

Billings City Administrator Weekly Report

January 8, 2021

- 1. Employee Arbitration Case** – in early 2020 Human Resources conducted an investigation that resulted in termination of a Teamster employee that was subject of the investigation. The Teamster Union represented the terminated employee and contested the city's decision through the grievance process that went all the way to arbitration. The Arbitrator's decision was received in late December and the City's decision was upheld. No one likes to have to make the difficult decision to fire an employee, but sometimes it is necessary. Thanks to Legal, Human Resources and Public Works for all their hard work.
- 2. MOU with Beartooth RC&D** – Joel Bertolion with RC&D emailed the enclosed financials that were approved at their last Board Meeting. The RLF shows approximately 400k left to lend and with the last loan obligated it will be 9 loans in Yellowstone County totaling of 596,603.00. Their next meeting will be January 21st and if anyone is interested in attending, they can either let me or Frank Ewalt know as he receives the board packets as well. Attached please find additional information on the RLF and Beartooth Financials.
- 3. Parks** - Centennial Park storm water drainage is having some minor issues – parks department staff will correct the issues and sod will be installed to keep the targeted opening date. We are also having problems with the contractor/manufacturer who was awarded the restrooms, which are impacting timelines for completion. We are working on those issues and moving forward with some possible solutions.

High Sierra Park restroom was vandalized, interior toilet structure will need to be replaced, restroom is closed until completed.

Rose Park playground installation of equipment may be completed by 3rd week of January if weather stays favorable to construction

- 4. Airport** – We are continuing to work with NW Energy on possible solutions for the substation location. Negotiations have not been completed. Therefore, we won't be back to the council with a lease until February.

Passenger numbers for Christmas/New Years were at 75% of normal and continuing to improve.

- 5. Facilities** - City staff has met with Yellowstone County staff on moving forward with the appraisal process for the Stillwater Building. A letter is being drafted to WC Commercial indicating both parties cannot move forward with a buy-sell at this point but would like to move forward with the appraisal process to determine market value of the Stillwater Building.

6. **Legislative Session** - We are currently tracking these bills on your preference list. Crowley Fleck provides us with the following report each week (along with timely communication throughout the week). We will refine how best to share this information with the full council in the upcoming weeks.

Bill Type - Number	LC Number	Primary Sponsor	Status	Status Date	Short Title
SB 65  	LC0901	Steve Fitzpatrick (R) SD 10	(S) Hearing -- (S) Business, Labor, and Economic Affairs	01/08/2021; 9:00 AM, Rm SC	Revise civil liability laws
HB 115  	LC0924	Bill Mercer (R) HD 46	(C) Draft Delivered to Requester	01/05/2021	Increase penalties for 5th and subsequent DUI
SB 73  	LC0802	Keith Regier (R) SD 3	(S) Introduced	01/05/2021	Provide for local distribution of lodging sales tax revenue

There is a hearing that may be of interest. It is for SB 65  , (S) Judiciary, Jan 08, 2021, 9:00 AM in room 303. The sponsor for this bill is [Steve Fitzpatrick](#)

December 31, email from our lobbyist - Dear Clients and Friends,

Thank you for sharing the ups and downs of 2020 with us and our team on government affairs issues and more! We are opening the door of 2021 with excitement and wonder – we still wonder exactly what will happen with the MT Legislative Session and we are excited to work with all of you. I am also excited to introduce our newest team member- our 2021 Intern, Josh Fuller, who will start sending you emails soon about the upcoming session bills that we are tracking for you. Josh will send each of you our revised pre-session report by January 5th with a compiled list of legislator contacts via cell phone and email. We know during this upcoming session that the legislators' email will be flooded, so we compiled a list that will be easy to call/ text legislators as well. We divided it per committee as well – so that we can easily reach out to folks on committee level issues.

Typically, we send each client a weekly report and list all the bills we are tracking in this report. I have spoken with some of you already and know if you do or do not want to receive that each week. However, if we have not discussed the weekly report, please send me an email if you still wish to receive it. If I do not hear from you then we will NOT send you a weekly report. We will send you the mid-session report and the end of session report. Sometimes folks feel this weekly report is redundant and we are trying to think innovatively in this new time! We will continue to maintain a list of bills on the Montana Legislature's website for each client that you can track 24/7 and Josh will send you emails about bills that we think might be of interest to you as we see them.

We want to thank you, in advance, for your patience with us as we navigate a Zoom/In-person legislative session in 2021. I am still unclear if we will be allowed to testify in person in every committee and so we will be sending out information on how to testify remotely as well. The Montana Legislative staff has tried very hard to help figure out a transparent process for all of us to participate... but it will not be without its hiccups. As for the new executive branch, we know that Governor Gianforte has put into place key folks as listed below- but we know there are many more appointments to make. We look forward to working with all of the new leaders in the Executive branch and thank them for their service as well:

- Chris Heggem, Chief of Staff
- Kurt Alme, Budget Director
- Mike Milburn, Chief Policy Advisor
- Glenn Oppel, Deputy Policy Advisor
- Michael Freeman, Natural Resources Policy Advisor
- Amanda Kaster, director of Department of Natural Resources. Kaster prior served in Congressman Zinke's staff and moved with him to Department of Interior.
- Chris Dorrington, director of Department of Environmental Quality. Dorrington has worked at DEQ as an administrator.
- Laurie Esau, director of Department of Labor and Industry.
- Mike Foster, director of the Department of Agriculture. Foster was state executive director of the Montana USDA Farm Service Agency, a job he was appointed to in 2018 by the Trump administration.
- Misty Ann Giles, director of the Department of Administration. Giles is the chief of staff for Rural Development at the U.S. Department of Agriculture and is moving to Montana from Washington, D.C.
- Brendan Beatty, director of the Department of Revenue. Beatty has been at the department for 25 years as counsel.

Also, all of the other four statewide elected officials (Attorney General Knudsen, OPI Arntzen, Secretary of State Jacobson and Insurance Commissioner Downing) are appointing their staff and we can send you information as that develops for specific offices if you are interested- just let us know.

Thank you again for working with us and our team! We feel grateful to you all for the work you do to make Montana a great place to work and live in! We wish you the best of health in 2021!

Beartooth Books- Reporting Ending September 2020

	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>% of budgeted</u>
Income			
AG-FOOD AND AG CENTER	85,007	62,311	73%
AG-MCDC	1,000	0	0%
BOARD - EDA SPONSOR DUES	51,072	42,768	84%
BOARD-INTEREST INCOME	400	204	51%
BOARD-FOUNDATION MONEY	3,700	3,390	92%
RLF-STAFF REIMBURSE	18,000	0	0%
RLF-ORIG FEES	5,000	0	0%
CRDC	71,907	46,795	65%
FUELS-TOTAL	-	0	#DIV/0!
EDA - GRANT	70,000	35,000	50%
NOT BUDGED INCOME	-	6,900	0%
TOTAL INCOME	306,086	197,367	64%
Expense			
TOTAL STAFF EXPENSE	233,104	156,201	67%
COMMUNICATIONS	6,000	4,375	73%
EQUIPMENT & VEHICLE	8,520	6,299	74%
CONTRACTUAL	20,000	9,325	47%
SUPPLIES	12,900	14,665	114%
TRAVEL	11,080	3,793	34%
OTHER	10,420	14,752	142%
RESERVE	-	-12,043	#DIV/0!
EXPENSE TOTAL	302,024	197,367	65%

Account Balances

Bank of Joliet-Building Account	\$4,471.87
Bank of Joliet- Savings Account	\$75,300.66
Bank of Joliet- Checking Account	\$74,820.63

Revolving Loan Fund Books- October 2020

Loan Client Review

County	# of loans	\$ Loaned out
Big Horn	2	\$173,049
Stillwater	3	\$436,746
Yellowstone	8	\$396,603
Carbon	3	\$142,100
Sweet Grass	2	\$180,935

- A \$200K loan has been approved for Yellowstone County. This will not be funded until spring.
- Our loan clients (so far) are weathering the COVID storm.
- I have 3 applications in various forms that will hopefully head to the RLF meeting.

Bank Balances as of October 31, 2020

Total available for lending

Bank of Joliet- EDA	\$29,783	29,783
Bank of Joliet-CDBG	\$189,481	189,481
Bank of Joliet- IRP	\$388,787	152,413
Bank of Joliet-Fromberg	\$29,783	<u>29,783</u>
		\$401,460