

City Council Work Session

5:30 PM
Council Chambers
October 5, 2015

ATTENDANCE:

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

ADJOURN TIME: 7:33 pm

Agenda

TOPIC #1	MDU Landfill Gas Plans
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Larry Oswald, Bismarck office, introduces Bob Mormon, director, and Doug Hansen, regional director. \$250,000 paid to city from landfill gas to date. Also banked some carbon credits, looking to sell them. Increasing revenues due to sales agreement. Revenues will increase as production increases and agreement in place. 3 parts to the revenue stream.
- McCall: explain green gas and blue gas. A paper transaction swaps the gases.
- Oswald continues.
- Bird: value volatility – valued when? At sale.
- Oswald continues. Expected 2015 City revenue projected to be \$250,000. Hoping for better production. 2016 projection is \$165,000.
- Swanson: common among other states? Less than handful of plants turning landfill gas into clean natural gas.
- Cromley: carbon credits expire? No expiration date but have to continue paying registration and older fuel credits are worth less than current ones. Why decrease in value if they don't expire? Not sure why people willing to pay less for old ones but that's the market.
- Volek: appreciate MDU
- Hanel: landfill wells not protected. Concern? Doug Hansen: would know if wellheads are damaged.
- Yakawich: what is gross gas revenue? \$1.5 million estimate. Not a money-maker so is it all goodwill? Early years it's difficult to make money but expect to be in the black this year.
- Brown: anything city can do to increase production? Started with vertical wells that aren't producing as much as projected but horizontal collectors are producing.
- McFadden: can we add water to produce more methane? Yes but there are other environmental concerns with adding water.

- Cimmino: royalties of \$253,000 to GF, but lots of GF pays for police, fire, etc. Thought that money was committed to radio equipment. Volek: Will report back
- Pitman: prior story was that EPA would penalize city for methane production, now making money. Credit to Councilmember McCall for pursuing carbon credits – great insight.
- Public comments: none

TOPIC #2	Community Conversations
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Liz Kampa-Weatherwax, Purchasing Agent: memo outlines preliminary info. Next City Link insert is Oct 25, so want to firm up dates and locations. Want feedback on topics, dates OK, additional or other locations?
- Hanel: have info available on the charter.
- Crouch: considered task force meeting locations? Was once considered but not recently.
- Cromley: airport improvements as a topic.
- Bird: concur with Hanel comments about charter. Public safety funding – why did people support or not support ballot question?
- Yakawich: homelessness and transiency. Volunteer to help.
- Cimmino: annexation and growth already covered by growth policy public input, no one supports local option in past, vehicle/pedestrian/bike safety education.
- McCall: Dick Clark also helped in past. Ken assisted in past few years. Items: Charter, Airport, Public/road safety.
- Bird: communication is a challenge, city is large enough to warrant a Public Information Officer (PIO), worthy of discussion, goes to topic of using social media, website design, time was too short to advocate PS levy, need someone to do quicker and better.
- Hanel: send list to Council, vote on favorites and do top 2-3 topics.
- Volek: suggest meeting downtown at noon
- Crouch: would like them to be after election. Nov 4&5 and later in Nov.
- Bird: conversation, not a lecture. Council should focus on those topics. Citizen survey topics?
- Hanel: Nov 4 and 5, Nov 10 and 12.
- Pitman: prefer meeting time to be 7:00 vs. 5:30 as in past.
- Yakawich: attended a couple prior meetings, not giving people enough time to talk. Regardless of number of topics, maybe focus on public questions and feedback, not presentations.
- Kampa-Weatherwax: used round-tables first time and seemed to work well, used it second time and it didn't work well. Hard to get people to open up and talk. Really need good topics.
- Volek: what forms of social media does the public want us to use?
- Hanel: combine that with does city need PIO?

- McCall: method and topic matter. Combine social media, PIO and citizen survey questions that the city should ask.
- Volek: locations and dates will depend on availability. CMs have a preference or suggested location, please let us know.
- McCall: Little Horn State Bank in ward 5, St. Johns or Arrowhead in Ward 4.
- Cimmino: Castle Rock is OK but Oasis is good too for Ward 2.
- Bird: look at task force schedules and ask if they'll sponsor. Ward 3 location should not be at Briarwood, Lewis and Clark would be good, lots of space.
- Crouch: ward 5 task force meets third Tuesday
- Cimmino: consider limiting locations/times and no more than 3 topics. Would like to see fewer meetings at larger venues.
- Kampa-Weatherwax: town hall meetings 10-12 years ago not well attended, so more meetings in several locations seemed better.
- Brown: large meeting may require more time.
- Volek: recommend no more than 3 topics. Public info officer & charter – interest in change? Public and street safety.
- Public comments:
- Dennis Ulvestad: 3040 Central, Billings, MT: attended in 2009. Faith Chapel worked well. Longer, larger meetings – maybe 2 total. Fewer topics – maybe 3.
- Yakawich: what should be the City's intent?
- Ulvestad: more conversation, community cohesion,
- Tom Zurbuchen: 1747 Wicks, Billings, MT: limit the subjects. Conversations die if there are no answers to questions. Charter is too broad, needs to be details.

TOPIC #3	Enterprise and Public Safety Software Conversion Update
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Dave Watterson, Chief Information Officer: introduces Barb McRae, Application Development Manager. Update since we presented about a year ago.
- Volek: Council and staff have helped to make huge updates.
- McCall: training periods? New World training started in Oct. 2014.
- Cromley: city court collections not included? MT SC mandated Full Court, including funding. Interface between New World and Full Court.
- Pitman: when do we get rid of timecards? Employee portal allows it but will start small. Anyway that computer images can also project on TV screens? Will look into it.
- Yakawich: how does new public safety software help dispatchers? Lots of info available to police and fire on MDTs, frees dispatchers from those burdens. May be offset by community growth and responsibilities. Also can do reports in the field.
- Public comments: none

TOPIC #4	Holiday Schedule
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- November as is. December according to calendar. January 4 business session to swear new CMs and then hold work session. Will be advertised and will post agendas per schedule.
- Public comments: none

TOPIC #5	Council Discussion
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Crouch: Bozeman ballot for \$.02 gas tax, what would that do for Billings? Why do we celebrate Columbus Day? Rename it indigenous peoples day? May sponsor that initiative next week. Why do we have so many 45 MPH zones? National stop bullying day.
- Volek: last week discussion – Gallatin County will have to support a gas tax. Gas vs local option discussion.
- Hanel: 1534 Ave F – garden grows into alley and not satisfied with previous action by Code Enforcement.
- Brown: Centennial Park master plan on Oct 13. Opposition to a dog park in Centennial Park. Alternative location might be Lampman Park since City hasn't sold it. May not be lots of opposition. Consider it.
- McCall: acreage in Lampman? About 6.
- Bird: list of parks that have master plans, which ones don't? Update on Optimist Park master plan process. High School student concern about crossing Grand at 5th Street West. Good Stuff owner meeting with CE officer – update on status, problem for neighbors, what is our authority, etc.... Concern about safety and rodents in lot.
- Volek: will have Legal and Planning put together a presentation or document.
- Pitman: Breast Cancer awareness month. Water bills for GF depts. Change High Sierra from neighborhood to a community park.
- Yakawich: reinforce CM Brown's comments. Careful when we work with businesses like Good Stuffs.
- McFadden: formerly suggested that Lampman be used for a dog park. Not popular. What discretion does Council have with not selling Lampman.
- Cimmino: Centennial Park master plan hearing is next Tuesday. Local group worked many years to get new park. Lampman now discussed. Impact?
- Volek: Council decides how to use City land. Will vote on Centennial Park next week, not on Lampman. Pretty sure that new master plan would be needed for Lampman to accommodate a dog park.

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

- Tom Zurbuchen: somebody has to maintain a dog park. Not right for whole city to use High Sierra a dog park and have only 500 people pay for it. Same for Centennial. Irresponsible dog owners. Come up with separate dog park maintenance district or funding source.

Additional Information:
