

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING January 26, 2021  
6:00 p.m.**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Regular Council meeting was held Tuesday, January 26, 2021, in the City Hall Conference Room at City Hall, 17 S. 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Miles City, Montana and online at zoom.us. Council President Austin Lott called the meeting to order. Council Members present were Brant Kassner, Dwayne Andrews, Ken Gardner, Elizabeth Patten, Rick Huber, Austin Lott, Kathy Wilcox and Stacey 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 Speelman and City Clerk/Minute Recorder Mary Rowe.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Council President Austin Lott led the Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF COUNCIL & COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**City Council Minutes: 1/12/2021**

\*\* *Councilperson Kassner moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of January 12, 2021, subject to any changes, and seconded by Councilperson Huber. The motion passed by unanimous consent, 8-0.*

**SCHEDULE MEETINGS**

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

Human Resources Committee 02/02/2021 @ 4:15p.m.  
Public Safety Committee 02/02/2021 @ 6:00p.m.

**REQUEST OF CITIZENS & PUBLIC COMMENT**

Jim Atchison, Southeastern Montana Development Corporation (SEMDC), presented a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) which displayed a 2020 community survey recap for Miles City. SEMDC present trends in communities, justify budget decisions, help with Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) and assist with growth plans. They are constantly adjusting and prioritizing to meet the needs of Montana communities.

**APPOINTMENTS**

None

**PROCLAMATIONS**

None

**STAFF REPORTS**

Chief Stevens handed out Fire Department statistics highlighting call volume, staffing and equipment issues, and the critical condition of the fire department building.

Planner in Training Capps explained that the façade grant is being extended and presented the committee with the program application that she is intending to hand out to local businesses. She stated that there is \$8,000 in funding available.

**CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Councilperson Huber stated that Animal Control Officer Mark Winkley gave him a tour of the animal shelter and went over future plans with him. They went on a two-hour ride along and pointed out that Mark is very professional and cares about his work with the City. He encouraged other Council members to do the same. Councilperson Huber then presented Council with a handout titled “Colstrip

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Rediscovered” which highlight four different counties in Montana, as a follow-up to Jim Atchison’s presentation.

Councilperson Wilcox spoke about a recent Public Safety meeting where Chief Stevens informed them of the major windstorm that occurred in Miles City and the damage that was done to the Fire Department during that time. She suggested that Council look into using the “Woolhouse” for the Police and Fire Department’s safety building, with a focus on a staff safe area.

Councilperson Gardner wanted to give recognition to the hospital and Chief Stevens for their professionalism.

**MAYOR COMMENTS**

None

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

None

**BID OPENINGS**

None

**BID AWARDS**

None

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

None

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. RESOLUTION NO. 4387 - A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING CITY OF MILES CITY PERSONNEL POLICIES REGARDING NON-UNION STAFF COST OF LIVING INCREASES**

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

Councilperson Wilcox explained that this is a “clean-up” approach to staff wage increases and a way to plan ahead for the next fiscal year. The cost of living increase was not on track for non-union department heads and was only granted when the budget could tolerate it. This wage matrix would follow the state recommended amounts and will follow the proper process starting in March or April and go to Finance Committee in June during the draft budget. She also stated that the step increases would go out twenty years and be based on performance evaluations. It is believed that this wage matrix would assist with retention of good staff. It was also noted that the increases are not guaranteed and would only occur if budget allowed.

Union wages negotiations and step increase versus employee performance were briefly discussed.

\*\* On roll call vote, the motion passed by unanimous consent, 8-0.  
Resolution No. 4387 passed.

**B. RESOLUTION NO. 4388 - A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF MILES CITY TO ENTER INTO AN INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT WITH CUSTER COUNTY FOR FISCAL YEARS 2020-2021 AND 2021-2022.**

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

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Councilperson Wilcox suggested that Animal Control fees in the Interlocal agreement need to be revisited. She also stated that Animal Control Officer Mark Winkley is looking into it.

Councilperson Huber stated that he would prefer the Interlocal Agreement expire annually. He asked Chief Stevens his thoughts on if \$130 was covering the cost of ambulance services, to which the Chief responded that he believes it to be low.

It was suggested by the majority of Council that the fees be discussed in a Public Safety Meeting.

\*\* Councilperson Wilcox moved to postpone, seconded by Councilperson Kassner and passed unanimously, 8-0.

**ADJOURNMENT**

\*\* Councilperson Kassner moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilperson Wilcox and passed unanimously, 8-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:51p.m.



Austin Lott, Council President



Mary Rowe, City Clerk