

# City Council Work Session

5:30 PM  
Council Chambers  
Date: April 21, 2014

## ATTENDANCE:

Mayor/Council (please check) x Hanel, x Cromley, x Yakawich,  Cimmino,  
x Pitman, x McFadden, x Bird, x Swanson, x McCall, x Crouch, x Brown

## Agenda

### TOPIC #1: Zimmerman Trail

- Debi Meling: Update on when Zimmerman Trail will open. A rock fell last month and the road was closed. Have had a project for nine years from the Federal Government for safety improvements. Have been working on that project for several years determining what to do with that money, whether we could widen, looked at a tunnel, alternate option and what kind of cost we were looking at. Have been working with MDT the past year to get a contract with our Engineer. Have two different projects. Phase 1 – Rock fall Project. Was slated to start in Sept. 2014. Have speeded up project since the road closed. Reason 2 phases, did not know how much rock fall was up there. Estimated between \$1M – \$3M. Earmark is under \$8M. There are other rocks unstable at this time. Have put off opening road and fixing guardrail knowing more rocks are coming down. Working with MDT and FHWA to advance this phase and bidding starts next week. Reviewed the plans today. Will get a bid May 8 and immediately move into contracting bid award. Hopefully have a contractor by end of May. This work may take anywhere from 2-4 weeks. Should be done mid to end of June. Then there will be work on the guardrail repair and resurfacing. Gave presentation that shows 6 areas where rocks will be removed or stabilized.
- Tina Volek: Who is the owner of this property where these rocks reside?
- Debi Meling: City owns the road, and the County parkland is on the north, east, and west side. Working on the County land. Have been given permission to do this work. State is involved because with Federal highways money it flows through the State.
- Bird: Funding source? Is County participating in these costs?
- Debi Meling: FHWA, State and local.
- Dave Mumford: County is not participating in the costs. Being covered under Federal highways because any rock that falls will hit the road.
- Mayor Hanel: Correct to say that the moneys used for the rock work will not interfere with the earmark funds for the road work?
- Dave Mumford: All part of the same earmark. Knowing in the beginning that in order to do the construction, would have to scale and move rock. Are

responsible for all overruns over the earmark amount. Decided to pull all the rock down so that we don't have this variable.

- Mayor Hanel: So not sure how much that is going to cut into the work that we would like to do on Zimmerman Trail?
- Dave Mumford: At this point between \$1M to \$2M.
- Tina Volek: Bulk of our work is going to be at the top and the bottom, widening the road.
- Dave Mumford: No change to the width. Just an overlay with new barriers along the edge, and striping. Grades cannot be changed.
- Brown: Are these Montana Contractors?
- Debi Meling: No. The State of Montana has contractors that are pre-qualified for different types of work. In this case, there are none in Montana. Only 3 in the region.

Public Comments: None

## **TOPIC #2: CDBG/HOME Allocation**

- Brenda Beckett: Preview of recommendations. Gave presentation on HUD programs. Community Development Programs: Decent Housing, Suitable Living Environments, and Economic Opportunities. Low Income Benefit for low income area, low income individuals or households. Main focus of all of our funds for the City of Billings. Map on concentrations of poverty in the City as of 2010. Consolidated planning process is made up of two large five year studies. Housing Needs Assessment 2010-2015, and Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice 2013-2018. Due at the end of September – Comprehensive Annual Performance Evaluation Report to HUD that reports on our accomplishments during the last fiscal year. CDBG (Community Development Board Grant) has taken a beating over the past couple of years. Did have stimulus money for renovations having to do with weatherization. Saved by the move to Program Income. Showed on chart, new money from HUD and the Program Income that we received because of loans that are paid back for the first time home buyer program, and home repair programs. New funding for CDBG and HOME. Program Income very large (\$672,436) and falling short on CDBG (\$593,351) which is why we won't be able to fund one our major programs this upcoming year. Total Budget is \$1,265,787. Timeline: Program starts - December 6; Applications due – January 15. Only taking applications for any projects that will pay the City back. Task Force Input – February & March; Budget Recommendations – April 1; Council Work Session – April 21; Council Public Hearing & Action – April 28; Plan to HUD – May 15; Plan Year Begins – July 1.
- Brown: Are these loans interest free?
- Brenda Beckett: Yes. Very simple lender. 0 interest and zero payments until the property is sold. This is called a silent second mortgage. Make sure we are lending to households that are feasible to rehabilitate with the amount of money that is there.

Recommendations: Administration: Maximum allowed - \$118,175 & \$30,171

CDBG:

Vista: \$50,000      Manufactured Home Repair: \$50,000  
Housing Rehabilitation: Remaining CDBG - \$375,176.

HOME:

CHDO: Minimum required amount - \$45,257  
Affordable Housing: \$55,000  
Home Buyer: Remaining HOME - \$542,008

Allocation by Consolidated Plan Strategy: Last Year - 2013

- 42% - Home Repair Program
- 45% - First Time Homebuyer & Housing Development
- 13% - Administration, which also supports Billings Metro VISTA Project.

Last year's Allocation included new \$250,000 for Revolving Loan Fund.

- 36% - Existing Housing
- 52% - New Affordable Housing
- 12% - Partnerships

Allocation by Consolidated Plan Strategy: This year - 2014

- 38% - Home Repair Program
- 46% - First Time Homebuyer & Housing Development
- 16% - Billings Metro VISTA Project

- Tina Volek: National objectives, mapping, planning process, spending history, spending priorities for FY15.
- McFadden: Stabilize neighborhood?
- Brenda Beckett: Yes. Study that just came out on the abandoned homes project. Low foreclosure rate on the properties that we assist. About 1 – 2 %.
- McCall: Any regional or national reports that compare their programs to ours? Excellent data and info on the website.
- Brown: How much money is out in loans that has not be paid back?
- Brenda Beckett: Have \$2.9M in affordable housing rental projects, and \$55M in first time homebuyer. Have been doing the home program since mid-1990's.

Public Comments: None

**TOPIC #3: FY2015 Planning Fee Proposal**

- Wyeth Friday: Presentation was in Friday packet and reviewing tonight.

**Planning Fees:**

The City Council and City Administrator instructed staff to bring forward fee changes / increases every two years for consideration.  
The Planning Division fees were last adjusted in FY13. The Division reviewed its fee structure and costs as part of its FY15 budgeting process. A 7% increase is proposed (3.5% per year since FY13) in most fees for FY15.

The proposed fee increase is based on personnel, operations, and maintenance costs incurred by the Division.

**Cost Increases FY13 – FY15:**

	<u>FY13</u>	<u>FY15 (estimated)</u>	<u>%Change</u>
Revenue	\$1,265.70	\$1,293,394	2%
Expenses			
Personnel	\$ 799,304	\$ 960,426	20%
O & M	\$ 442,208	\$ 490,000	11%
Grants/Transfer	\$ 13,099	\$ 11,962	
Total	\$1,254,611	\$1,462,388	17% (8.5%/year)
Expense Net			15% (7.5%/year)

**Planning Fees:**

Staff is not proposing 15% increase due to funding sources and one-time costs:

- 2013 Moving costs, 2013 Innoprise Conversion, 1/3 Dept. Receptionist.
- Fees should only cover permit and application processing.
- Staff performs other duties that are funded from Levy and PL Program.
- Trying to ensure all revenue sources are considered in this proposal.
- 7% appears to address costs for permit/app. Processing.

DRAFT - Chart was shown on **Proposed FY2015 City Planning Application Fees**

**Planning Fees:** Estimated Revenues from fees (\*City only)

\$5,000 in new revenues estimated in FY15 under the new fee schedule based on FY14 level of subdivision activity.

\$4,000 in new revenues estimated in FY15 under the new fee schedule based on level of general application and permit activity.

**Planning Fees:**

- The proposed changes to the fees for the Planning Division have been discussed with the Billings HBA.
- If directed, staff will bring the fees back at a regular Council meeting for action prior to Council's action on the FY15 Budget.

- Hanel: Compliment PCS for development review process.
- Pitman: Issues with County subdivision to avoid City?
- Wyeth Friday: No, most development in City and County just now starting up.
- Yakawich: Developers and builders support these fees?
- Wyeth: Generally pleased with process, not as much concern about fees.
- Brown: Fee increases needed mainly to cover wage increases?
- Wyeth Friday: Yes.
- Brown: How do our fees compare to other cities?
- Wyeth Friday: Middle of the pack but other cities assess fees differently than we do.
- Pitman: Not a lot of complaining from the development community. Hearing the same and facilities make the difference?
- Wyeth Friday: Better layout and the receptionist improved things. Parking is better.

Public Comments:

Kevin Nelson – 4235 Bruce Ave.: Unclear about one-time FY13 moving costs and whether included in fee adjustment. Should planning moving fees come from the GF?

Tina: GF paid for code enforcement but the others paid their way.

Candi Millar: GF contributed \$35k to the Planning Dept.

#### **TOPIC #4: Water and Wastewater Rate Study**

- Jennifer Duray: Presentation in the Friday packet.

PW recently completed a Water and Wastewater Rate Study. Here to present the results and recommendations that came out of that study. Hired a Consultant 82S to perform our rate study this year. Asked them to not only update our water and wastewater user rates, but also look at our tier structure that we use for residential water rates. As part of that study, they looked at the Heights water district rates which are called our resale rates. Then calculated a cost of service rate for Phillips 66, and the system development fee that they will need to pay before they connect to our wastewater system. Brief background of our structure. Prior to 2009 had a constant block structure. Transitioned to an inclining block structure in 2009. Means that the price per unit or the price per CCF is lower for the lower tiers of water use. As you go up, the price per unit increases. Inclining block structures are also called conservation rates because they assign higher costs to customers who are placing greater peak demands on our system. It is those peak demands that cause higher infrastructure costs. Makes sense to charge them more for those higher costs that they are placing on our system. Not all tier structures are created equal. Wanted to take a look at ours and see if we could make improvements somewhere. Did this for a few reasons. First was, had the structure in place for about 6 years. Have a lot of data to analyze and look at what we have received and look at what we are doing well, and what could be improved. Also receive a number of complaints about people wanting to even out the water bills for summer and winter. Do have budget billing and could do it through that process. People feel penalized for watering their lawn. Certainly not the intent when we implemented this structure. Councilmember Pitman asked us to look into this. We are doing so.

##### Residential Water Rate Design Considerations:

- Users would like to even out summer and winter billing.
- Consideration:
  - Prudent lawn watering
  - Ability for users to control costs
  - Tier for excessive use
  - Effect on “lifeline” users
  - Revenue stability.

One of the first questions we asked our consultant was what do other communities do? We want to know what is average. Is there something we could do better than we are doing now. What we found - it really depends on the community. There are communities that have much more rain than ours, and

then there are brown cities. A brown city, they place a high importance on conservation. It is going to depend on the climate. Didn't feel that Billings wanted to be a brown city. Take that into consideration. Everybody in the industry agrees on, there needs to be enough of a percentage difference between the tiers to make an impact to the customer. Whole point of conservation rates is to encourage efficient water use. Without that pricing, if you are at that lower end – 7 or 8%, people won't really notice that. Won't affect conservation that much. Our rate structure is currently 3 tiers.

Tier 1 0 – 4 CCF at a rate of \$1.95

Tier 2 5 – 16 CCF at a rate of \$2.10

Tier 3 > 16 CCF at a rate of \$2.75

- Tina Volek: Please explain what CCF is?
- Jennifer Duray: A CCF stands for one hundred cubic feet. Equivalent of 748 gallons of water. Biggest complaint on current system is the third tier that people get to 16 too quickly. First thing was to update our current structure to the rates that we would need for FY15. Are asking for a water rate increase this year. Updated our current structure to:

Tier 1: \$2.11

Tier 2: \$2.28

Tier 3: \$2.98

Notice we only have an 8% increase between Tiers 1 and 2, but we have a 31% between Tiers 2 and 3. First alternate we came up with expands Tier 1 slightly up to 6 CCF's. Would include the average indoor water use. Next Tier is 7 to 43 CCF's. That is where we get into the prudent lawn watering. Per recommendations from Extension Office, it would take 1.5" of water per week to be considered prudent. On a 10,569 sq. ft. lot which they consider average, would take 37 CCF's of water. That is Tier 2. 20% difference between Tier 1 and 2 rates. Tier 3 would be 44 – 100 CCF's, and Tier 4 is everything over 100 CCF's. First Tier is indoor water budget, Tier 2 is outdoor water budget, Tier 3 is excess use, and Tier 4 is wasteful use.

- Brown: Going from 7 – 16 CCF's to 7 – 43 CCF's?
- Jennifer Duray: It was 5 – 16 CCF's. The rates increase as well. Rates are less and as you expand the Tiers the rates have to go higher because they are all revenue neutral. Distributes revenues more equally. Most bills are staying in Tier 1 and 2 for the entire year. Still have a number of Tier 4 bills. It is pretty minimal.
- Tina Volek: Is there a way to go on the website to look at your bill?
- Jennifer Duray: All bills are online and could go back and get the past bills. When the notices are sent out, have to send average impact for each individual user too. Second Alternate expands Tier 1 even more to 14 CCF's. Picked 14 because average annualized water use. Would include not only that 6 CCF's of indoor water use, but another 8 CCF's of minimal watering. Tier 2 would include the remainder of the prudent lawn watering. Tier 3 and 4, same as on Alternate

1. Alternate 2 is the one that best promotes distribution of revenues between tiers. Least expensive for prudent lawn watering, but it sends a clear signal for excess use. It is the scenario that staff is recommending.

Retail and Resale Water Rate Recommendations: So far have talked about the volume metric part of the fee. Have two parts to the water fee. Other is the fixed monthly fee. Not recommending any changes to these water fees. A residential home would typically have a meter size of the ¾". That is \$8.00. Would not change. Side by side comparison of residential Tier Alternatives. Chart doesn't give complete picture. Have to look at the bill impacts to understand how it affects people. From the chart, you can tell that as you expand those Tiers out, the rates do get higher but stay in the Tiers a lot longer. Are all revenue neutral solutions for us. Would receive the same amount of revenue in each of the proposed FY15 scenarios. Non-Residential rate would go from \$1.62 to \$1.71 is what we are proposing. Resale rate for Heights water would not change. The seasonal rate would go from \$2.75 to \$2.87. Slide shows the actual bill impacts for residential customers under the different scenarios. Looking at the residential consumption for 6 CCF's which our winter usage is. FY15 rate on the lower end of the spectrum near the current structure would be \$21.00/month. Would go down by 10¢ for Alternate 1. Alternate 2 would go up by 26¢. The 26 CCF's is the average summer usage. Below the prudent level. Important to note, the existing structure would be \$73.60. It would go down a little bit to \$72.50 for Alternate 1, and then down a little bit more for Alternate 2. The Residential Consumption 43 level which is the prudent watering, plus the indoor use would be down quite a bit for both Alternates over the existing structure. As you start going back up into the 75 and 110 Residential Consumption, that is when the Alternates start becoming more expensive than the current structure. Bottom line, existing structure is the cheapest for light and heavy users. Alternate 2 is the cheapest for the average user. Whereas Alternate 1 would favor mid to heavy 75 CCF range. Bill impacts for non-residential are shown 1" meter using 100 CCF's. Go up by \$9.00.

Wastewater: Have been increasing wastewater rates last few years to get to level needed to fund wastewater treatment plant improvements that are required to meet federal regulations for the treatment of phosphorous and nitrogen.

Anticipate this is the last of these increases for this project. Are hopeful that we can go back to the lower increases that are in line with inflationary levels.

Residential and commercial has the same rate for wastewater and are recommending this goes from \$2.75 to \$3.00 per CCF. Also recommending small increases in the fixed monthly charge for the wastewater side. For a ¾" meter which would be the residential would go up 5¢ to \$6.45. Bill impacts for wastewater are shown in chart. 6 CCF usages is average residential. That bill would go up \$1.55/month (from \$22.90 to \$24.45). Showed slide on different comparisons of different cities in Montana for the water / wastewater bill combined. Rates shown for other cities, are their rates now and do not include any proposed rate increases that they might be doing this year. Great Falls in the process of building new wastewater plant so their fees will be going up. At

their current rates, the recommended Alternate 2 will still be less than everyone but Great Falls.

Phillips 66 – are going to be connecting mid- May. They will begin discharging towards the end of May. Are only using specific portions of our system. Will be using just the transmission line from their plant to our plant. Are using our plant and all the treatment facilities associated with that. To do their rates, we had to not assess them for any of the O&M and capital costs that are associated with the parts of the system they don't use. Total revenue requirements come in at under \$265,000. That equates to a fixed monthly rate of \$7,590.00 and a volume metric rate of 43.1¢ per CCF. Their agreement charged a surcharge of 6%. That surcharge goes to the GF. Phillips 66 system development fee is a one-time fee that they have to pay to connect to our system. Several factors we need to follow

- Must comply with State law (MCA 7-6-1601)
  - Requires a nexus between the charge and cost of providing the service.
  - SDF methodology per statute (buy-in and incremental components)
  - SDF Advisory Committee
- Revised existing methodology based on agreement with P66.

Phillips 66 SDF Results:

Existing Treatment System SDF	\$597,865.05
Existing Trunk System SDF	\$23,600
Planned System Expansion SDF	\$1,029,047.15
TOTAL SDF for P66	\$1,650,512.20

- Pitman: Happy that PW is dealing with Tier 3, but favor Alternative 1.
- McCall: Recommendation is to go with Alternative 2. Holds people accountable and does conserve water. Tier 1 includes people that have minimal use. Extension on Tier 4, the higher amount, again is up to people who will choose how they want to water.
- Pitman: Alternative 2 does seem the best way to go.
- Yakawich: How do you monitor wastewater?
- Dave Mumford: Wastewater rates for residential is the average of your winter (4 months) of domestic use. We don't have any of water lawns, washing cars, etc. Don't monitor actual flows in your sewer line. Monitor what goes into your house in Dec., Jan., Feb., and March.
- Yakawich: How is the quality of our water?
- Dave Mumford: Water quality exceeds any national standards.
- Cromley: Don't charge by square foot of a lot right? Concerned about using the word prudent.
- Jennifer Duray: Correct.



- Dave Mumford: Prudent is 1.5 inches of water per week, per square foot. When the word prudent is used not talking about the amount that is actually on the ground, other than if you watered 1.5 inches per week, you should be able to keep the grass green. Lot size is not taken into account, just the amount of water necessary to keep your grass green.
- Tina Volek: Recommendation from Staff is to go with Alternative 2.

Public Comments:

Kevin Nelson – 4235 Bruce Ave: “Consensus” of Council to proceed with Alternative 2 deprives public of their ability to testify and possibly change. Decision is already made. Poor governing.

**TOPIC #5: Quarterly Updates**

- BIRD – Kelly McCarthy: Reviewed BIRD (Billings Industrial Revitalization District) Report to City of Billings – Q3 FY14 (Jan – Mar 2014)

Financials

- No new income in quarter
- Expecting payment in June 2014
- \$530,000 unallocated
  - o Gateway project
  - o One app in processing
  - o Two others anticipated soon

Projects

- Castlerock Excavating
  - o Demolition of building destroyed by fire
  - o Repair storm drain under Montana Ave
- Michael Haas
  - o Former Treasure State Formal Wear
  - o Convert to office spaces
  - o Underground tanks
- MDU MGP (*Manufactured Gas Plant*) Facility – Corner of 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. and N. 18<sup>th</sup>
  - o Working with DEQ on clean bill of health
  - o Letter of support from EBURD
- HAWK Signal at North 20<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Ave N.
  - o Meeting with VISTAS
- Website live!

Community Activity

- Representatives (board members, staff and land owners)
  - o Board of Adjustments
  - o Parking Advisory Board
  - o Railroad Crossing Committee
- Q’s Art Shop
  - o Art for a Cause on 8 May
- Montana Mobile Document
  - o Shred-a-thon for Big Sky Senior Services - June 14<sup>th</sup>

- Patty and Kelly briefing Urban Planning Class at MSU-B
- County Commissioners in March

#### Olympic Update – For 2026

##### History

- Across the street from largest entertainment complex in state
- Very high traffic counts
- Lack of infrastructure has limited development in the Gateway area
- SID/RSID plan developed in Summer of 2013
- Incentives developed in Summer of 2013
- Required annexation and acceptance of SID costs
- Reception lukewarm

##### Updates

- Dennis Pitman comment during last quarterly briefing
- Met with board, and city officials – find a more creative way to fund
- Project Cost \$3.1M
  - o \$.25M from County RSID fund
  - o \$.25M from East Billings TIF
  - o \$2.6M TIF Revenue Bond
- Requires three steps to get there
  - o Voluntary Annexation (no SID/RSID required)
    - 28 Landowners, 48 parcels
  - o Expand TIF District
  - o Approve TIF Revenue Bond
- Pat Weber ran numbers on \$2M bond and we're good
  - o Need to look at \$2.6M scenario
- Need to get into CIP

##### Build it and they will come!

- Interest from developers is increasing and likely to continue
- Might help Metra in their marketing
- "Welcome to Billings"

- Yakawich – Is it easier to tear down then build?
- Kelly McCarthy – Depends on site specific. Sometimes keep old building is better. House boarded up for 15 years, more beneficial to remove building and start fresh.
- Yakawich – Like idea of outreach. When is event at First Interstate Bank?
- Kelly McCarthy – Two events on schedule is: Art for A Cause – May 8 at Q's Art Studio on 6<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> ; and Mobile Document Shredding – June 14<sup>th</sup>. Will be held across from Hog Wild Café. EBURD annual mtg on April 30<sup>th</sup> at noon at First Interstate Bank.
- Downtown Billings Partnership – Greg Krueger: Entire staff of Downtown Billings is present. Evolution of Downtown Billings – Showed Logos used since 1998. Downtown Billings Alliance – Presentation in the Friday Packet. In the middle of bid renewal. Is going well. Growth of the Business Improvement District (clean and safe portion) has grown at a steady 7% on average per year since 2005.

Property owners are paying more in taxes based on taxable amount of market value but they have a return in that their property is more valuable as well. Have Board of Directors of the Partnership downtown and created a downtown development committee.

Have accomplished N. 27<sup>th</sup> TIFD in 2014:

- Babcock Building
- Northern Hotel
- New Library
- Parking Structures
- New Street lights – not done
- More Private Investment
- Grow the Business Improvement District
  - Property Owner maintenance & Management
  - Cooperative Security in Downtown

Projections for how TIF will be used in FY2015 – Based on \$2.6M in increment income for downtown. 2% - goes to the City cost allocations; 7% - Bond principle; 31% - Bond interest (bond on Empire Parking Garage); DBP Management - 11% of the total; Project Incentives which we are reimbursing for (Northern Hotel) – 21%. Spent almost \$3M on qualified expenditures that TIF could have paid for if we had the money. Transfer a sizeable amount of money to parking, plus part of the fund does go to Parking because of Empire Parking Garage. A portion of that fund will be dedicated to the garage for at least another year. That number will reduce in FY2016. Current projects:

- BID Renewal
- Retail Recruitment
  - Empire Garage
- Pocket Parks
- Public Art
- Address Transient and Homeless
- Population
- Railroad Issues
  - Pedestrian Bridge
  - Traffic
  - Quiet Zone Maintenance

Parking Garage – Concrete is just about poured. So much left to accomplish. Battin Bldg still a challenge. Post Office is going to be for sale. Have good ideas for that bldg. and area around it. Will not tear it down. It is a historic registered bldg. Pedestrian bridge will be our responsibility to maintain. Not a GF liability.

- Bird – Battin Bldg – any hope?
- Greg Krueger – Do believe there is hope for that bldg. Site is an extremely valuable piece of land. That bldg. has some potential.

- Tina Volek: Met with new agent for the Battin Bldg. who is a local based individual. Presented a proposal to us. Still in the process of doing our site and space master plan. Will be awhile before we have those results.
- Greg Krueger – Owners have a very negative reputation. There’s a huge gap as to what the building really is and what people think it is. Most of perception in Billings is it is far more delapidated and a dangerous building then it probably really is. The owners presence in town working with the City and County and being more involved with it is extremely important.
- McFadden: Change the name of the building?
- Greg Krueger: Yes. Point out there are two Battin buildings in downtown. New courthouse is also the Battin Building.  
Babcock – In 2017 it becomes the property of the City of Billings and we need to work on what we are going to do with that building so that it is an asset and not a liability.
- Tina Volek: Going to move over these items as we still have an Executive Session to get to. Budget, Initiatives, and the Cell Phone Statistics were all in the Friday packet. Questions, Tina would be glad to answer them. On Initiatives, those items that are marked complete, I recommend that we delete those from the list, and would note that the Strategic Plan is on the Agenda for approval next Monday evening. Any questions? I do want to make a note since the folks from SBURA (South Billing Urban Renewal Authority) were not here tonight from Floyd Martin thanking Councilmember Bird for being a bunny at the easter egg hunt this weekend. Thanks to her for her participation.
- Budget -
- Initiatives -
- Strategic Plan -
- Cell Phone Statistics –
- **City-Wide Park District 1 Projects** – Mike Whitaker – Presentation in Friday packet.
- Mike Whitaker: All 2013 projects have been completed. Year 1 of the 3 year plan that the Park Board and Council worked on, has been completed. Have already started projects for 2014. Shared photographs of modular restrooms which were placed in Central Park, Sacajawea Park, Mountview Cemetery. Restroom remodels in Stewart Park, North Park, Veterans Park, Optimist Park, Pioneer Park, and Gorham Park will be finishing up these remodels by the end of this week. All 6 restrooms should be operating sometime next week. Pioneer Park was remodeled. All 22 playground sites have been changed over to the fall protection wood chip. Veterans Park had a restroom remodel, and the playground. Slides at Rose Pool have been completed. All 2013 ongoing improvements have been implemented. These are:
  - Weed Management Program
  - Outreach Program
    - Volunteer Coordinator

- Improved park maintenance

- Arborist
- Park Maintenance Worker – Equipment Operator

### **2014 City-Wide Park District Projects**

- All equipment at the batting cage has been updated and replaced.
- Rebuild Pioneer Park and Castlerock tennis courts
- Upgrade South Park playground equipment.
- South Park Sprayground – Replace a wading pool

Received a grant from LWCF for \$75,000. Will enhance the upgrades at South Park Playground.

- Bird: Tennis court improvements going to be finished on the courts that the Tennis Association wanted to have ready for the State Tennis Tournament?
- Mike Whitaker: Contract is in place for resurfacing six courts at Pioneer Park, and resurfacing four courts at Rose Park. Contract spells out this will be completed by May 15<sup>th</sup> weather permitting. Have to have temp. of 50° or higher. Tournament is May 26-28.
- Bird: Determined a location for the South Park sprayground?
- Mike Whitaker: No, have not yet. Second half of funding does not come in until June.
- Cromley: What was the original budget amount for South Park?
- Mike Whitaker: Around \$180,000. Then the grant is an additional \$75,000.
- Cromley: How soon do you expect work on the South Park playground to begin?
- Mike Whitaker: Mid-summer. Will happen quickly. A design-build. Project should be completed by the end of summer.
- Yakawich: Compliments on restrooms. Fred Bicha the City Forrester expressed a concern for the trees in the City. Not doing a good job cutting them and then losing in a year.
- Mike Whitaker: Sometimes when a home owner hires someone to do tree work, they don't always hire a certified Arborist.
- Brown: Specific date when restrooms are turned on in parks?
- Mike Whitaker: All weather related. Takes 2 weeks to get all restrooms turned on.
- Bird: Is there a way to work out something with the Southwest Corridor Task Force to get parking at the Optimist Park in lieu of a Master Plan? My understanding that there have been two?
- Mike Whitaker: A parking lot would really enhance the overall experience. One of the benefits of a Master Plan, it works out any possible conflicts out there that you don't build a parking lot in the wrong location of the park. Also ensures public input in the process. Think it is crucial whenever you have any

development of the park. Are Council approved Master Plans so Council could approve a parking lot.

- Bird: Does the Master Plan address parking?
- Mike Whitaker: Don't recall seeing a parking lot in the Master Plan.
- Tina Volek: Remind Council that when we do not have a Master Plan and projects are implemented in parks, it is often a cause of a great deal of concern. For instance, Disc Golf Course at Pioneer Park was installed without a Master Plan. Also wanted to note that parking in the parks is a concern. We have not had sufficient revenue over time to do the work in the parks. This afternoon, there was an e-mail to the Council about potholes in Centennial Park from Burlington Little League.
- Mike Whitaker: In the proposed budget this year, as it relates to a park district project, are proposing to update and improve the infrastructure at Stewart Park, which includes roads and parking areas. Recently did a City-Wide needs assessment, and gave 13 projects for the community to rate. They rated Riverfront as the top project for Parks to come back and make repairs on the road and parking areas.
- Tina Volek: Now that we have the Park Maintenance Plan, we can begin systematically to address parking lot issues that we were not able to do before. It will be awhile before we get to individual lots other than what we have already outlined here. Will respond to that individual with that information unless the Council has other questions or concerns.
- Brown: Would that be a good place to test that chip-seal out at Centennial?
- Mike Whitaker: It is a gravel lot so you can't put chip-seal down. On a temporary basis you could put grindings. Public Works Dept. lets us know if they have excess grindings. Good example – Black Otter Trail in Swords Park. Around 1 ½ years ago really wasn't passable. Now it is passable because of the Public Works Dept.
- Brown: Difference between chip-seal and grinding?
- Mike Whitaker: Grinding is removing the top layer of blacktop. Chip-seal is when you go back and fill in the cracks and put down a little asphalt and throw gravel on top of it.
- Mayor Hanel: Mr. Whitaker, could you give us an update on the Ranger Program?
- Mike Whitaker: Chris Waite just had another orientation program, and now we have roughly 25 volunteers out in the parks.
- Bird: Master Plan cost for Optimist Park?
- Mike Whitaker: Roughly around \$25,000 - \$30,000.
- Bird: Who funds that?
- Mike Whitaker: Not a firm price just basing on past history. Neighborhoods raised funds to do Master Plans. For example, Yellowstone Family Park, it was

the Homeowners Association that provided the funds to do that. The developer would facilitate doing the Master Plan.

Public Comments:

Kevin Nelson - 4235 Bruce Ave: South Billings Boulevard TIF district has more money than they know what to do with. Optimist Park really needs a new parking lot for safety. Why isn't South Billings Boulevard TIF on the quarterly reports? If downtown has a quiet zone, other areas of the city should too – discrimination.

**Council Discussion:**

- Pitman: When do we start using the green barrels? April 1. This weekend is Bright and Beautiful. Clean-up is Saturday. Can adopt a spot.
- Bird: Council contingency time limit?
- Tina Volek: Encumber funds for following FY.
- Yakawich: National drug take back this Saturday at the Elk's Lodge.

**Public Comments on Items not on the Agenda:**

Kevin Nelson- 4235 Bruce Ave: Millings in alleys will fail due to not enough base. Follow the money. City doesn't make money if city uses rotomillings. Examples of where millings are used successfully. Council should ask Mumford to identify a gravel street in their wards to try out millings. Waiting until Sept. loses an entire construction season. Could succeed yet this year.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

**ADJOURN TIME: 8:43 pm**