

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING January 12, 2021**

**6:00 p.m.**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Regular Council meeting was held Tuesday, January 12, 2021, in the City Hall Conference Room at City Hall, 17 S. 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Miles City, Montana and via Zoom.us. Mayor John Hollowell called the meeting to order. Council Members present were Brant Kassner, Dwayne Andrews, Ken Gardner, Elizabeth Patten, Rick Huber, Austin Lott, Kathy Wilcox and Stacy Broell.

Also present were City Attorney Dan Rice, Public Works Director Scott Gray, Police Chief Doug Colombik, Fire Chief Branden Stevens, Planner in Training Ally Capps, Public Utilities Director Tom Speelmon and City Clerk/Minute Recorder Mary Rowe.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Hollowell led the Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF COUNCIL & COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**City Council Minutes: 12/22/2020**

\*\* *Councilperson Gardner moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of December 22, 2020, subject to any changes, and seconded by Councilperson Kassner.*

Councilperson Lott requested corrections of “estate” to “abatement” on page two of five and a correction of “heating issues” to “heaving issues” on page three of five.

\*\* *The motion passed by unanimous consent, 8-0.*

**Public Safety Committee Minutes: 12/15/2020**

**Public Safety Committee Meeting  
December 15, 2020**

The Public Safety Committee met Tuesday, December 15, 2020, at 6:00 pm via Zoom Conferencing in the Conference Room at City Hall, 17 S. 8th. Present were Committee Members Ken Gardner, Elizabeth Patten and Austin Lott. Excused was Committee Member Kathy Wilcox. Also present were: Police Chief Doug Colombik, Fire Captain Jake Richards, City Planner Ally Capps, Public Utilities, Fire Chief Branden Stevens, Firefighter Grant Lean, and HR Officer/Recorder Linda Wilkins.

Chairperson Lott called the meeting to order.

**1. Request of Citizens**

Fire Chief Stevens updated the Committee on the status of Fire Department facilities and equipment. Should the current call volume continue, a staff of 19 FTE's would be required to keep up. The department is continuing to look at wildland assessments. Tower 19 is a 1993 model is coming upon being 30 years old, a maintenance company will be coming to look at the tower in the near future. The fire station is having draining, electrical, and plumbing issues. A safety audit was recently conducted and a plan will be put together to address these issues.

**2. Committee Member Comments**

None

**3. Review and Recommendation regarding short, mid and long-term goals for the Woolhouse Building.**

Committee Chairperson Lott, Captain Dan Baker and Chief Colombik have met with Architect Brandon Janshen. Architect Janshen has provided preliminary drawings, which will be included as part of these minutes. The building purchase

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price is \$263,000. A base flood elevation study will be done. The building will require fire sprinklers, gutting, and remodel for offices and evidence storage; all remodel will be in accordance with ADA. The remodel costs are estimated at \$600,000. Total project cost would be \$1.1 million dollars, including furniture. Phase I of the project would include providing temporary housing for the police department in the rear of the building, while the building project is progressing. This area could provide office space of 2,200 square feet for a possible tenant in the future such as Montana Probation and Parole. Chairperson Lott would like the following items started: 1) Base Flood Elevation Report 2) Obtain a quote for hazardous material assessment in preparation for an abatement plan. Chairperson Lott stated that Bruce Ingraham said the assessment would be approximately \$5,000. Committee Member Patten suggested Planner Capps contact the Brownsfield Coalition for funding, they have been looking for a project in SE Montana. Phase II will start on the east end of the building. Phase III other options for the building, i.e. dispatch, fire department.

\*\* *Committee Member Lott moved to recommend to Council 1) overall budget of \$1.1 million, 2) approve a hazmat assessment contingent on either Brownsfield Coalition or Bruce Ingraham, 3) approval of a flood study, and 4) demolition and rapid remodel for short-term occupancy, if required. All contingent on purchase of the building, seconded by Committee Member Gardner. On roll call vote the motion passed unanimously, 3-0.*

**4. Adjournment**

\*\* *Committee Member Patten moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Committee Member Gardner and passed unanimously, 3-0.*

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

\*\* *Councilperson Lott moved to approve the minutes of the Public Safety Committee Meeting of December 15, 2020 subject to any changes, and seconded by Councilperson Gardner.*

Councilperson Patten requested a correction to the remodel costs from \$900,000 to \$600,000.

\*\* *The motion passed by unanimous consent, 8-0.*

**SCHEDULE MEETINGS**

*The following meetings will be held in the City Hall Conference Room:*

- City/County Meeting @ 11AM on 01/19/21

**REQUEST OF CITIZENS & PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**APPOINTMENTS**

**Mayor Hollowell called to Elect Council President:**

\*\* *Councilperson Kassner nominated Councilperson Lott, and seconded by Councilperson Gardner.*

*As there were no other nominations, Mayor Hollowell closed nominations.*

Councilperson Lott stated that he will do his best to step in when needed and address everything fairly while representing the City.

Dawn Bolejack-Leidholt, 1112 Main Street, stated that it is a good nomination.

\*\* *On roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously, 8-0.*

# PROCEEDING OF CITY COUNCIL

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## **Standing Committees:**

Finance Committee- Austin Lott, Brant Kassner, Stacy Broell, and Elizabeth Patten  
Public Safety Committee- Austin Lott, Ken Gardner, Kathy Wilcox, and Elizabeth Patten

Public Service Committee- Dwayne Andrews, Rick Huber, Kathy Wilcox, and Ken Gardner

Human Resource Committee- Kathy Wilcox, Rick Huber, Stacy Broell, Dwayne Andrews

Flood Control Committee- Ken Gardner, Brant Kassner, Austin Lott, and Elizabeth Patten

\*\* *Councilperson Broell moved to approve the Standing Committees as presented and seconded by Councilperson Kassner, on roll call vote the motion passed unanimously, 8-0.*

## **Non-Standing Committees:**

Local 600/Labor- Mayor Hollowell and Dwayne Andrews  
Councilperson Huber volunteered to be on the Committee and Councilperson Andrews volunteered to drop from the Committee.

\*\* *Councilperson Lott moved to approve the Local 600/Labor Committee members, seconded by Councilperson Gardner and passed unanimously, 8-0.*

Health Board –

Councilperson Patten volunteered to be on the Health Board.

\*\* *Councilperson Broell moved to approve the Health Board member, seconded by Councilperson Huber and passed unanimously, 8-0.*

## **PROCLAMATIONS**

None

## **STAFF REPORTS**

Chief Colombik handed out 2020 statistics comparing last year to current year, stating that Covid-19 impacted calls this year and online crimes are increasing rapidly.

Chief Stevens reported on staffing, overtime, and equipment. Helena is donating a minivan to the Fire Department for Fire Inspectors.

## **CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Councilperson Lott wanted to thank the Miles City Police Department, namely Officers Fetty and DeVault, for finding and recovering one of the four wheelers that was stolen from Transco.

Councilperson Patten read the following letter and recommended looking at the current policy:

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## MILES CITY, MONTANA

*Based on comments brought to me by citizens of Miles City, and my own thoughts prior to and after the Council meeting of 11/24/2020, I think that as we move forward as a city, we need to look at our hiring policy. I think it would be in our best interest to have all positions in the city be open for a competitive application process. People who are already city employees would be welcomed and encouraged to apply for higher level positions or positions in other departments, and the application of a current city employee could potentially be weighted as compared to the application from a non-city employee. I think we do ourselves a disservice on many levels by not having competitive applications for all positions.*

If the city is going to hire an architect, there is an RFQ process. If the city is going to buy a new piece of equipment, there is a competitive bid process. If we are hiring new employee, I believe we should have a broader scope of considered applications.

This allows the person who is hired to the position to know that they went through a competitive application process and received the job offer because they were best qualified for the position. This allows Council to be able to tell the public that after a competitive application process, the person hired best met the qualifications for the position. I would like to recommend to the HR committee that the Recruitment and Selection policy, Resolution #4109, is revisited and revised. I would also like to recommend that this is done in the near future, while there is not an open job, so the conversation and revisions can be done when there is not a particular person who is an internal applicant for a particular position.

Councilperson Wilcox stated that the Human Resources Committee could prepare a draft policy if there were enough interest from other Council Members; Councilperson Andrews gave 100% support and Councilperson Lott said he would like to have the conversation. She will present it to the Human Resource Committee.

Mayor Hollowell stated that if we have an internal applicant that meets the qualifications, has knowledge of the department, and have put in the time, it is not a guarantee, but he would like to reward that applicant.

### MAYOR COMMENTS

Received an email from Patrick Tivnin from the VA, saying that all occupants will need to relocate from the VA building in second quarter of 2021.

### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

None

### BID OPENINGS

None

### BID AWARDS

None

### PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

#### **A. Final Approval to Close on Purchase of Woolhouse Gallery for Police Building**

\*\* *Councilperson Patten moved to approve closing on purchase of Woolhouse Gallery, seconded by Councilperson Andrews.*

Mayor Hollowell informed the Council that the results of the flood fringe came back and the Woolhouse is in the flood fringe, but the main floor level is above base flood elevation plus two, so the City is good there. He and the state believe that the basement can be flood proofed by filling a couple windows then it will be usable space, but still waiting for Federal response. Mark Ingraham will be expediting the asbestos check, which will be approximately a two week wait period if they had to do any mitigation.

Councilperson Gardner read a text message from Mark Ingraham stating that he has already done a walk through of the Woolhouse. If samples are taken and a rush is put

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on it, the assessment could be done in a week. If there is asbestos, a permit from Department of Environmental Quality would be needed and that could be another couple of weeks.

Austin Lott explained that all of these costs are included in the approved budget of \$1.1 million dollars. Once the inspections are complete, we will have a better process for remodel/internal location.

Councilperson Broell inquired about the square footage of the finished area that will be used and stated that it is costing about \$79 per square foot of finished product.

Ruth Kuchynka, 618 N 5<sup>th</sup>, suggested that a notice be put out to the public stating that there are available funds to cover a large portion of the costs, because she does not believe this is common knowledge.

Councilperson Patten brought up that the Police Department is currently paying monthly rent to the VA, so that will be money to put towards the purchase costs. Chief Colombik stated that it is about \$3100 per month to the VA.

\*\* On roll call vote, the motion *passed* by unanimous consent, 8-0.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. RESOLUTION NO. 4386- A Resolution Authorizing Certain Officers of the City of Miles City as Signatories Upon Bank Accounts of the City of Miles City at Stockman Bank**

\*\* Councilperson Lott moved to approve the Resolution, read by title only and seconded by Councilperson Gardner. On roll call vote, the motion *passed* unanimously, 8-0.

**B. Approval to apply for CLG Program Grant Application for \$6000 to fund the Historical Preservation Officer from April 1, 2021 through March 31, 2022**

\*\* Councilperson Patten moved to approve the CLG Program Grant Application, and seconded by Councilperson Lott. On roll call vote, the motion *passed* unanimously, 8-0.

**C. Approval of December Claims**

\*\* Councilperson Lott moved to approve December Claims, and seconded by Councilperson Huber. On roll call vote, the motion *passed* unanimously, 8-0.

**ADJOURNMENT**

\*\* Councilperson Huber moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilperson Kassner and passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:12p.m.

  
John Hollowell, Mayor

  
Mary Rowe, City Clerk