

City Council Meeting
April 8, 2025

Present: Mayor John Williams, Councilmembers Greg Koczur, Jack Rosander, Wayne Dudley and Rose Hanser

Also Present: City Judge Penny McPherson, Police Chief Cory Hert, Fire Chief Tony Reda, Public Works Director Pat Zent, Planning/Zoning/Code Official Kami Egan, City Clerk/Treasurer Michelle Richards and City Attorney Michelle Sullivan

Mayor Williams called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. City Clerk/Treasurer Richards completed Roll Call.

Consent Agenda:

Councilmember Dudley moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Councilmember Hanser seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion carried with all in favor.

- Minutes of 3/25/25 Regular Meeting
- Claims #31503-31559 \$238,248.18
- Payroll Summary 03/28/25 \$121,240.22

Department Reports:

Reports were presented by Police Chief Hert, Planning/Zoning/Code Official Egan, Fire Chief Reda, City Attorney Sullivan, Public Works Director Zent, Judge McPherson and City Clerk/Treasurer Richards.

Mayor's Communications:

The city's quarterly newsletter for Spring will be mailed out this week. Mayor Williams thanked everyone involved in putting the newsletter together.

Mayor Williams distributed copies of the Proclamation from President Trump exempting the Coal and Oil-Fired Electric Utility Steam Generating Units from the previously adopted national emission standards for two years. Copies of Executive Orders from President Trump in relation to coal and electricity were also distributed. Montana Governor Gianforte was at the White House with President Trump during the signing of the orders.

Mayor Williams encouraged City Council members to attend the annual Elected Officials Workshop in May organized by the MSU Local Government Center.

Public Hearing:

Mayor Williams opened the hearing at 7:15 pm regarding the transfer of a 2002 Pierce Fire Engine to the Treasure County Volunteer Fire Department. Jim Atchison spoke in favor of donating the truck. No other comments were received orally or in writing. Mayor Williams closed the hearing at 7:16 pm.

Public Comment & Participation:

Jason Fitzgerald, CD Architects, attended the meeting at the request of Councilmember Koczur. Councilmember Koczur asked Mr. Fitzgerald to explain the additional \$149,000 in architectural fees for the Business Innovation Center since nothing has been done yet and what the responsibility is of the architects. Mr. Fitzgerald explained the building had to be redesigned three times. The additional funding is for construction administration and will be tracked and billed hourly. The entire \$149,000 may not be expended. The fees from the original contract were expended and exhausted due to the extra work to revise the design, rebid the project and assist in obtaining grant funding. As for the responsibility for construction of the building, the contractor is responsible for construction.

Jim Atchison, Executive Director of Southeastern Montana Development Corporation (SEMDC), reported SEMDC, Duane Ankney and NorthWestern Energy will be hosting a public nuclear meeting on Friday, May 2nd. SEMDC will be requesting the city sponsor a grant application to update the Colstrip Economic Diversification Strategy.

Unfinished Business:

Councilmember Dudley moved to approve Resolution No.2025-R04, donating a 2002 Pierce Fire Engine to the Treasure County Fire Department. Councilmember Koczur seconded the motion. Discussion: Councilmember Rosander asked if a value of the truck had been determined. Fire Chief Reda estimates the value at \$60,000 - \$90,000. Councilmember Hanser feels it is great to help support other communities.

Public Comment: None.

Motion carried with all in favor.

New Business:

Councilmember Rosander moved to approve an Amended Plat for Lots 3G & Lot 3H, Block 7, Big Timber Subdivision. Councilmember Dudley seconded the motion.

Discussion: None.

Public Comment: None.

Motion carried with all in favor.

Councilmember Hanser moved to approve a Special Events Permit for the 1st Annual Mike Vera Poker Run and Car Show on July 12, 2025. Councilmember Dudley seconded the motion.

Discussion: Councilmember Rosander asked if the police department has been notified yet and commented neighboring property owners should be notified. Councilmember Hanser asked about liability insurance and clean-up responsibility. Councilmember Dudley asked if access to the post office will be blocked off. Mayor Williams suggested a map be submitted indicating the requested closure of streets.

Public Comment: George Blood, Montana President of Crazy Indians Brotherhood, addressed the council regarding their questions. Mr. Blood will be contacting the police and other departments as required. The organization does not have liability insurance. They will also take care of all clean-up and obtain porta potties. Access to the post office will not be blocked off. The event should be done by 10:00 pm. Proceeds from this event will be used to purchase backpacks full of school supplies for the children in Rosebud County and distributed in August.

Councilmember Hanser made a motion to amend that approval is contingent upon submission of a map to the Colstrip Police Department indicating what portion of the street and the time the street

will be closed. Councilmember Rosander asked who is going to make sure everything is submitted as required. Mayor Williams and Police Chief Hert will handle this.

Councilmember Dudley seconded the motion to amend.

Amendment motion carried with Councilmembers Dudley, Koczur and Hanser voting in favor and Councilmember Rosander voting against.

Main motion as amended carried with all in favor.

Councilmember Dudley moved to approve a Special Events Permit for the 2025 Colstrip Days Celebration June 25-29, 2025. Councilmember Koczur seconded the motion.

Discussion: None.

Public Comment: None.

Motion carried with all in favor.

Mayor Williams recessed the meeting at 7:48 pm. The meeting reconvened at 7:51 pm.

Councilmember Rosander moved to approve Task Order No. 45 with KLJ Engineering for paving at the Colstrip Cemetery at an amount not to exceed \$72,000. Councilmember Koczur seconded the motion.

Discussion: Councilmember Rosander would like to know how much it would cost for high-quality gravel versus pavement. He has been in a lot of cemeteries in eastern Montana and hasn't seen any paved except for national cemeteries. He is not necessarily against paving the cemetery but would like to know the cost of graveling. There are some taxpayers concerned about this. Mayor Williams stated this is included in the city's budget and feels the cemetery is deserving of a good appearance. City Council also already approved the cemetery plan submitted by the Cemetery Board. The city is considering submitting a grant application to the Montana Coal Board to assist in the cost. Councilmember Dudley commented he has talked to several city residents and there are some that are pretty passionate about asphalt going in other places other than the cemetery. The engineers will be requested to provide a cost comparison of gravel versus paving.

Public Comment: Dan Negethon, 6640 Browning Drive and chairman of the Cemetery Board, stated the board discussed gravel but chose to move forward with asphalt.

Councilmember Dudley moved to table a decision to obtain more information. Councilmember Koczur seconded the motion to table.

Motion carried with all in favor.

Councilmember Hanser moved to approve the proposal from Western States Electric for maintenance, cleaning and inspection of the Water Treatment Plant Control Center Panels.

Councilmember Rosander seconded the motion.

Discussion: None.

Public Comment: None.

Motion carried with all in favor.

Mayor Williams adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Michelle Richards, City Clerk/Treasurer