

City Council Work Session

5:30 PM
Council Chambers
March 21, 2016

ATTENDANCE:

Mayor/Council (please check) Hanel, Cromley, Yakawich, Cimmino, Brewster, McFadden, Friedel, Swanson, Sullivan, Clark, Brown.

ADJOURN TIME: 9:10 All present. Sullivan exits at 8:50 pm.

Agenda

TOPIC #1	Arterial Fees Increase
PRESENTER	Dave Mumford, Public Works Director
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Mr. Mumford: Response to a 2015 Council initiative. \$3.69 million per year revenue. \$4.6 million per mile to build a 3 lane street. 25% rate increase to achieve that 1 mile per year standard.
- Sullivan: when is it ineffective for the fee?
- Clark: who doesn't pay assessments? Mr. Mumford: State federal, county and all depts. except airport and PW.
- Sullivan: why can we bond public safety district but not arterial fees? Mr. Mumford: district is voted on. Arterial street fee hasn't been challenged, so not court tested, not able to bond it.
- Mr. Mumford: another option that council could consider. Local option fuel tax; would need state law change to allow cities to impose it. Would generate \$2.2million annually at .02 cents per gallon. Council could impose it itself. Can't be used for maintenance, only for construction. CIP is established for now. Ms. Volek: on agenda with County for this week
- Cimmino: series of questions about fee and its use and the road construction costs. Mr. Mumford: Engineering gave cost breakdown
- Hanel: why is fee for vacant lot less than developed lot? Mr. Mumford: not sure
- Brewster: wants to see rate increase as part of budget proposal.
- **Public Comment:**
- Kevin Nelson: 4235 Bruce Avenue, Billings, MT - points out that 2 CMs were part of the decision to cap R9600 lot assessments. Landscaping on streets costs too much, must be a better solution. Council should look at all zoning classifications and their fees before increasing them. State and county do pay the fee.
- Tom Zurbruchen: 1747 Wicks Lane, Billings, MT - read the arterial street fee resolution and it says that all residential is capped at R9600. State has senior tax program but no such relief on assessments. Not fair to assess residential rate on multi-family lots.

- Connie Wardell: PO Box 21432, Billings, MT – makes a lot of sense for the city to consider local option gas tax. Rural state legislators may want to create local option gas tax for smaller “districts”
- Mr. Mumford: will get back to the council about whether the state and county pay the fee.
- Brewster: recommend considering this as part of the budget process, seconded by Clark
- Brown: wants to pursue gas tax. Forgo budget process and wait for gas tax option.
- Sullivan: against gas tax, arterial fee looks better
- Hanel: current process works well, would be behind if we wait
- Cimmino: election this year, council should decide what it wants to do with gas tax so that candidates can be questioned about supporting that law. Encourage council to carefully review the CIP.
- Yakawich: want Council to make its statement on local option gas tax early in year, ahead of other Legislative issues.

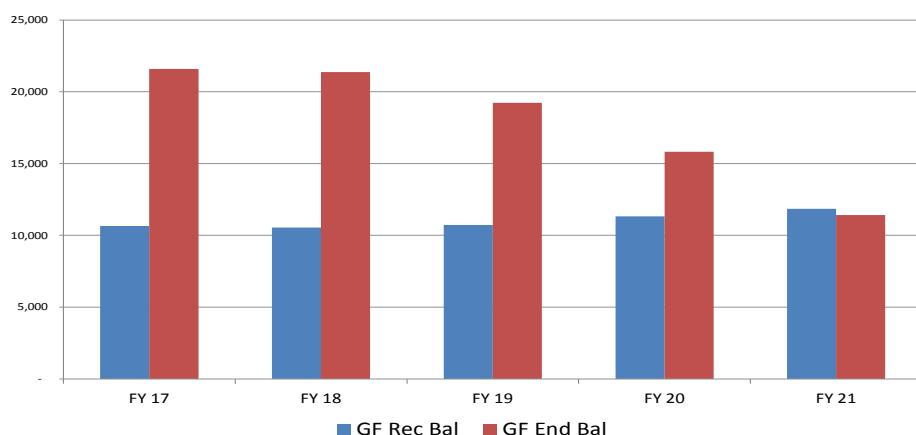
TOPIC #2	Integrated Water Plan
PRESENTER	Dave Mumford, Public Works Director
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Mr. Mumford: Council will see consulting contract on this topic soon, so this is preview of that work. HDR selected to do upcoming professional consulting. 60 million gallons per day in the summer. Expect 50,000 people in next 20 years. Consider west end WTP. Current plant needs upgraded.
- Yakawich: Heights WTP? Mr. Mumford: additional piping needed to the heights.
- Hanel: West end WTP, discussion with Laurel? Mr. Mumford: has met with in the past to discuss buying water from Billings, were not interested at that time.
- Sullivan: water restrictions can be used in summertime, but by 2020 we may need to ration? Mr. Mumford: correct, irrigation only.
- Friedel: how many times hit peak? Mr. Mumford: 15-20 days last August
- Cromley: how is Laurel with R2 water rights? Mr. Mumford: don't know, but ours is finalized.
- Sullivan: very important topic. Water security may be more important than volume.
- Hanel: Like to see if Laurel would like a joint effort with Billings.
- **Public Comment:**
- Tom Llewelyn: 3113 Stanford, Billings, MT - 40 year resident and developer. Excellent planning effort for growth. Great community, it will grow. Take water from river during high flow.
- Kevin Nelson: 4235 Bruce Avenue, Billings, MT - lots of water available at 1800 feet. Asked a few weeks ago about growth rate. Mr. Mumford: Geologists say there is a formation called “Madison Formation” coming out of Glacier. Do not think it is under Billings.
- Connie Wardell: PO Box 21432, Billings, MT - so lucky to have Mr. Mumford as the PW Director. Grey water use is possible.

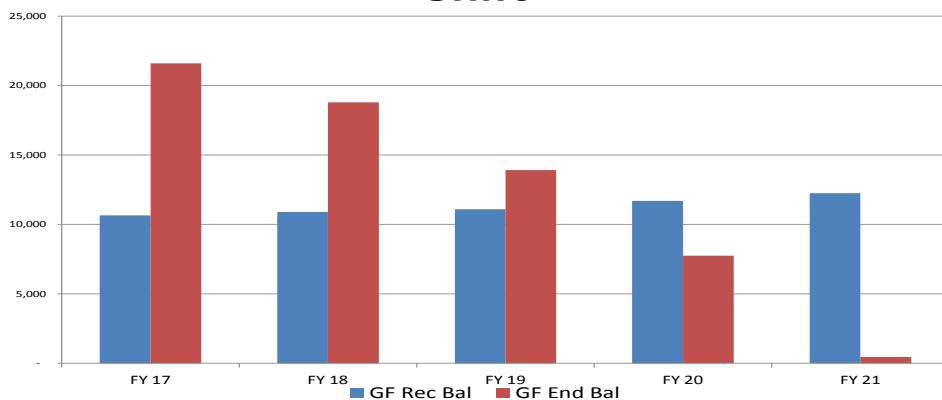
TOPIC #3	IAFF Contract Negotiations
PRESENTER	Tina Volek, City Administrator
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Ms. Volek: PowerPoint presentation about current firefighters contract. 5 new positions and 8 vacancies filled. 24 hours on, 48 off.
- Firefighters currently work 2272 hours
- Adds 324 hours/firefighter
- 14.3% Increase
- Firefighters would now work 2596 hours
- Equivalent to adding 3 captains, 3 engineers and 5 firefighters
- Would be equivalent of adding 11 FTEs
- Cost ~\$1,200,000 per year

Levy All Mills-Standard Expenditures



Continue Reduced Mills-Add a Work Shift



- What Happens if Add Work Shift and Fire gets Three Years of COLAs?
- Arbitration
- Police and Teamsters get 3.2% in FY17 and 3.0% in FY18
- Ability to pay
- Comparison to other Cities
- Possible Two Year Costs
- ~\$2,500,000 Added Work Shift
- ~\$660,000 COLA

- Cimmino: was the fire lawsuit about overtime? Ms. Volek: individual firefighters filed lawsuit about hourly rate vs salary. City paid 4.8 million.
- Questions about how the shifts work, and costs.
- Sullivan: wonder if outgoing Councilmembers should have passed Public Safety hiring.
- Dispute between Clark and Hanel about the advisability of hiring 6 for fire dept vs adding a shift to cover present work schedule.
- Fire Chief Dextras: About 1/3 of the year unable to staff ladder truck. Concept of reducing Kelly day to 1 is very costly.
- Hanel: staff recommending extra shift? Where did that proposal come from? Ms. Volek: would have recommended it if we hadn't hired new firefighters at end of last year. Would help in future.
- Sullivan: citizens asked why they should vote for a PS levy when firefighters work so few days per year.
- **Public Comment:**
- Tom Zurbruchen: 1747 Wicks Lane, Billings, MT - City Administrator shows COLA on top of adding a shift that increases the fire gross wages by 14%. COLA should be 0.
- Kevin Nelson: 4235 Bruce Avenue, Billings, MT - what about a Dupont shift? Refinery schedule – alternative work schedule. If Council's priority is public safety, recapture the voted levies in the TIF districts.
- Ms. Volek: remind Council that union can take City into arbitration. Police officers wages are below Bozeman.
- Brown: Bozeman does not have same restrictions on wages? Volek: Bozeman does not have same cap as Billings.
- Yakawich: support hiring the 6 new firefighters. What is city's worst and best case? What is city trying to accomplish? Hanel: adequate staffing with resources available. Comes down to negotiations.
- Brewster: showing public that we can make good business decisions and give proper direction to staff.
- Cimmino: should not compare Billings to Bozeman's wages. Frustrated at high COLA increases.
- Brewster: should not have unilaterally hired more employees, should have considered other options.
- Friedel: Bozeman has higher cost of living. Private sector does not get same percentage COLA.

- Sullivan: may not be smart to state best and worst case because it could compromise bargaining position. Council needs to have discipline to look at all options and not sacrifice long term for short term.
- Brown: recommend that city not propose additional work shift.

TOPIC #4	Citizen Survey
PRESENTER	Bruce McCandless, Assistant City Administrator
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Mr. McCandless asked Council for input on custom questions they would like to see on survey. Went over previous survey and results. First few pages are standard questions, 1 page is for custom questions. Open ended question recommended is - What is the most pressing issue for Council or community to be working on?
- Cimmino: asked why only given to 1500 households. McCandless: statistics show that reflects overall opinion.
- Sullivan: local option or sales tax instead of property tax? McCandless: have not seen a poll on it. Sullivan: thinks it would be helpful
- Hanel: suggests question on survey about structure of City charter as form of government. Voters turned down changes by a narrow margin.
- Cimmino: supports Mayor in adding a question about City charter.
- Yakawich: transparency/trust in government on past surveys. Would like to see again. Example: City Council and local government. McCandless: could add as a custom question.
- Brown: Survey asks if a service is important to them, but what are citizens willing to pay for services they want? McCandless: not sure how to phrase that, but could look into it.
- Hanel: Public Information Office (PIO) McCandless: Community Conversations has looked into that as well.
- McCandless: CM McCall was in charge of Community Conversations, have not had one since October 2015.
- Yakawich: Would like to see it continue.
- **Public Comment:**
 - Tom Zurbuchen: 1747 Wicks Lane, Billings, MT - charter cap might be positive if there was another limit, accountability, local option tax shouldn't be on the survey. State Legislature won't pass it. Ask about taxing gambling, alcohol, cigarettes etc.
 - Dennis Ulvestad: 3040 Central Avenue, Billings, MT - Council doing a good job, impressed. City Charter keeps branches accountable.

TOPIC #5	Council Discussion
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- McFadden: 15th and Broadwater, local bar gets noise variances and goes past time if they can. Limit the number of noise variances that a business can receive in a time period? Volek: has been amended around business hours in residential areas. Future Council

initiative? Hanel: can City Administrator restrict permits based on past performance?
Volek: will look into it.

	Public Comment
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Kevin Nelson: 4235 Bruce Avenue, Billings, MT - hold-over Senator could request a bill now. Chamber publication talks about retail spending. Wants Council to ask Mr. Mumford to report on how much time and money is spent on handling blowing trash from the landfill. Jobs at new hotel being built in Southgate are going to out of state workers. What is Stacy Robinson working on with landscaping around the landfill?
- McFadden: proposed local worker/company incentive. Legal constraints.
- Swanson: can city restrict who works on projects supported by TIF? Mr. Brooks: can research it to find an answer.
- Tom Zurbuchen: 1747 Wicks Lane, Billings, MT - city law says that all loads have to be covered. Enforce it.
- Dennis Ulvestad: 3040 Central Avenue, Billings, MT - will City be eliminating some boards and commissions? Hanel: homelessness committee is sunsetting and a couple others have been discussed but not actively working on any others.