

City Council Work Session

5:30 PM
Council Chambers
May 1, 2017

ATTENDANCE:

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

CM excused: Cimmino

ADJOURN TIME: 9:38 pm

Agenda

TOPIC #1	2017 Legislative Wrap-Up
PRESENTER	Ed Bartlett, City Lobbyist
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Ed Bartlett: disappointed in the end of the session; infrastructure failure. SB 367, HB 8 tied together, both failed. HB 8 failed for first time since mid-1990s. Gas tax passed and will double streets construction money. Public incapacitation killed in House Judiciary, as predicted. 2 local option bills failed. Negative TIF bills tabled, admin procedure bills passed, study commission possible. New Local gov't interim committee. 3 new district court judges, 2 in this district. HB 61 9-1-1 fees, passed but Legislature took \$2M for other purposes. HB 83 on elections passed, amended by Gov., and returned to him without his changes. Joint Resolution supporting naming Navy Ship City of Billings.
- Sullivan: public incapacitation didn't pass; disorderly conduct law was diluted? Yes, especially for early violations. HB 442 failed third reading; why? Sponsored by Rep Court, should have passed, don't know why it didn't.
- Hanel: HB 189 on special districts, what were Governor's amendments? Softened our opposition.
- Yakawich: can we meet earlier than in past to formulate city's priorities? We continue working on legislation throughout the interim.
- **Public Comment:**
None

TOPIC #2	Budget Overview
PRESENTER	Tina Volek, City Administrator
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Tina Volek: 12th budget presented to Council. \$287M total revenues.
- Sullivan: WWTP construction is in this year? Yes.
- Clark: do Feds still buy the buses for MET? 80/20 split with Feds, sometimes less with the state (vans only).

- Brewster: Solid waste explain why their rate increase is higher than others?
- Sullivan: can the equipment sinking fund be invested and use the funds for other items? Andy Zoeller, Interim Finance Director, yes, but some reasons not to do it.
- Brewster: like the idea but want a structured plan.
- Brewster: explain excess in the SID revolving loan fund.
- Volek: explains the SBRs approved in GF and PSF.
- Sullivan: last Council added firefighters and police. With property continuing to increase in value, why not recommend additional personnel in those depts.? Evidence building coming out of reserves. Fire Station study may indicate more firefighters.
- Hanel: thinks that we may need more parks maintenance people, not recreation position. Other departments have more of a need.
- Clark: how much intergovernmental revenue from the state transfer? Reason for using \$1M GF reserve is for PSF transfer? Yes.
- Brown: what is the \$78k use of reserves in Amend Park?
- Hanel: Same question on health plan? Purposely spending down reserve.
- Sullivan: why are costs so much higher than estimated? Discussion about police evidence building. Poor example for inaccurate cost estimates.
- Yakawich: can City publish more budget information? Simplify the budget info for common citizen. Graphs and diagrams help to explain.
- **Public Comment:**
- Kevin Nelson, 4235 Bruce Avenue, Billings, MT: think graph includes value from the TIF districts. Auditor discovered \$11M included in \$16M excess reserve? Spend money for quality of life issues. Public safety – arrested for DUI and be home in 45 minutes, still drunk. 3% wage increase is too much. Seniors will use parks more, so recreation person may be needed. Need more animal control, especially in parks.
- Volek: City is taking back the Babcock this year, committee recommended budgeting money to make improvements and for 1 year of operations.
- Bill Cole, Chamber Board of Directors: agree with CM Yakawich about simplifying the budget for public consumption. Key report or Executive summary would be helpful.
- Hanel: will take break after court presentation.

TOPIC #3	Municipal Court
PRESENTER	Judge Sheila Kolar
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Judge Kolar: introduces Britannia Park, Court Administrator. HB 133 will affect collecting restitution for victims.
- Hanel: court improvements working well? very well

- Sullivan: complaints about litter around entrances and dog droppings in parks. any opportunity for community service to improve those? Yes, but have to work through parole agencies.
- Brown: IT charge is high, why? Andy Zoeller, don't think that was a large increase, about normal.
- Yakawich: lots of court activity, well-orchestrated. Would like for judge to ask for what she needs. Ok, but court doesn't need anything else right now. Code enforcement citations; don't seem to have a lot of teeth, returns to the community as a bigger problem, can we talk with you about code enforcement issues? Haven't had many code complaints last 2 years but yes, willing to talk with CMs as needed.
- Cromley: municipal court required to appoint counsel? Prescreened, public defender's office pays for. Will Marsy's law cause extra costs? Departments will work together, but law will cause some scheduling problems and delays.
- Hanel: Mr. Nelson's comments about quick release of DUIs? Depends on the offense and seriousness of it. 1st offense, no criminal record, low BAC, will bond out quickly.
- **Public Comment:**
- Kevin Nelson, 4235 Bruce Avenue, Billings, MT: know 2 DUIs where Police Department drove 1 home. The other one was about 1 hour to release. Will Councilmembers ask for accounting of unpaid fines? Crime statistics; arrests counted or convictions? Friedel: usually arrests.

Break at 8:03 pm

Reconvene at 8:25 pm

TOPIC #4	Administration and Administrative Services
PRESENTER	Bruce McCandless, Assistant City Administrator
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Bruce McCandless: presentation of material in documents. Review customers, work performed and various departments. Security IT position requested.
- Sullivan: what needs security? Individual information, financial records, criminal records, credit cards.
- Yakawich: Volunteers celebration money in the budget and where? Can check that information and get back with Council.
- Sullivan: combining ballots have cost? Some additional costs.
- **Public Comment:**
None

TOPIC #5	Legal
PRESENTER	Brent Brooks, City Attorney
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Brent Brooks: hired the victim witness person Council authorized. Case statistics overview in documents.
- Brown: if more officers, need more in Legal? Yes, there is a correlation.
- Hanel: software and paperless office? Headed that way but don't know if/how small cities could afford it.
- Friedel: annual program cost? Think it's about \$5k but will check. Urge Legal to go paperless and it will save taxpayers. # of people who are put on parole? Varies due to judgement.
- Yakawich: # guilty of domestic violence? Could get statistics.
- Cromley: why redaction software so expensive? Only software that works with watchdog program. Proprietary.
- Sullivan: spreadsheet that shows what the public records requests have been? Yes.
- Cromley: Marsy's Law provides equivalent rights to victim as to defendant? Right to Council indigent victim, issue with City Attorney providing Council? Victim under threat of incarceration. Facing potential jail time and cannot afford Council will receive public defenders. Can send private letters of advice to request to Attorney General's office. recover any costs? Yes, if we copy or duplicate
- Yakawich: like that Legal states its challenges, hope that others will do the same. Has City considered using a labor contract negotiator? Can get the old info about costs. Quite expensive.
- **Public Comment:**
None

TOPIC #6	Council Discussion
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Yakawich: CM Cromley and I working on unoccupied buildings, chronic problems, will sponsor initiative to ask Code Enforcement to give quarterly report on activities.
- McFadden: alleys in bad condition, graded, no gravel added, trash trucks reestablish the ruts and holes. Pay for some rock in alleys.
- Sullivan: how many miles of unpaved alleys do we have in city? Consider paving them?

- Hanel: 124 miles of alley, unknown condition.
- Friedel: cost to install millings instead of gravel or other? Ditch is getting worse.
- Brown: Mumford testing millings in alleys below Rims. Report?

TOPIC #7	Public Comment on Items not on the Agenda
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

None.