



City of Sidney, MT  
City Council Regular Meeting  
July 17, 2023 6:30 PM  
115 2nd Street SE | Sidney, MT 59270

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The City Council meetings are open to the public attending in person, with masks encouraged when social distancing cannot be accomplished. If the public does not wish to participate in person, they are also invited to participate via a Zoom meeting. You can participate 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, Godfrey, Stevenson, Koffler, Rasmussen and DiFonzo

**4. Correction or Approval of Minutes**

**a. July 3rd, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes**

Motion was made to approve.

Motion made by Alderwoman Christensen, Seconded by Alderwoman Rasmussen.

Voting Yea: Alderman Koffler, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderman Stevenson, Alderwoman Godfrey, Alderwoman Christensen

**b. July 12th, 2023 Park and Rec Committee Meeting Minutes**

Motion was made to approve.

Motion made by Alderman DiFonzo, Seconded by Alderwoman Godfrey.

Voting Yea: Alderman Koffler, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderman Stevenson, Alderwoman Godfrey, Alderwoman Christensen

c. July 12th, 2023 Police and Fire Committee Meeting Minutes

Motion was made to approve.

Motion made by Alderman Koffler, Seconded by Alderwoman Godfrey.

Voting Yea: Alderman Koffler, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderman Stevenson, Alderwoman Godfrey, Alderwoman Christensen

d. July 12th, 2023 Budget and Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Motion was made to approve.

Motion made by Alderwoman Christensen, Seconded by Alderwoman Rasmussen.

Voting Yea: Alderman Koffler, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderman Stevenson, Alderwoman Godfrey, Alderwoman Christensen

5. Visitors

a. Johanna Lapel-616 West Main: Abate Sewer Charges \$640.64

Mrs. Lapel stated she purchased the home in March of 2023 and the previous owner died in 2021, it was then foreclosed on with all power being shut-off. She stated she received a sewer bill for an entire year of \$640.64, she stated the power just got turned on in July and the pipes are not functional to have any sewer going into the system. She stated she is asking for all the charges prior to July be forgiven.

Alderwoman Christensen asked if it is for sewer and water and PWD Hintz stated it is sewer only, as the property is on a sand point/well. PWD Hintz stated the City can abate the charges since there was no sewer use. He stated this home does have a water meter on the sand point. Alderwoman Christensen asked if she who was receiving the bill and Clerk/Treasurer Chamberlin stated the bill was being sent to the Estate of the previous owner and/or the bank that foreclosed on the property and that it was not until Water Clerk Schmierer was on Montana Cadastral to get the tax id number to assess the delinquency on the property taxes that she discovered it had new ownership, so the first bill Ms. Lapel received was the property tax notice. Alderwoman Rasmussen asked if this should have been taken care of in closing and Clerk/Treasurer Chamberlin stated it usually is. City Attorney Kalil stated the City does have the authority to abate the charges.

Motion was made to abate the bill until the July billing for \$640.64.

Motion made by Alderman Koffler, Seconded by Alderwoman Christensen.

Voting Yea: Alderman Koffler, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderman Stevenson, Alderwoman Godfrey, Alderwoman Christensen

**b. Sam Loveridge with Montana State Auditors Office:** Put Elderly Exploitation Event Notice on Water Bills

Blair Stapleton, Securities Outreach Coordinator for the Montana State Auditors Office, stated they will be in Sidney Wednesday August 23, 9am-10am. She stated this event will teach on fraud deduction, cognitive delay and financial decision making and trusted contact persons. She stated Troy Downing, herself and an attorney from their office will be speaking at the event. She stated they would like to have this event listed on the water bills to get the information out to the public.

Clerk/Treasurer Chamberlin stated the city has the capability for no additional cost to have a small announcement on the water/sewer bills that get mailed out, which is what they are requesting to utilize.

Motion was made to approve putting this event on the water bill.

Motion made by Alderman DiFonzo, Seconded by Alderwoman Godfrey.

Voting Yea: Alderman Koffler, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderman Stevenson, Alderwoman Godfrey, Alderwoman Christensen

**6. Public Hearing**

Nothing.

**7. Mayor Norby**

**a. Update**

Mayor Norby announced PWD Hintz, Clerk/Treasurer Chamberlin and himself will be doing the Community Power Hour tomorrow morning from 8-9am at the Richland County Extension Office.

**8. Committee Meeting Work**

**a. Park and Rec Committee:** Pickleball

Alderwoman Christensen stated the Park and Recreation Committee met and reviewed a proposal from PWD Hintz on having the pickleball courts in Kling Park instead of at the tennis court due to the cost of redoing the tennis courts. She stated after discussing, the Park and Recreation Committee are recommending continuing to save as much as possible and to pursue grants and local funding to redo the tennis courts and include pickleball. Alderman DiFonzo stated they also discussed with the current state of the tennis courts and the possible hazards the continuing deterioration is causing, they would like to see it done as soon as possible.

Motion was made to continue to save as much as possible and to pursue grants and local funding to redo the tennis courts and include pickleball.

Motion made by Alderwoman Christensen, Seconded by Alderman Koffler.

Voting Yea: Alderman Koffler, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderman Stevenson,

Alderwoman Godfrey, Alderwoman Christensen

**b. Park and Rec Committee: Lap Swimming**

Alderwoman Christensen stated the Park and Recreation Committee met and reviewed a request to have exclusive time and install necessary infrastructure for lap swimming. She stated after reviewing the Park and Recreation Committee tabled exclusive lap swimming until more information can be provided to the Committee.

**c. Park and Rec Committee: Parks and Pool FY23-24 Preliminary Budgets**

Alderwoman Christesen stated the Park and Recreation Committee met and reviewed the parks and pool preliminary budgets for FY23-24 and recommended approval of said budgets with transferring the money going to be spent on the pickleball courts to the Tennis Court CIP and instead of blasting and painting the pool, to transfer that money into a Pool CIP.

Motion was made to approve the parks and pool preliminary budgets for FY23-24 with amendments.

Motion made by Alderwoman Christensen, Seconded by Alderman Stevenson.

Voting Yea: Alderman Koffler, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderman Stevenson, Alderwoman Godfrey, Alderwoman Christensen

**d. Police and Fire Committee: FY23-24 Police Preliminary Budget**

Alderwoman Godfrey stated the Police and Fire Committee met and reviewed the Police preliminary budget for FY23-24 and recommended approval.

Motion was made to approve the police preliminary budget.

Motion made by Alderwoman Godfrey, Seconded by Alderman Koffler.

Voting Yea: Alderman Koffler, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderman Stevenson, Alderwoman Godfrey, Alderwoman Christensen

**e. Police and Fire Committee: FY23-24 Fire and Building Preliminary Budget**

Alderwoman Godfrey stated the Police and Fire Committee met and reviewed the fire and building departments preliminary budgets and recommended approval amendment to the building department budget to cut the supplies budget to pay a part of the Compliance Officer's position with a starting wage of \$22.00/hour.

Motion was made to approve the Fire Department preliminary budget and the Building Department preliminary budget with the amendment of cutting the supplies budget to pay a part of the Compliance Officer's position with a starting wage of \$22.00/hour.

Motion made by Alderwoman Godfrey, Seconded by Alderman Koffler.

Voting Yea: Alderman Koffler, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderman Stevenson, Alderwoman Godfrey, Alderwoman Christensen

**f. Budget and Finance Committee:** FY23-24 Solid Waste Preliminary Budget

Alderwoman Christensen stated the Budget and Finance Committee met and reviewed the Solid Waste Preliminary Budget for FY23-24 and the assessment fees. After reviewing they recommended approval of the solid waste preliminary budget with increasing the assessment \$25.00 per year for the next 2 years.

Motion was made to approve the solid waste preliminary budget with increasing the assessment \$25.00 per year for the next 2 years.

In discussion, Alderman DiFonzo asked if this would be the last increase this year and Alderwoman Rasmussen stated yes and this is yearly on property taxes.

Motion made by Alderwoman Christensen, Seconded by Alderwoman Rasmussen.

Voting Yea: Alderman Koffler, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderman Stevenson, Alderwoman Godfrey, Alderwoman Christensen

**g. Budget and Finance Committee:** Reviewed FY23-24 Budget and ready for Taxable Valuation

Alderwoman Christensen stated the Budget and Finance Committee met and reviewed the FY23-24 Preliminary Budget and Mill Levy's. City Clerk/Treasurer Chamberlin will present the full budget once the taxable valuation is received. Alderwoman Christensen stated they also reviewed the transfers out of the general fund to not exceed cash restrictions in the general fund. Clerk/Treasurer Chamberlin stated since the addition of the compliance officer position, she has had to make amendments to the transfers as presented to the Budget and Finance and with more budget changes coming, she would like to hold off on approval of the transfers out of the general fund.

Motion was made to table the transfers out of the general fund to be approved in the budget public hearing.

Motion made by Alderwoman Christensen, Seconded by Alderwoman Rasmussen.

Voting Yea: Alderman Koffler, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderman Stevenson, Alderwoman Godfrey, Alderwoman Christensen

**9. Alderman Requests and Committee Reports**

**Parks and Recreation** – Chairman Difonzo – Godfrey, Christensen | **Water and Sewer** – Chairman Koffler – Godfrey, Rasmussen

**Street and Alley** – Chairman Christensen– Difonzo, Stevenson | **Sanitation** – Chairman Rasmussen – Koffler, Stevenson

**City Buildings & Street Lighting** – Chairman Stevenson– Koffler, Rasmussen | **Police and Fire** – Chairman Godfrey, Godfrey, Difonzo, Christensen

**Budget and Finance** – Chairman Christensen – Rasmussen, Godfrey

Alderman Rasmussen stated she received a letter concerning the nuisance property at 321 4th Ave NE. Alderman Koffler stated that is a property the Nuisance Committee is currently handling.

## 10. Unfinished Business

Nothing.

## 11. New Business

### a. Purchase Fair Buttons for City Employees (77 employees for \$385.00)

Clerk/Treasurer Chamberlin stated she is looking for approval to purchase buttons for City employees for the 2023 Richland County Fair. She stated with 77 employees, it will cost \$385.

Motion was made to approve.

Motion made by Alderman Godfrey, Seconded by Alderman Rasmussen.

Voting Yea: Alderman Koffler, Alderman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderman Stevenson, Alderman Godfrey, Alderman Christensen

## 12. City Planner

### a. Planning Board Meeting 7-18-2023 7pm at Interstate Engineering Offices

Mayor Norby stated there will be a Planning Board Meeting 7-18-2023 7pm at Interstate Engineering Offices and the agenda is posted on the front door of City Hall for details.

### b. Open City Planning Board Position-Term Ends 1-1-24

Clerk/Treasurer Chamberlin stated due to Mr. Storm relocating out of Sidney, there is an open Planning Board position.

## 13. City Attorney

City Attorney Kalil stated after meeting with Richland County and Fairview last week, the County is withholding paying the marijuana excise money. He stated the issue with how to pay out that tax revenue has already been resolved by the legislature via a separate bill and there will be an agreement before the City Council for approval at the next meeting.

## 14. Chief of Police

**a. June 2023 Police Report**

Lieutenant. Zeiler provided the June 2023 Police Report on behalf of Chief Kraft.

**15. Public Works Director**

**a. June 2023 Public Works Report**

PWD Hintz presented the June 2023 Public Works Report. He stated they are hopeful Central will be open the middle of August, but the turmoil has seemed to calm down. He stated the paving on Lincoln will begin shortly. He stated the project is on schedule and progressing. Mr. Mayer stated they are doing a nice job with laying the pipe, but there has been issues with subcontractors for paving, curb and gutter and site prep. He stated although the pipe work will be done the end of July, Central will remain closed until the paving is completed.

Alderman DiFonzo asked when they pave Lincoln, will it be closed at the same time as Central and PWD Hintz stated it will. Alderman DiFonzo asked if there can be announcements in the newspaper, so everyone is aware. Clerk/Treasurer stated she can do Facebook posts trying to make sure people are aware.

PWD Hintz stated they will be doing milling/asphalt work in several locations in town. They will also be starting smaller sewer projects and they are installing the stop light on Holly Street, which has traffic control also. Alderman DiFonzo asked if 3rd Street NW will be paved and PWD Hintz stated they needs a SID to pave.

**16. Fire Marshal/Building Inspector**

**a. June 2023 Fire Run Report**

Clerk/Treasurer Chamberlin presented the June 2023 Fire Run Report on behalf of FM/BI Rasmussen.

**17. City Clerk/Treasurer**

**a. June 2023 Treasurers Report, JV Report and W/S Bank Transfer: at meeting in August**

Clerk/Treasurer Chamberlin stated due to not being able to close the FYE until well into July to pay all of June's outstanding bills, she will not be able to provide the monthly reports until the August 3rd, 2023 meeting.

**18. Consent Agenda**

Motion was made to approve the claims and building permits.

Motion made by Alderman Koffler, Seconded by Alderman Stevenson.

Voting Yea: Alderman Koffler, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderman Stevenson, Alderwoman Godfrey, Alderwoman Christensen

a. **Claims to be approved:** \$327,827.55

b. Building Permits to be approved

**19. Adjournment**

at 7:12 pm.