



City of Sidney, MT
City Council Regular Meeting 1-20-26
January 20, 2026 6:30 PM
115 2nd Street SE | Sidney, MT 59270

The City Council meetings are open to the public attending in person. If the public does not wish to participate in person, they are also invited to participate via a Zoom meeting or via phone:

Meeting ID: 713 080 5898 Passcode: 4332809 Call: 1-346-248-7799

1. Call to Order

Mayor Norby called the regular meeting of the Sidney City Council to order at 6:30pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was stated by all present.

3. Aldermen Present

Christensen (via Zoom), Buxbaum, Kauffman, Rasmussen and DiFonzo. Absent: Larson

4. Correction or Approval of Minutes

a. January 5th, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion was made to approve.

Motion made by Alderwoman Rasmussen, Seconded by Alderman DiFonzo.

Voting Yea: Alderman Kauffman, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderwoman Buxbaum, Alderwoman Christensen

5. Visitors

Evelyn Gonzalez, Jody Wells (Roundup), Patience Allen, Jordan Mayer (Interstate Engineering), Morgan Theil (Theil Bros. Roofing), McKade Mahlen (Interstate Engineering), Daniela Bennion (MC Water), Heidy McGrady. Via Zoom: James Falcon (Sidney Herald), Lacey Dynneson.

a. Randy Green-Nuisance Charges

Did not attend.

6. Public Hearing

a. Richland County Growth Policy

Mayor Norby called the public hearing for the 2026 Growth Policy to order at 6:32pm.

Mrs. Buxbaum stated the City's portion of the growth policy lies within pages 72-109 and has been extensively reviewed by City Staff and the Budget and Finance Committee, who have recommended the changes shown and outlined in the staff report provided. She reviewed the priorities for the City and those that overlap the City, Richland County and the Town of Fairview. She stated as the Planners hired to complete the growth policy, they are recommending approval with the condition that Richland County also passes the Growth Policy at their Public Hearing on January 26th, 2026 at 2:30pm.

Mayor Norby called for any opponents, three times, with none coming forward.

Mayor Norby called for any proponents, three times, with none coming forward.

Mayor Norby closed the public hearing for the 2026 Growth Policy to order at 6:42pm.

7. Mayor Norby

a. Update

Nothing.

8. Committee Meeting Work

a. Budget and Finance: Report

Alderman DiFonzo updated the City Council on the Treasurer's Report from the Budget and Finance Committee and the other items discussed at the committee meeting, including that they will be adding the Local Government Review topic discussion items to their agendas for the next couple of months to give an open line of dialog with the LGR Board and Community on questions they may have or that arise in the process and that he will be attending a RED meeting on Friday on behalf of Mayor Norby.

b. Budget and Finance: Pilot Tourism Grant Downtown Master Plan

Alderman DiFonzo stated Clerk/Treasurer Chamberlin presented the Budget and Finance Committee with a grant opportunity that she was seeking approval to apply for, which included funding for a downtown sidewalk program and pocket park. He stated they felt it was an ideal way to get funding in the community to start to address the sidewalk issues and recommended approval of applying for the grant.

Motion was made to approve applying for the Pilot Tourism Grant.

Motion made by Alderman DiFonzo, Seconded by Alderwoman Buxbaum.

Voting Yea: Alderman Kauffman, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderwoman Buxbaum, Alderwoman Christensen

9. Alderman Requests and Committee Reports

Budget and Finance – Chairman Christensen – DiFonzo, Buxbaum, Skinner.

Public Safety– Chairman Godfrey – Rasmussen, Kauffman, Creek.

Public Works – Chairman DiFonzo – Larson, Christensen, Harris.

Nothing.

10. Unfinished Business

a. Appointment to Conservation District

Clerk/Treasurer Chamberlin stated if anyone is interested to contact City Hall.

11. New Business

a. Morning Star Proposed Saltwater Disposal Well

PWD Hintz stated the mineral rights owners, including the City of Sidney, close to the location in question, are receiving letters informing them of the intent of MorningStar to install a Saltwater Disposal Well. He stated he has very real concerns with this location since it is so close to the City limits, given the recent explosions and ground contaminations in area. He stated this was initially brought to his attention by Dexter Thiel of Thiel Bros. Roofing, whose property is directly across from this location. Morgan Thiel read a letter on behalf of her father into the record stating his concerns for the safety and well fare for the community and properties should this be allowed to go in and asking for assistance in opposing it.

Mayor Norby stated he has concerns about the cities aquafer and PWD Hintz stated he does not know how close it is to our aquafer but ground contaminations could still affect it and that needs to be considered. Alderwoman Rasmussen and Alderman DiFonzo agreed that any chance the aquafer could be affected needs to be addressed. Alderwoman Buxbaum asked if the City has any extra-territorial jurisdiction and PWD Hintz stated we received the letter because we are mineral right owners close to the location and can write a letter as part of the public comment section of their consideration of approval. He further stated the County likely received a letter also. Mr. Mayer stated in the zoning, cities often have jurisdiction over a distance outside of the city limits, such as 1/2 a mile and Clerk/Treasurer Chamberlin stated she will ask City Planner Sanderson about this. Alderman Kauffman asked if the County's section of the Growth Policy has anything that could assist in this and Alderwoman Buxbaum stated she will look into it.

PWD Hintz stated he would like permission to write a letter to the Board of Oil and Gas opposing this Saltwater Disposal at this location. Ms. Thiel stated the Board of Oil and Gas are holding a public hearing on February 12th in Billings that you must attend in person to testify at. She stated they did not confirm but did say it is possible that they could approve this at that meeting.

Motion was made to approve the City write the letter opposing the Saltwater Disposal at this specific location.

Motion made by Alderman DiFonzo, Seconded by Alderwoman Rasmussen.
Voting Yea: Alderman Kauffman, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderwoman Buxbaum, Alderwoman Christensen

12. City Planner

Nothing.

13. City Attorney

a. Update

Nothing.

b. Resolution No. 3967-Adopting the Richland County-Sidney-Fairview Growth Policy

Mayor Norby read Resolution No. 3967-Adopting the Richland County-Sidney-Fairview Growth Policy, out loud.

Motion was made to approve contingent on Richland County approving the Growth Policy.

Motion made by Alderwoman Rasmussen, Seconded by Alderwoman Christensen.

Voting Yea: Alderman Kauffman, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderwoman Christensen

Voting Abstaining: Alderwoman Buxbaum

14. Chief of Police

a. Update

Nothing.

15. Public Works Director

a. Update

Alderman DiFonzo asked if contact was made on the property discussed at the previous Council meeting and PWD Hintz stated not yet but it is possibly going to become a nuisance property.

b. North Park Elevated Water Tower Replacement- Contract Amendment #3 to Task Order #7

Mr. Mayer presented the contract amendment #3 to Task Order #7, per the staff report attached. He stated they were conservative in their estimate on construction engineering, but knowing that the project is over 2 years and there being many variables, there is a chance that they may have to increase that amount in the future. He stated they will keep an close eye on the budget and will work with the Public Works Department for onsite supervision and will adjust if needed. He stated mobilization will start in April and the discussion on if the ballfields will be able to be used one more year will be had at the pre-construction meeting.

Alderwoman Rasmussen asked how this is funded and Mr. Mayer stated the first phase of the project was ARPA Grant funded, which is now closed, and the remaining will be SRF Loan funded, with closing this spring.

Motion was made to approve the Contract Amendment #3 to Task Order #7.

Motion made by Alderman DiFonzo, Seconded by Alderwoman Rasmussen.

Voting Yea: Alderman Kauffman, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderwoman Christensen

Voting Abstaining: Alderwoman Buxbaum

16. Fire Marshal/Building Inspector

17. City Clerk/Treasurer

a. Update

Nothing.

18. Consent Agenda

Motion was made to approve the claims and building permits.

Motion made by Alderman Kauffman, Seconded by Alderwoman Christensen.

Voting Yea: Alderman Kauffman, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderwoman Buxbaum, Alderwoman Christensen

a. Claims to be approved: \$363,520.24

Intermediary Claims: Stockman Bank \$25,996.45

b. Building Permits to be approved: RC2026-20, RC2026-21, 2026-25, and 2026-27

19. Adjournment

at 7:02pm.