

Agenda Items

City of Billings
Legislative Report
16th Week of the Montana Legislature
April 26, 2013

On Wednesday, April 24th, the 87th Legislative Day, the Montana Legislature adjourned “sine die”. During the Session 1201 bills were introduced (of the 2218 bill draft requests filed). For this Report the following topics and bills are highlighted:

- **HB 2**, (the General Budget Bill) sponsored by Rep. Ankey, was passed by the Legislature on April 19th after several bipartisan votes. It was transmitted to the Governor on April 25th. The final Bill appropriates \$3.6 billion for the next two fiscal years ending in 2015. The ending fund balance in 2015 is estimated to be \$182 million. **HB 2** is central to a “package” of bills passed by the Legislature to fund government services and implement policies adopted by the Legislature, including the following significant bills: **HB 5** provides \$49.5 million for University System projects in 7 Montana cities, including the Science building at MSU-B; **SB 175** provides \$50 million additional funding for K-12 schools; **HB 13** provides \$115 million for pay increases for State employees; **HB 454** provides \$67 million to the PERS pension fund; **SB 96, SB 282 and SB 394** provide about \$69 million in property tax and income tax reductions; and **SB 410** provides an additional \$13.5 million for several state agencies as requested by the Governor to supplement **HB 2**.
- **HB 11**, the Treasure State Endowment Bill, provides for construction of bridges and water projects. It passed the Legislature on April 19th. Of the \$22 million appropriation, Yellowstone County would receive \$218,439 for bridge repair.
- **HB 218**, sponsored by Rep. Ankney, will provide up to \$85 million over 7 years to local governments in eastern Montana impacted by Bakken oil production. The monies are to be used primarily for infrastructure projects. The Bill passed on April 24th.
- **HB 314**, sponsored by Rep. Doug Kary, to revise Special District laws, passed the Legislature as amended. One section, which would have caused the City to start over with its citywide park district, was deleted from the Bill. The Governor signed the Bill on April 9th.
- **HB 443**, sponsored by Rep. Cook, passed the House, but was tabled in the Senate Taxation Committee. This Bill would have required that a tax increment finance district terminate no later than 30 years after adoption.
- **HB 454**, sponsored by Rep. McChesney, is the pension reform bill to provide funding for PERS, keep the defined benefit plan and revise GABA. It passed the Legislature as amended on April 22nd. It provides for deposits of up to \$21 million per year in PERS from the coal severance tax; increases the employer contribution 1.27% in 2014 and then

gradually increases employer contributions by 2.27% over a period of 10 years; increases the employee contributions by 1%; and decreases GABA to 1.5%.

- **HB 472**, sponsored by Rep. Jerry Bennett, would have reduced the tax owed on business equipment by raising the exemption amount to \$250,000. It passed the House, but was tabled in the Senate Taxation Committee.
- **HB 575**, sponsored by Rep. Berry, is a bill revising state emergency system 9-1-1 laws. It would require that fees collected for wireless enhanced 9-1-1 services be reallocated to wireless providers and to wireless 9-1-1 jurisdictions. It passed the Legislature and was transmitted to the Governor on April 18th.
- **SB 96**, sponsored by Sen. Tutvedt, was amended to provide for an exemption of the business equipment tax for up to \$100,000 of market value of the equipment, and a reduction in the tax rate to 1.5% for the first \$6 million of taxable market value. The Bill passed the Legislature on April 24th.
- **SB 105**, sponsored by Sen. Taylor Brown, would revise interim zoning laws. It passed the Legislature, but was returned with Governor's amendments. These amendments to SB 105 were rejected by both the House and the Senate. The Bill was returned to the Governor on April 18th.
- **SB 239**, sponsored by Sen. Buttrey, passed the Legislature and has been signed by the Governor. The Bill merges laws to create aerospace, technology and industrial tax increment finance districts into one district called a targeted economic development district.
- **SB 280**, sponsored by Sen. Thomas, would permit mediation for dispute of property tax valuation cases. It passed the Legislature on April 19th.
- **SB 290**, sponsored by Sen. Arntzen, passed the Legislature and was transmitted to the Governor on April 12th. The Bill would provide for a hearing and potential change in a county zoning district for county parcels surrounded by city property. This Bill would apply to the noise and dust issues at one or more industrial properties in Billings.
- **SB 324**, sponsored by Sen. Rosendale, would substantially revise subdivision laws related to lease or rent. The Bill attempts to address concerns raised by a 2012 Attorney General's opinion. It passed the Legislature and will be transmitted to the Governor.
- **SB 398**, sponsored by Sen. Tutvedt, would have revised the property tax revaluation process and the taxation of residential and commercial property and reduce the property tax reappraisal cycle to two years. It was tabled in the House Taxation Committee on April 19th. (This Bill is one of 20 not voted on by Senate Democrats on April 5th over a protest and dispute about a Call of the Senate Motion and two referenda.)
- **SJ 23**, sponsored by Sen. Tutvedt, is a resolution to study the tax appeal process. It passed the Senate and the House.

- **SJ 30**, sponsored by Sen. Tutvedt, is a resolution to conduct an interim study of TIFDs. It passed in the Senate Taxation Committee on April 12th but died in process on April 24th when the Legislature adjourned.

I look forward to discussing these and other legislative matters with you. Please contact me if you have any questions or would like information on any particular topic or bill.

Ed Bartlett, City of Billings Lobbyist, cell: 406-431-6014

Other Items

RECEIVED

APR 23 2013

Mayor



PO Box 201800 1515 East 6th Avenue Helena, MT 59620 (406) 444-3115

April 22, 2013

Mayor Tom Hanel and Billings City Council
PO Box 1178
Billings MT 59103

Dear Mayor Hanel and Council Members,

It is a pleasure to inform you that the Parmly Billings Library has been recognized with the 2013 Excellent Library Service Award (the ELSA). This award is given by the Montana State Library Commission to libraries that demonstrate a high level of service to their communities. Libraries that apply must meet requirements established by the Commission in categories including collection development, information access, policies, planning and evaluation, fiscal management, board accomplishments, continuing education for staff and trustees, and outreach to the community.

Congratulations to your library and your community for achieving the ELSA. The Commission thanks you for the support you give your local library. It is essential to ensuring that your citizens have a better quality of life by giving them access to the information they need to make informed decisions to live healthy, happy lives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard Quillin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Richard Quillin, Chair
Montana State Library Commission



April 2013



SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT

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Elephants on
Broadway
5pm-9pm
Downtown

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Scheels Run for
Ryan
7am-11am
Westend

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Special Event Calendar

***Approval Pending**

For questions or details:
wellbrooks@ci.billings.mt.us



May 2013



Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

			1	2	3	4
					Spiral Skies Belly Dance	*Community Fun Run 8:30a-10:30a Cinco de Mayo Street Closure Downtown 10-9pm
5	6	7	8	9	10	11 Montana Women's Run 5:30am-noon
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
						Run for Heaven's Sake 7:30am-10:30
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Special Event Calendar

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June 2013



Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

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***Amp'd Alley
Closure
S. 27th @ Skate
Park 10-9pm**

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***Heart and Sole
5:30a-10:30a
Finishing in Dehler
Park**

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