

## **Public Safety Committee Meeting April 22, 2021**

The Public Safety Committee met Thursday, April 22, 2021, at 6:00 pm via live attendance and Zoom Conferencing in the City Hall Conference Room, 17 S. 8th. Present were Committee Members Elizabeth Patten, Kathy Wilcox, and Ken Gardner. Also present were: Fire Chief Branden Stevens, Animal Control Officer Mark Winkley, Council Member Rick Huber, Council Member Dwayne Andrews, Custer County Fund for Animals Members – Cindy Conley, Kathryn Kellogg, Tracy Schwarzkopf, Kaitlyn Perkins, Dispatch Supervisor Lyne Anderson, Public Works, Police Chief Doug Colombik, Director Scott Gray and HR Officer/Recorder Linda Wilkins.

Chairperson Patten called the meeting to order.

### **1. Request of Citizens for Public Comment**

Custer County Fund for Animals thanked and recognized Officer Winkley for his work with animals.

### **2. Staff Comments**

Chief Stevens reported that call volume is up, the department is taking a record number of transfers which consequentially adds mileage to the ambulances. Tower 19 is out of service, there is concern over the stability of the ladder, which hopefully can be repaired. Custer County Fire Chief Peterson has requested the City to respond to County calls during the day, apparently there has been issue with response by the County volunteer firefighter. The interlocal agreement was discussed regarding an adjustment to charges for services provided by the City. He has discussed with the Montana Legislative Budget Chair regarding funding related to the issues with the department building. The City is ahead of the game because there is a Preliminary Architectural Report (PAR). A mold assessment report has been received and will be forwarded to the Public Safety Committee. The ridge cap on the roof has been repaired and replaced.

### **3. Committee Member Comments**

Chairperson Patten stated that beginning July 1 Miles City and Sidney will become dispatch cities for prevailing wages which will help bring construction costs down.

### **4. Discussion and Recommendation regarding pigeon abatement**

Officer Winkley stated the epicenter of the pigeon population is in the 300, 400 and 500 blocks of Main Street, the old Farmers Union Building and the BN Depot; he had done some research on options:

1. There an individual out of Billing who traps, shots and disposes of pigeons out of Billings.
2. There is an individual who traps pigeons to use for dog training.

He had left a message for the Mayor and was waiting for his response. Chairperson Patten stated she would speak with the Mayor. Committee Member Wilcox suggested doing both options.

### **5. Discussion and Recommendation of the Animal Ordinance regarding cats**

Officer Winkley state there is currently no limit on the number of cats that can be owned by a household, currently three (3) dogs are allowed per household. There was discussion on the number of cats allowed per household ranging from 6 to 3. It was also discussed addressing the time frame for fostering or rescuing cats in a household beyond the number of cats allowed to be owned per household. A question arose regarding licensing cats, Officer Winkley will check and see if the current ordinance requires cats to be licensed. Committee Member

Wilcox appreciates the amount of time dedicated to the enforcement of the current ordinance and suggested a draft be prepared for the next meeting addressing licensing and the number of cats per residence. Members of the community are also trapping cats which also needs to be addressed. Officer Winkley stated he would do research regarding the number of cats' other city's allow per residence and licensing. Chairperson Patten stated trapping also needs to be addressed.

**6. Update on if Prairie County will join Southeastern Montana Dispatch, potential timeline, and what this will look like for future staffing**

Supervisor Anderson received notification Tuesday that Prairie County will be joining dispatch on July 1, 2021. There is a lot of transition work to be done. She would like to have two (2) additional dispatchers added, but one (1) by July 1. There will be an additional \$100,000 of revenue for dispatch taking on Prairie County.

**7. Discussion and Recommendation regarding new Truck Route**

Chairperson Patten stated that the change in the route would alleviate large numbers of trucks passing through town and use the Interstate as much as possible for truck traffic. Director Gray stated there is a large volume of truck traffic routing through town going north to hauling wind farm construction material and road construction trucks for the change to the highway going north. The route through the City will use Pacific Avenue instead of Bridge Street. The Montana Department of Transportation (MTDOT) has placed signage up to direct truck traffic down Garryowen Road to Pacific. The redefinition of the truck route will also alleviate truck traffic past the high school and residential areas, sharp turns that have often knocked fire hydrants down. The City will need to pass a new truck ordinance with routing directions. New signage will be placed for the truck route in town and start the process for funding from MTDOT.

*\*\*Committee Member Patten moved to recommend and proceed with the Ordinance for the new truck route, seconded by Committee Member Wilcox.*

Committee Member Gardner commented he like the new route.

*\*\*The motion passed unanimously, 3-0.*

**8. Update on MCPD remodel timeline**

Hardy Construction was here on Tuesday at 1:00 p.m. they were advised the City would not be able to provide staff or exterior demolition; Hardy will be providing a budget for interior and exterior demolition. The architectural plans are being worked on, the mechanical engineers report will be out at the end of April. The fire sprinkler system is out for bid.

**9. Adjournment**

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

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Chairperson Elizabeth Patten

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Recorder Linda Wilkins