

City Council Work Session

5:30 PM
Council Chambers
February 2, 2015

ATTENDANCE:

Mayor/Council (please check) Hanel, Cromley, Yakawich, Cimmino, Pitman, McFadden, Bird, Swanson, McCall, Crouch, Brown

Agenda

TOPIC #1: Legislative Update

Ed Bartlett on phone, joined by Jani McCall and Tim Burton. Summary of activity in last several days. HB 5, split into several other bills. About the same number of bill draft requests and bills introduced at this time of session as in the last session. Healthy MT plan Medicade expansion won't get hearing until Republican's propose their versions. SB 157, revise property tax, Feb 4 hearing in Senate Tax; unknown impact on Billings finances. Arntzen bill on county islands and nuisances, SB 214 hearing last week, no proponents or opponents. HB 213 exemption on business equipment tax, increasing the exemption amount, no backfill for local governments but sponsor will accept amendment. Building dept reserve bill up for 2nd reading later this week. Crime lab satellite, concern over location in Billings. Jani McCall: local option update. no changes from last week, in sponsor's hands, must be transmitted by House by end of February. League and MACO asked to attend meeting with Sen Jones and Sen Brendan, exploring other ways besides HB 5 to finance infrastructure improvements, maybe tapping coal tax trust fund at \$25m/yr for 3 years. Complicated formula for distributing money.

Hanel: SB 103 costs?

Ed: presumptive illnesses for firefighters, no hearing scheduled, will have to include costs and if coverage would spread to other employees.

Pitman: LC 1355 public intoxication status?

Bird: LC 2098 crime lab – other locations? – politics of it?

Ed: several sites in Billings being discussed, could go to other city if we can't find an acceptable sites.

Yakawich: LC 1355 support by City. Status.

Brooks: public intoxication bill may not be needed, try other tools first. Need to check with law enforcement.

Yakawich: want to find out right away about law enforcement needs, support it if it's needed.

Bird: really important to pay attention to law enforcement, local effort underway, larger implications of criminalization; jail time, or sobering center? Proceed with caution.

Pitman: want the city to proceed if possible.

Brooks: officers and others will visit San Diego and find out how law is used.

Pitman: touch base with Sen. Kary so he knows what we're doing.

Cromley: past discussion was that public intoxication law not needed but use existing laws to divert people into treatment.

Cimmino: community innovations summit, see that we're sending people to San Diego, what are the benefits?

Tina: 3 day agenda/schedule to learn about SIP/HOT programs. Will need to ID funding sources.

- Public Comment: none

TOPIC #2: Park District 1 Three-Year Plan

Mike Whitaker: introduces park board members in the audience. Explains how priorities were identified. Recommendations overview. Council questions.

Bird: would like future work session item on baseball and city parks.

- Public Comment: Tom Zurbuchen: assessment exceeds \$2 million, was a big deal last year and Council instructed PRPL to reduce assessments to below \$2 million. Put 3 PMD1 personnel into the regular PRPL budget.
- Bird: explain 50% of assessment goes to personnel.
- Tom: started at \$180k/yr, at 5% increase per year, will soon be too high.
- Tina: will recalculate and report to Council about personnel cost projections.
- Greg Krueger: favor PMD1 work. City needs to invest in parks.
- Jeff Childress: Heights National baseball vice pres. Issue at Clevenger Park, not addressed by PMD1 spending. Parking lot is a mud pit, should be improved.
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TOPIC #3: SBURA Bond Payments

Pat Weber: presents info on supporting PD with TIF. Little benefits. Explains the SID bond retirement for King Ave East improvements by issuing TIF bond, terminate agreement with property owners (give up future reimbursement),

Bird: Miller Crossing properties included in the project?

Yakawich: Educate me about who saves money

Swanson: zoning? (HC) how much improved property? (20+/-).

Pitman: vacant lots? (11). Properties more likely to sell if SID is paid? (yes).

Yakawich: could TIF be used to improve intersection of SBB and King Ave East?

Cimmino: money could be used for public safety? (yes, but no more money available for public improvements in the districts).

- Public Comment: Tom Z.: when district created, people complained about "blight" determination. Should not use TIF to refund the SID, use it for the improvements that were promised when the district was created.
- Steve Zier, 5415 summerstone, on behalf of the SBBURD. SID adds about \$2/sq ft to land price. Knows that land prices have halted some deals. Public projects are being done.

- Kevin Nelson: city should pay developer \$3/ft after land develops. Reads a story about Minnesota city. Cities give away too much for Bass Pro Shop and Cabela's. Pathetic development agreement.
- Yakawich: explain the deal?
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TOPIC #4: Quarterly Updates

- BIRD – Patty Nordlund
- Downtown Billings Partnership – Greg Krueger
- South Billings Urban Renewal Association – Candi Millar, several upcoming capital projects.
- Budget – answer questions
- Initiatives – Tina Volek: bio for Bryan Peterson and course outline. Pitman 8-25-14, intend to initiate ZC to allow class 2 and 3 tow trucks as allowed home occupations. Cell phone use statistics: stop them? List of cell phone use sign locations.
- Cell Phone Statistics – answer questions
- Public Comment: Tom Zurbuchen: budget 2nd quarter report. Key to the city's future. Compare 1st and 2nd quarter reports. More people that city employs, spend less on payroll. Page _ budget – seasonal employees;
- Kevin Nelson: business incentives aren't fair, don't work, etc. political abuses occurring – benefits are being channeled to the board members.
- Floyd Martin: Neuman lane first project, but I already had curb, gutter and sidewalk. Did the street for the school.

TOPIC #5: Council Discussion

Bird: what guidance can Legal dept give to the Ethics Board? Do they need it from Council? Legal representation for Councilmembers and employees – received confusing advice, needs to be clarified for everyone.

Swanson: agree with CM Bird. Any precedence?

McFadden: if Ethics Board wants Council guidance, they can come to meeting and ask.

TOPIC #6: Public Comment on Items not on the Agenda

Joanne Brighton: want to plant a seed. 61-12-401 MCA about taking a vehicle into custody, who can do it, how long before its removed. Vehicle towing companies are not following code. Downtown businesses not following rules about notice to vehicle owners.

Tina: remind Council that meeting on Feb 7, 8:00 a.m. Community Center, budget discussion. Pitman will not attend, Cimmino may not attend. PSF directors will attend, not the other GF depts.

TOPIC #7: Executive Session – Litigation strategy, not involving other public agencies.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

ADJOURN TIME: 9:10 – recess into exec session.