

City Council Work Session

5:30 PM
Council Chambers
June 18, 2018

ATTENDANCE:

Mayor/Council (please check) Cole, Cromley, Yakawich, Brewster, Ewalt, Joy, Friedel, Gibbs, Ronning, Clark, Brown.

CM excused: Brewster

ADJOURN TIME: 11:20 p.m.

Agenda

Cole: condolences to CM Joy

Joy: thanks to PD, Sheriff and others for support and well wishes.

TOPIC #1	Convention Center
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- John Brewer, Chamber of Commerce: introduces Tom Hazinski, HVS Consulting.
- Hazinski: define convention center. Looks at competitors. Recommend programmable space of 66,000 square feet, total 150,000 square feet with support facilities. Types of events that a convention center could attract. Declining share of the market. Competition with METRA not substantial, not a lot of overlap. Financial analysis. Stabilized attendance year = \$750k+ operating loss. Estimates economic impact.
- Cromley: competing center in Boise doesn't have any exhibit space, only ballroom and meeting spaces. Other slide shows communities that are dissimilar. Other centers gaining or losing attendees?
- Ronning:
- Brown: surprised that convention center would create only 125 jobs?
- Gibbs: 5 year financials show total \$4M loss. Anything that could reduce it? Mix of jobs that are created?
- Cole: benefits of added economic activity, jobs, etc. is the tax generation just property tax? How could city increase the tax collections.
- Ronning: economic impact is just for the convention center rental space? Yes.
- Cole: what are some associated uses that boost attendance.
- **Public Comment:**
- Alex Tyson, TBID: sports activities important, have to work hard to attract conferences.
- Connie Wardell, P.O. Box 21432, Billings, Montana: sports more important to the city than study indicates. Poor air service is a problem. Medical community is a strength.

- Kevin Nelson, 4235 Bruce Avenue, Billings, Montana: Montana convention center should be the focus. Should grasp the rare opportunity that is now available.
- Cole: Hazinski thoughts on the MT convention center? Hazinski: Not attractive; walkability and destination appeal are low.

TOPIC #2	Community 7 Television Contract
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Wyeth Friday, Planning Director: introduces Tim Harrington, Community 7.
- Harrington: information on how Community 7 works. Brochures and other info given earlier. City Council meetings important to the station.
- Ewalt: only available on cable? Yes.
- Clark: broadcast work sessions? Yes, on channel 8.
- Yakawich: KTVQ agreement with Channel 7? Partnership that KTVQ can use the Channel 7 broadcast, informal agreement.
- Ronning: happy to hear about work with the Library to broadcast from community room. Use TIF to fund improvements in private businesses to facilitate the remote broadcast? Working with some such as FIB op center.
- Cole: archive for 1 year? How do the cameras work?
- Wyeth: details on some of the issues that Council will see next Monday in a new agreement.
- Cole: move from \$100,000/year to \$180,000/year? Yes.
- Joy: 3.j talks about government access, 500 hours/year; is that 500 additional to total? Total is 500, about twice currently used.
- Cole: inflationary change to \$100k over past 20 years might equal \$180k.
- **Public Comment:**
- Kevin Dowling: President of TV 7 Board. Agreement will boost info transfer to citizens.
- Ronda Whiteman: Vice President of TV 7 Board. Thanks for past support, excited about future work.
- Diane Parker: TV 7 Board member. Thanks, lots of work done by TV 7 and city staff, expanded services are exciting.
- Friedel: investigate whether citizens can testify from home/other locations?
- Harrington: anything is possible, new video and sound systems have helped and will investigate the interchange.
- Cole: ok with 5:30 pm start time? Yes. What about a different day? Will make it work.
- Jim Corson: TV 7 Board member. 2nd time on the board. Thanks for city support.
- Ronning: how involved is TV 7 with the schools and training? Will report
- Cristal Meeks: TV 7 Board member. Staff does lots of work without much resources.
- Connie Wardell, P.O. Box 21432, Billings, Montana: learned about community access tv while on school board.

- Tim Warburton, 3444 Lucky Penny Lane, Billings, Montana: support \$180k payment. Support remote testimony opportunities.
- Break at 7:55 pm, reconvene at 8:05 pm.

TOPIC #3	BUILD Grant
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Wyeth Friday: BUILD replaces TIGER. Application outline. Proposed project description.
- Friedel: how will intersection handle traffic once IBL is built? Friday: don't know the counts but IBL construction, roundabout at Hwy 3 and Zimmerman Trail, Zimmerman Trail improvements will all improve safety and volume. Want to address this by meeting on July 9.
- Brown: how will we pay for consultant services? Friday: PW is working on consultant help and amount small enough that C.A. can approve it.
- Brown: can staff do it alone? Friday: will try but will be hard to do. Checking with several firms. FHWA talking about doing the grants again next year.
- Cole: can be a game changer, so make it happen. Trails are all planned which should help grant review. Who reviews and is it all or nothing?
- Wyeth: several staff levels review it, could give us only part of the project/money.
- Clark: when do they award? By the end of 2018.
- Ronning: Ward 4 constituents don't want IBL because of impact on Zimmerman Trail.
- Friday: there is a study that shows a northern/western route that avoids the connection but impacts Molt Rd and other.
- Friedel: south trail segments still feasible given the River flood and erosion?
- Friday: lots of trail follows current roads and final alignments will have to be reviewed.
- **Public Comment:**
- Connie Wardell, P.O. Box 21432, Billings, Montana: didn't think decision was to connect IBL to Zimmerman Trail. Save land for airport expansion. Agree that road may need to connect further west due to traffic on Zimmerman Trail/Rimrock. Bad decisions made when we rush after federal money.
- Tim Warburton, 3444 Lucky Penny Lane, Billings, Montana: western connection wouldn't go anywhere or be used.
- Friedel: 2nd route out of the Heights.
- Kristy Drake, 2416 Rolling Oak, Billings, Montana: support the project.

TOPIC #4	Budget Wrap-Up
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Andy Zoeller, Finance Director: review budget.

- Ronning: local option tax? Variety of uses available, would benefit City significantly.
- Cole: reserves for cash flow purposes needed. When will level be reached? Self imposed minimum is 29% of general fund. 2022 will need more money.
- Yakawich: Evidence Center on back burner.
- Joy: which of the proposed items would be on-going and which ones would be one-time. Zoeller: public information officer, park development (multi-year plan), strategic plan (one time), 2020 consensus (one time), paramedic program (ongoing expense).
- Council questions and comments about budget.
- Karla Stanton, Human Resources Director:
- Bruce McCandless: personal services include all employee benefits. Insurance benefits increasing. New employees earn more for first seven years. Local option tax has sunset attached in 5-10 years. Do not recommend using, use for capital items and use tax authority to support year to year operations.
- Mike Whitaker, Parks Director: budget review.
- McCandless: strategic plan review.
- McCandless: get firefighters licensed to do paramedics services. Additional 5% plus supplies.
- Bill Rash, Fire Chief: behind the curve for paramedic services. Introduces Sean Biggens, Training Chief.
- Biggens: review implementation plan.
- **Public Comment:**
- Kevin Nelson, 4235 Bruce Avenue, Billings, Montana: talked about the need to grade gravel street. TIF said 2022 would have money. Asking Council for supplemental budget request.
- Jason Banfield, 6724 Cove Creek Drive, Billings, Montana: firefighter. Stated City needs to get firefighters paramedic training. Benefit for all.
- Mark Solberg, 123 North Crestwood Drive, Billings, Montana: firefighter, encouraged Council to support firefighters to get EMS training.
- Clark Johnson, 6280 Masters Boulevard, Billings, Montana: encouraged Council to support an indoor sports facility.
- Olaf Hedstrom, 1728 Natalie Street, Billings, Montana: firefighter, Council to support firefighters to get EMS training.
- Tim Warburton, 3444 Lucky Penny Lane, Billings, Montana: supports Parks plan and would like to see more aggressive plan.
- Rick Devore, 2614 Park Ridge, Billings, Montana: encourages City to support park development.
- Connie Wardell, PO Box 21432, Billings, Montana: stated Council did not have authority to assess park fee.
- Council consensus: Park funding 7 in favor, source TBD. Favor EMS training for firefighters.

TOPIC #5	Council Discussion
PRESENTER	

NOTES/OUTCOME	
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- Friedel: garbage man put garbage can on top of drain and caused flooding. Would like to see a group to mow lawns for elderly.
- Gibbs: research taxing purchases according to zip code. Out of state gets taxed, in state does not. Brent Brooks, City Attorney: would need to get legislative sponsor and bill drafted.
- Ronning: Cottonwood Park is not draining well.
- **Public Comment:**
- None

TOPIC #6	Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Tim Warburton, 3444 Lucky Penny Lane, Billings, Montana: supports information officer for City and EMS training. Encouraged Council to attend Parks Board meeting.
- Connie Wardell, PO Box 21432, Billings, Montana: utilize MSU for social media help.