend to Council to approve Ordinance No. 1343 and seconded by Committee Member Gardner. The motion **passed, 4-0.***

B. Discussion on "Downtown Art Walk"

Jenna Janshen, 604 S. Center, explained that she and her husband purchased the old Rowland & Thomas building (908 Main Street) and had a bright idea to revitalize the downtown Main Street District with an Art Walk. She had visited the downtown area of Sheridan, Wyoming and was pleased with the beautiful artwork displayed all over the area. She handed out a small packet containing photos of the proposed sculpture and a map of other areas on/around Main Street that art work could be placed. She believes that introducing this aesthetic to Miles City would bring outsiders/visitors in and keep them entertained. She had not spoken to many businesses about her idea yet, but did speak with City Attorney Rice who would like to have sculptures placed out front of the Trails Inn and Lucas & Tonn buildings. Jenna understands that there would be certain criteria that Historic Preservation would have to approve prior to any implementation. She volunteered to create instructions and guidelines for other participating businesses to conform to ADA regulations. She is requesting approval and guidance from this Committee before presenting it to Council at the next meeting. She expressed a sense of urgency in getting the sculpture placed outside of her building using existing grant funding.

****** *Committee Member Andrews moved to recommend to Council to approve the concept, and seconded by Committee Member Huber.*

A brief discussion about the Downtown Art Walk requirements commenced.

****** *Committee Member Andrews amended his motion to recommend to Council to approve a revocable license as a Resolution and seconded by Committee Member Huber. The motion **passed, 4-0.***

4. Adjournment:

****** *Committee Member Wilcox moved to adjourn, seconded by Committee Member Huber, the motion **passed unanimously 4-0.***

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10pm

****** *Councilperson Wilcox moved to approve the minutes of the Public Service Committee Meeting of October 6, 2020, 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:
None

REQUEST OF CITIZENS & PUBLIC COMMENT

Councilperson Wilcox read a letter that she received from a citizen. Councilperson Patten said she had received the same letter.

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101 S. Custer
Miles City, MT 59301
October 19, 2020

John Laney, Director
Miles City Chamber of Commerce
511 Pleasant
Miles City, MT 59301

Dear John,

This letter pertains to the October 15th article in the Miles City Star about the need to support local businesses instead of shopping on-line. I am in full agreement with your statements about the importance of shopping locally, especially in light of the impact that COVID-19 has had on many businesses. However, I will state that I am reluctant to set foot in several Miles City businesses because of an appalling disregard by many people on wearing masks. I'm sure I don't need to tell you that mask wearing is currently mandated in all businesses in counties where there are four or more active COVID cases. As of today, Custer County has **60** active cases, yet I've recently been in several businesses where numerous customers, and in some cases, employees, are unmasked. When I encounter this disregard for my health and the health of others, I am not motivated to return. Sadly, this only encourages me to turn to on-line shopping, and this is a sentiment I've heard expressed by many others.

To the detriment of us all, the wearing of masks has been highly politicized since early on in the pandemic, which I know makes enforcing mask mandates more difficult. However, I'm wondering if there's been a truly coordinated effort between local government, health officials and the Chamber to get business owners and the local citizenry more onboard with the need for masking up. I hope more can & will be done as I hate to think that I and others need to avoid local businesses in order to stay safe.

Sincerely,

Barbara Cole

cc: Terri Fandrich
John Hollowell
AmberTrenka
Kathy Wilcox
Elizabeth Patten
Rick Huber

APPOINTMENTS

None

PROCLAMATIONS

None

STAFF REPORTS

Doug Colombik- Reported that there were a couple of big arrests last week. One was at a jewelry store and within two hours they arrested the suspected. He said the night shift did an outstanding job.

CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS

None

MAYOR COMMENTS

None

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Finance Committee- Approval on proceeding with Splashpad project as presented by MCI₂

**** Councilperson Lott moved to proceed with the Splashpad project, seconded by Councilperson Patten.**

There was a conversation on addressing the maintenance cost. Councilperson Lott said the City had already committed to the project and felt the City should move forward. He explained that the Public Utilities Director thought that the water could be donated to the park which would save approximately \$7,000 per season.

MCI₂ Representative Branden Janshen said that most of the additional expense would be from the additional water used on the splashpad. Other expenses would be when the system broke down, and that should not happen for several years.

MCI₂ Representative John Goff explained that the group is donating a \$900,000 project to the City and they would not abandon the project or the City in the future. The group is looking at ways to support the City in the future in helping with the cost of maintenance.

Robert Martelle, 17 S. Stacy, stated that he had just moved from Forsyth. He said they had received a free-swimming pool and it did start costing the City additional money after a while. With the splashpad there will be additional operating cost and asked Council to take that into consideration on their decision as to whether the City can afford it.

**** The motion *passed* unanimously, 7-0**

BID OPENINGS

2020 4-Wheel Drive Loader

The City received 2 bids. They were as follows:

- Tri State- \$199,707.01 with a \$70,000 buy back. Bond was submitted and will take 120-150 days for delivery
- RDO (John Deere)- \$192,000 with a \$100,300 buy back. Bond was submitted and will take 90 days for delivery

**** Councilperson Lott moved to refer the bids to the Finance Committee for review, seconded by Councilperson Wilcox. The motion *passed* unanimously 7-0**

BID AWARDS

None

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

A. Interview of Council Applications, and Nomination and Approval of New Council Member

The City received one letter of interest from Stacy Broell, 906 North 3rd Street, Miles City Montana.

Mayor Hollowell opened the floor to the Council for interviewing questions.

Councilperson Andrews asked why she was interested in the position. Applicant Broell said she believed that she could bring a lot to the table. Her background is accounting business and finance and she was aware of some projects concerning the City. She had been an auditor for years and thought her background would be beneficial to the City.

Mayor Hollowell asked with her background being accounting and finance, is that from a degree and/or experience? Applicant Broell said she had a bachelors in accounting/finance, a minor in business management. She had eleven years' experience in accounting, auditing and finance with her most recent experience at Stockman Bank. She added that she comes from a family that had their own business.

Councilperson Gardener expressed to be true to herself. She may be the lone wolf at times and needed to stick to her guns. He asked if she had attended any Council meetings in the past? She said she had attended meetings in Glendive.

Councilperson Wilcox said the position means that she would need to commit her time to other committees beside Council. She asked if she was comfortable with committing time to the City? Applicant Broell answered yes and she was aware of it.

****** *Councilperson Andrews moved to nominate Stacy Broell, and seconded by Councilperson Gardner. On roll call vote, the motion **passed** by unanimous consent, 7-0.*

****** *Councilperson Patten moved to approve Stacy Broell, and seconded by Councilperson Andrews. On roll call vote, the motion **passed** by unanimous consent, 7-0.*

B. RESOLUTION NO. 4380- A Resolution Authorizing the City of Miles City to Enter Into an Agreement Entitled "Interlocal Agreement for Creating Montana Firefighters Testing Consortium- Amended and Restated" With Certain Cities and Fire Districts in the State of Montana

****** *Councilperson Lott moved to approve the Resolution, read by title only and seconded by Councilperson Gardner. After a brief conversation, on roll call vote, the motion **passed** by unanimous consent, 7-0. **Resolution No. 4380 passed.***

C. RESOLUTION NO. 4381- A Resolution Authorizing the City of Miles City to Enter Into an Engagement Agreement With Parker, Heitz and Cosgrove, PLLC, for Floodplain Related Legal Services

****** *Councilperson Wilcox moved to approve the Resolution, read by title only and seconded by Councilperson Gardner. On roll call vote, the motion **passed** by unanimous consent, 7-0. **Resolution No. 4381 passed.***

D. Approval of New Building for MCPD

****** *Councilperson Andrews moved to approve, and seconded by Councilperson Lott.*

Councilperson Andrews said it was important to move on the issue at this time. He thought the TLC building was move in ready, but would like to renovate some. The City has an option to buy or lease.

Councilperson Lott was concerned on the cost of the TLC building. He asked Architect Janshen what his estimate was for the renovation of the building.

Architect Janshen gave a ballpark figure of \$100 per square foot on the main floor and \$50 per square foot in the basement. There was approximately 2500 square feet on the main floor and the same square feet on the second floor. He said he had not written up an estimate for the renovation, because he needed to meet with the Police

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Chief and get a list of their needs. In the end the bare bones will be assessed. The building does have a working elevator and some ADA upgrades are needed. All in all, the building as is had potentially everything the Police needed. He thought it would be \$500,000 to \$750,000 for everything and that is estimated high. The cost would be much less if the City decided to not renovate the basement right away. He thought the basement was going to be used for mostly storage.

Councilperson Lott thought that there was not enough information on the cost of the building or renovation of the building. It could possibly cost \$350,000 to \$500,000. There are other locations that he would like the City to investigate; Those were building on city land by our Fish Wildlife and Parks building or renovating the basement in City Hall.

Councilperson Wilcox expressed the urgency of finding a building for the police department to move into. She said they have less than six months before they have to move out, winter is coming and the City had already lost a lot of buildings because it is not reacting fast enough. In Captain Baker's email, it was stated that it would take 6.5 years to pay the building off, if the amount that the City pays for rent now is applied to a loan payment.

Councilperson Gardner was impressed with the TLC building and thought the Council needed to make a decision.

Councilperson Huber appreciated the committee for all their efforts that have gone into the issue. He felt a lot of time had gone by and felt the City needed to buy the building, because the square footage meets the needs of the department. He wondered if the owner of the TLC building would work with the City on the purchase price. He brought up building a building where the tennis courts are in Riverside Park. Combining the cost of \$100 per square foot on both floors which would be \$500,000 and the purchase price of \$249,000, he thought was high.

Administrator Malenovsky said in the future, the plan is to build the levy in the area by the tennis courts. She also reported that the TLC building is in the flood plain and would need flood proofing. The City would need to watch the money spent on the renovation because as of now you can only renovate half of the appraisal for the building. This would renew every year, so the next year it would be appraised with the renovations added.

Architect Janshen said it would cost \$100 per square foot for the main floor and \$50 per square foot for the basement. The cost would be much less if the City decided to not renovate the basement right away because it was going to be used for mostly storage. He thought it would be \$500,000 to \$750,000 for everything and that is estimated high.

*** Councilperson Wilcox moved to amend the main motion to give the Mayor authority to negotiate the purchase of the building, second by Councilperson Andrews.*

*** Councilperson Andrews moved to amend the amended motion to; Dan, Doug and the architect come up with a cost estimate on renovating the TLC building and give the Mayor permission to negotiate the purchase of the building, second by Councilperson Lott.*

Councilperson Kassner asked why the basement, garage and conference room in City Hall could not be used to get the Police department through the winter.

Architect Janshen said the Cadastral price for the TLC building was \$165,000 so a lesser amount could be applied to the renovation. He asked who for the City comes

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up with the appraisal value?

Attorney Rice explained that the assessed value is used to approve a building permit. When in doubt the appraisal value could be used to have a base to enlarge the improvement cost. He added that the lot value would need to be subtracted from the purchase value.

Administrator Malenovsky explained that the Cadastral is always lower and used a lot because it was free. Appraisals are higher, but there are multiple ways to receive this information. She could use the highest value to get the 50 percent allowed.

Chief Colombik thought the building would work for the department. The parking is tight, but thought the outside deck and staircase could be torn down, which would give them more parking space. He was not sure how the school would like it when a patrol car responded to an emergency call and ended up driving 30-40 miles per hour on the street right beside them. Also, the railroad tracks are a block away, which could be a problem.

Resident Robert Martelle, 17 South Stacy, thought the area for parking was not big enough and would cause congestion in the area. He stated that he sees a lot of the police vehicles parked at Wibaux Park, next to "Wibaux Park Only" signs. He could only imagine the neighborhood with a 150' frontage that belonged to the building. He wondered why the City wanted to spend three quarters of a million dollars and in five to ten years, put it back on the market. He also spoke of the additional cost for utilities that would need to be paid.

Councilperson Gardner said that with all the buildings the City has looked at there is always something wrong. Also, all of them have been in the floodplain. So, if the City found property out of the floodplain, then the location would not be central to Miles City. He added that the TLC building has a street that runs North and South, so they would not have to use the street in the school zone.

Director Gray suggested buying the Lynam property and build a police department there. The cost would be comparable to what the City will spend to buy and renovate the TLC building. Also, he confirmed that there is approximately 40 feet of land by the FW&P building that a building could be built.

Architect Janshen said he did not know how the price had gotten to such a high dollar amount, so he reviewed his finding again. He said the building does meet the City's immediate needs. It had a working elevator; new roof and some ADA upgrades are needed. All in all, the building as is had potentially everything the Police needed. He thought it would be \$500,000 to \$750,000 for everything and that is estimated high. The cost would be much less if the City decided to not renovate the basement right away. He thought the basement was going to be used for mostly storage.

*** On roll call vote, the amended, amended motion (Dan, Doug and the architect come up with a cost estimate on renovating the TLC building and give the Mayor permission to negotiate the purchase of the building), passed by unanimous consent, 7-0.*

E. Approve Deceased Write-off's in the Amount of \$171.25 from Ambulance Fund

*** Councilperson Gardner moved to approve the write off's, and seconded by Councilperson Andrews. The motion **passed** by unanimous consent, 7-0.*

F. Approval to Accept the CARES ACT Dollars Received

****** *Councilperson Patten moved to approve accepting the CARES Act revenue, and seconded by Councilperson Lott. The motion **passed** by unanimous consent, 7-0.*

G. Approval to Purchase a Conferencing System

****** *Councilperson Patten moved to approve purchasing a conferencing system and seconded by Councilperson Gardner.*

Director Speelmon explained the system he chose was for a medium size conference room. A computer and television would need to be purchased separately for a total of \$3,400. There could possibly be an additional cost for an extra plug in.

****** *The motion **passed** by unanimous consent, 7-0.*

H. Approval on Proceeding with a Park District

****** *Councilperson Lott moved to approve proceeding with a park district and seconded by Councilperson Andrews.*

The following was discussed:

- If the Park District is protested by 10 percent of the citizens, then it would have to go to the voters
- A lot of improvements could happen; Finish building Stacey Fountain, sidewalks at Wibaux Park, restrooms at Maurice Hilleman complex, Jaycee Park and Bender/Soccer Park, fall zone protection on playgrounds and cutting trees where needed
- If the City had a Park District, more grants would be available geared towards outdoor projects. It opens doors for more money for the community
- The City would proceed with just taxing City residents, if the County Commissioners decided at a later date to join, that could easily be done
- A Parks District board would probably be needed for planning, prioritizing, etcetera.
- There is a three-step process: Resolutions would be needed for Intention to Create the District, Creating the District and Approving the District
- Before the process could start, the City would need a boundary map for the District

Resident Robert Martelle, 17 South Stacy, explained that many years ago the City created maintenance districts to relieve expenses from General Fund. The assessments for the maintenance districts include wages. He explained that the maintenance and lighting assessments are twice as much as his property taxes. He did not feel that was right. He would like the City to work on the flood control issue because it would make the City safer and property value would increase. Which would mean citizens could fix up their properties without the limitations that are in the City ordinances now. He felt that was better than a park district.

****** *The motion **passed** by unanimous consent, 7-0.*

I. Approval on Paying the Expenses Associated with Architect Cost for the Police Buildings

****** *Councilperson Wilcox moved to approve paying for the expenses associated with architect cost for the police building, and seconded by Councilperson Lott. The motion **passed** by unanimous consent, 7-0.*

J. Approval on a 4% Wage Increase to the Public Works Director Position

****** *Councilperson Patten moved to approve a 4% increase to the Public Works Director position and seconded by Councilperson Lott.*

Councilperson Wilcox explained that the wage increase was referred to the Finance committee with a 1-2 percent increase suggested. She said the Finance committee would not support large increases at budget time for fiscal year 20-21 and asked what had changed since the meeting in August.

Councilperson Lott said the Finance committee considered the increases as presented in the request. Personally, at this point, he felt the 4% increase should be reviewed again.

Director Gray explained that he received an email from Human Resource stating that wage increase request were due April 1st, which he completed and submitted on March 13, 2020. The request went to Human Resource committee two or three times. The last time was because current evaluations were not completed. Once that was done in August, the request went back to Human Resource committee again in October, and then referred to the Finance Committee. He said within the last three years the cost of living totaled 6 percent and he felt that asking for a 4 percent increase was not a lot. He felt the budget was fine because of a cost saving in vacancy savings and said the City needed to reward their employees.

Councilperson Patten said that all three of the requests were talked about a lot at the Finance meeting. She felt the requests were not out of hand according to the cost of living increases each year. She added that the employees that were represented by unions receive increases and felt the three non-union employees should get something because she would like them to stay working for the City. If the City wants good people to stay with the City then it has to pay them wages that are comparable to other Cities that are our size. Council should take into consideration, that the three employees requesting increases had submitted their request on time.

Councilperson Wilcox talked about a new policy that was in process right now. It would update the way the City gives wage increases to non-union employees. It is based on a matrix that would help meet the wages to be at full amount. She would like to see the three that submitted the request get a smaller amount and let the Human Resource Committee finalize the new policy. There was still a lot to figure out, and wanted to implement it by early 2021.

Mayor Hollowell thought the 1-2 percent increase that was recommended by Human Resource Committee, should apply to all three employees that are requesting wage increases. He felt the Finance Committee responded to what the employees asked for. The increases that are up for approval will be paid out of temporary money, and he felt the City needed to prepare for future cost. He recommended to lower the amount and be consistent in the amount of the increase for everyone involved.

Councilperson Gardner agreed with Councilperson Wilcox on the 2 percent increase. He did not think the City should compare its wages with Cities in the western part of the State, or Williston North Dakota.

Councilperson Huber said taxes would be raised, throw in the districts, police department and fire hall, there is a lot to deal with.

Director Gray explained that he works with millions of dollars in the maintenance districts and tries not to over budget. He is proactive with the taxes, but if the citizens want good infrastructure they need to pay for it. He said when he was interviewed for

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his position, he was asked what he could do for the City. His answer was to get things done, and he felt that he has gotten things done since he has been in the position.

There was a long discussion on how the matrix scale would work.

- **** *Councilperson Wilcox moved to amend the main motion to approve a 2% Increase to the Public Works Director position; retroactive to July 1, 2020, and seconded by Councilperson Kassner*

Councilperson Patten said the City needs to look at working with Director Gray. She did not think \$500 for an annual increase was asking a lot. The City needed to follow through with the matrix as discussed and keep directors informed.

Councilperson Lott explained that with or without the increase, the City will be cutting services in fiscal year 2021-2022. He did not know what those services would be, but the financial situation is not in a good spot. He felt it was the Council responsibility to make it right. He did not agree when Council approved the wage increases for union employees, because it unbalanced the fiscal year budget.

- **** *The amended motion **passed** 6-1, with Councilperson Patten voting no*

- **** *The amended main motion **passed** by unanimous consent, 7-0.*

K. Approval on a \$2.00 Wage Increase to the Floodplain Administrator/Auto Cad/Assistant PWPU Position

- **** *Councilperson Lott moved to approve a \$2.00 per hour wage increase to the Floodplain Administrator/Auto Cad/Assistant PWPU position and seconded by Councilperson Wilcox.*

- **** *Councilperson Wilcox moved to amend the main motion to approve a 2% Increase to the Floodplain Administrator/Auto Cad/Assistant PWPU Position; retroactive to July 1, 2020, and seconded by Councilperson Gardner*

Mayor Hollowell said that his comments made earlier, applied to all three positions.

Administrator Malenovsky explained that she had everything submitted well before the deadline or before budget began. Comparing her wages to the 2017 survey her position is still below that, and the \$2.00 increase would bring her pretty close to it. The \$2,000 out of General Fund included wages and benefits. Every year her budget comes in underbudget at fiscal year-end, so she felt she could find the money to cover the expense.

Councilperson Wilcox said she appreciated the input. She felt Council needed to approve an increase that was at the same level as the other request.

- **** *The amended motion **passed** unanimously 7-0*

- **** *The amended main motion **passed** by unanimous consent, 7-0*

L. Approval on Increasing Wages for the Police Chief Position From \$5,602.00 to \$6,341.84 a month

- **** *Councilperson Patten moved to approve increasing wages for the police chief position from \$5,602 to \$6,342.84 a month and seconded by Councilperson Andrews.*

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- ** Councilperson Wilcox moved to amend the main motion to approve a 2% increase to the Police Chief position; retroactive to July 1, 2020, and seconded by Councilperson Gardner.**

Chief Colombik thanked everyone for the conversation. He explained that his position is 13 percent below the average. If there is no wage increase he figured in 2-3 years it would be 20 percent below the average. He had asked the Finance committee to set up a 2-3-year contract to increase his wages, but that did not happen. He thought the City needs to take responsibility for the Directors and the experience they have, especially in law enforcement and what is going on right now in our Country. He clarified that his request would take the position to an average amount pay, not at the maximum.

- ** The amended motion *passed* unanimously 6-1. Councilperson Patten voting no**

Councilperson Patten said that the two percent bring the wage up to \$5,714 a month, which is laughable when you compare it to the \$6,342 a month, and felt it was not honoring what he asked for.

- ** The amended main motion *passed* by unanimous consent, 7-0.**

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:59 p.m.


John Hollowell, Mayor


Lorrie Pearce, City Clerk