



City of Sidney, MT
City Buildings and Street Lighting Committee Meeting 5-17-23
May 17, 2023 5:30 PM
115 2nd Street SE | Sidney, MT 59270

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: 834 0295 3672 Passcode: 4332809 Call: 1-346-248-7799

Alderman present: Stevenson, Rasmussen

Others present: Mayor Norby, PWD Hintz, FM/BI Rasmussen, Fire Chief Adam Smith and Clerk/Treasurer Chamberlin

1. New Business

a. Vacant Buildings

Clerk/Treasurer Chamberlin presented the sample ordinance provided by Alderwoman Godfrey on the vacant buildings in Anaconda. FM/BI Rasmussen stated he reached out to the Compliance Officer in Anaconda on the success and he stated they have a few buildings they are trying to use this code on but they are just starting to utilize it. He further stated he has concerns on who will police and monitor it since the City of Sidney does not have a compliance department or officer and he has concerns on the City becoming liable for these properties. He stated Billings is pursuing something similar also and have also reached out to Anaconda.

PWD Hintz stated he does not feel this is the appropriate tool to take care of vacant buildings. Alderwoman Rasmussen stated she agrees there is a liability question for the City to take this on with current staff, such as building codes do not apply to this. Fm/BI Rasmussen stated our current building codes do not apply and the city would more than likely have to hire a structural engineer to say the building is not safe.

Clerk/Treasurer Chamberlin stated she has concerns with the fees being able to be refunded and the accounting that would take, the 30 day vacancy would mean snow birds and many other households who travel frequently would have to register and pay, and she has questions how the fees would be decided to be spent on these properties. FM/BI Rasmussen stated the fees can only go to abatement of these buildings.

PWD Hintz stated there are vacant buildings that are in horrible shape in the community. He stated we do need a tool to make sure these properties are taken care of, but this ordinance does

not actually force property owners to make the necessary improvements. Alderwoman Rasmussen asked if it would be better to look into the nuisance code to take care of such properties and Mayor Norby agreed that is the route that could be taken.

Clerk/Treasurer Chamberlin stated city staff would like to opportunity to look into adding to the city nuisance code with City Attorney Kalil and how staffing will handle this additional work and report back to the City Buildings/Street Lighting Committee. Alderwoman Rasmussen stated she would like to see the current nuisance code being enforced and running appropriately before adding more and more to it. FM/BI Rasmussen stated with the newest changes of the nuisance code and the streamlining of the process, we might be able to take care of these properties already.

Motion was made to recommend approval of City Staff looking into the current nuisance code if the inclusion of vacant buildings in it is appropriate or needed and report back to the Committee at a future date.

Motion made by Rasmussen, Seconded by Stevenson.
Voting Yea: Rasmussen, Stevenson

Adjourned at 5:55pm.