

City Council Work Session

5:30 PM
Council Chambers
May 30, 2017 (Tuesday)

ATTENDANCE:

Mayor/Council (please check) x Hanel, x Cromley, x Yakawich, Cimmino, x Brewster, x McFadden, x Friedel, x Swanson, x Sullivan, x Clark, x Brown.

CM excused: Cimmino

ADJOURN TIME: 8:14 pm

Agenda

TOPIC #1	Future Major Issues
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Tina Volek, City Administrator: review the document sent to Council in Friday packet. Reviews issues, need decisions on those items that are identified as FY 18 actions.
 - Inner Belt Loop
 - Transit
 - Parks
 - Public Safety
 - Facilities Master Plan
- Brewster: fine with all items in FY 18.
- Sullivan: clarify election date for MET. Calendar year 2018. Ploehn prefers Nov. 2018 (FY 19).
- Sullivan: can we decline fed money and operate a para-transit service. Will research.
- Brown: 8 mills for MET replaces 2 buses per year forever? Yes.
- Swanson: have options for financing, just need to decide priorities.
- Friedel: price tag on Kairos building? No, only prices for a new addition to evidence. Lots of improvements needed and recommend buying instead of leasing.
- Friedel: do we have a use for the current building? Probably can use it.
- Clark: station location study underway? Yes, and that's why the issue is timed in FY 19.
- Hanel: AMR locations? Don't have fixed locations, staff and assign vehicles as demand dictates.
- Yakawich: comprehensive report. Wait until 2020 before looking at court and city hall? Yes. Inevitably running out of space. Many possible solutions and other issues to address first?

- Yakawich: are we missing opportunities by waiting? Maybe but many decisions need to be made before city starts buying or building. Land probably available if we partner other parties.
- Sullivan: parks – discussed election, have bonds but almost paid? How much money needed to make the improvements? Prefer letting voters decide whether to increase PMD 1 assessments. Volek: process changed by Legislature. Unreturned ballots count as yes.
- **Public Comment:**
- Marty Connel, BIRD President: Kairos building interesting and want to tour it sometime. Security important and that's assured with this building. Ask that his architect tour evidence building, meet with our architect and develop a proposal. Willing to lease or sell (condo). \$4/ft to lease and \$1M - \$1.5M to buy.
- Hanel: not familiar with building.
- Volek: will have Connell tour and invites councilmembers to also tour.
- Yakawich: amount of space available? About 3x City space needs. City to buy more space in future for expansion.
- Swanson: nothing to lose by looking at building and CMs should tour
- Cromley: schedule to tour and develop costs? Can tour anytime. 7-10 days to develop proposal.
- Brown: will recuse self for discussion of Kairos for conflict – temporary employee.
- Kevin Nelson, 4235 Bruce Avenue, Billings, MT: letter from SW corridor task force from last week. City should consider fire station and new evidence expansion on Midland Rd. Personal opinion is that co-location is best for city. Could sell station 5. City and Blue Creek Fire have conflicting service areas; City could absorb the district and give owners better insurance rates.
- Brewster: thought that Briarwood annexation left land in the Blue Creek Fire Dist. Has this changed over time?
- Clark: Briarwood and Cedar Park are served by City and the rests by Blue Creek. Staff will provide map.
- Sullivan: which station covers Josephine Crossing? Will find out.
- Dennis Ulvestad, 3040 Central Avenue, Billings, MT: priority should be inner belt loop, allow voters to decide whether to bond. Need fire station. Parks should be 3rd. Transit is #4 and should use big buses for heavy use areas and smaller ones for everything else. Facilities Plan – city should look at Battin Bldg.
- Steve Zeier: Kairos bldg. should be considered for evidence – secure building. BOC and evidence bldg. are in the SBBURD. Board views City as a good partner and willing to talk about financing plans. Optimist Park – new master plan and want to implement it.
- Hanel: any comments on the South Task Force letter? Intriguing idea.
- Clark: planning to improve Hawthorne? Yes.
- Clark: prefer spending TIF on evidence building.
- Yakawich: is the consensus to not to fund the evidence building? Board needs to decide that but funding the building will impact SBBURD funding other projects.

- Yakawich: \$500k TIF for Optimist Park for parking improvements? \$400k - \$500k is being discussed.
- Clark: keep pursuing the Optimist Park parking.
- Sue Bressler, 220 Yellowstone, Avenue, Billings, MT: encourage City Council to put more money in parks. missing donation opportunities by waiting on developing the park. Contributors not seeing improvements and complaining.
- Hanel: which funding option do you prefer? Don't know, just know that we need to develop more park.
- Clark: thought dog park money wasn't yet raised.
- Yakawich: do you attend the PRPL board meetings? yes, waiting on City to fund its part of the project.
- Floyd Martin, 4645 Phillip Street, Billings, MT: vice chair of SW corridor. City owns vacant land east of evidence building.
- Hanel: close the hearing.
- Brewster: like the 2-year incremental construction plan.
- Sullivan: support if we use some gas tax money to examine Molt Rd – Hwy 3 cutoff.
- Brewster: worth looking at that planning effort.
- Volek: staff looked at it and closer-in locations might be better. Fairly certain the city will get to keep the gas tax long term.
- Clark: when does new gas tax money come to city? Dave Mumford, Public Works Director: March 2018.
- Swanson: City still have access to the grant for Zimmerman Trail? Yes and will mostly look at the top and bottom, not the middle.
- Sullivan: need to buy land for west end roads.
- Volek: 9-1-1 center will be moved to 2018. MET election can happen in 2018.
- Hanel: Ploehn – comments on using small buses? Small buses work on some low ridership routes. Some routes need the larger buses to handle peaks.
- McFadden: pay almost \$.5M for bus, what is life expectancy? Fed money dictates 12 years and we're running them 14-15 years.
- Clark: amount of federal money? Amount of money depends. \$1.1m for operations. Capital better matching.
- Friedel: talked with First Student about picking up kids or us paying them to do it? No.
- Friedel: would like to pursue it.
- Sullivan: could we have election in Nov. 17? 5-6 months to election and not on citizen radar; need more time to educate public.
- Clark: \$60k is stand-alone election? Yes.
- Brown: can MET use advertising spaces on buses to campaign for levy? Don't know.
- Brooks: public time, resources, funds etc. cannot be used for or against ballot or towards a candidate.
- Cromley: since Ploehn prefers Nov. 2018, not 2017 for election. Schedule work session early fall 2017 to discuss.
- Clark: money go into MET fund and what protects it?

- Sullivan: Fed \$ support declining. Instead of 8 mills, go to election with 5 because maintenance declines as we improve maintainable buses?
- Hanel: schedule fall WS to further discuss MET levy increase.
- Volek: guidance on FY 19 projects? Staff will continue working on them and bring them back in future meetings.
- Hanel: huge strides in PMD 1, but why not use a portion of the current revenue for bonds for 3 park projects?
- Volek: levy supports some personnel, so have to examine the impacts.
- Clark: can PMD 1 be used to pay for a bond; don't think we can without election? Staff will continue working with bond counsel.
- Yakawich: any way to reduce cost of park development? Cottonwood development will cost \$8M and we have \$500k. May be able to reduce some costs but all development will be expensive.
- Friedel: looked at funding small neighborhood parks differently than large ones like Pioneer? Subdivision PMDs and willing to create more of them.
- Friedel: maintenance cost for improved Centennial Park? Will get back to you with cost per acre
- Brown: PMD 1 exclusive for deferred maintenance projects, so developing new ones may not fit with PMD 1's creation. Will send you PMD creation documents to clarify what restrictions are in it. Brown: if put to election
- Clark: PMD 1 wasn't supposed to be used to hire employees, but for maintenance. Something changed in the past to allow hiring. Volek: Employees are providing maintenance. All budget items have been reviewed by Council.
- Clark: want to see uncommitted reserves used to do park work.
- Volek: bond and operating levy for fire, City Hall and court. Battin Building may be done before 2020.
- Hanel: would like to see some numbers.
- Friedel: mutual agreement with 3 jurisdictions.
- Brewster: want to see study on fire department.
- Sullivan: lease terms for rented space.
- Brewster: have to do something sooner rather than later about the evidence building. If capital investment, rather use undesignated reserves. 2019 is Ok for schedule.
- Cromley: request staff coordinate with Mr. Connell on his building.

TOPIC #2	Budget Wrap-Up
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Volek: presented Council info on utility costs for GF, PSF, etc. but haven't analyzed. June 5 will again talk about budget so hope to make decisions then.
- Sullivan: can PW give us production costs vs the retail price. Mumford: not a profit business, so the charges are what it costs to produce the water, etc.

- Sullivan: Hawthorne and Highland Park accounting for 45% of the sewer charges. Why? Volek: Mr. Whitaker has not seen documents yet, so we need more time to go over documents.
- Cromley: how much would water rates decline if all departments pay for services? Have an impact but don't know the number yet.
- Brewster: thanks for the info.
- Clark: citizens may get reduction in water bills but have to make it up in property tax.
- Brewster: can't deduct water bills from income tax.
- Friedel: doing this to make sure that departments are responsibly using the services and products.
- Volek: give staff feedback on the residential snow plowing proposals? Please review the SBRs that are in the budget book.
- **Public Comment:**
None

TOPIC #3	Council Discussion
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Hanel: pass along compliments to Cemetery and Parks on its appearance for Memorial Day events.
- **Public Comment:**
None

TOPIC #4	Public Comment on Items not on the Agenda
PRESENTER	
NOTES/OUTCOME	

- Kevin Nelson, 4235 Bruce Avenue, Billings, MT: concerned that Yellowstone County population is flat. Bozeman and Missoula increased. Need to understand the dynamics that impact Y.C. population.
- Hanel: lots going on in city, so don't rely too much on the census statements.
- Clark: census is estimated right now.
- Mr. Nelson: info came from same sources and show these results, so
- Jack Pelham, 7 Montana Avenue, Laurel, MT: would like to increase Babcock Theater interest. Donations to new non-profit might be difficult. Didn't find any existing ones. Would like to do a 1-year feasibility study and present information to Council.