

**CITY OF COLUMBIA FALLS  
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
HELD MAY 4, 2015**

**Regular Meeting - Transact Routine Business**

Mayor Barnhart called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with roll call as follows:

PRESENT: Mayor Barnhart

COUNCIL: Plevel, Shepard, Fisher, Karper, Lovering, and Petersen

ABSENT: None

Also present were City Manager Nicosia, Deputy City Clerk Ott, City Attorney Breck, and Police Chief Perry.

**ROLL CALL**

Pledge of Allegiance

**PLEDGE**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Mayor Barnhart requested a motion to approve the agenda. Councilman Plevel motioned to approve the agenda, second by Councilman Lovering, and the motion carried unanimously.

**AGENDA  
APPROVAL**

**VISITORS/PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

None.

**VISITOR/PUBLIC  
COMMENTS**

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

Councilman Plevel moved to approve the consent agenda noting that all claims appeared to be in order, second by Councilman Karper. Motion carried with Council voting as follows: YES: Shepard, Fisher, Karper, Lovering, Petersen, Plevel and Barnhart NOES: None. ABSENT: None.

**CONSENT  
AGENDA  
APPROVAL**

A. Approval of Claims \$ 121,791.85 – May 4, 2015

B. Approval of Payroll Claims - \$ 58,280.38 – April 24, 2015

C. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes – April 20, 2015

D. Approve 2015-2020 Flathead County Operating Plan for Cooperative Wildfire Management and authorize City Manager to sign.

E. Approval of APS EAP Agreement Amendment Effective July 1, 2015 and authorize City Manager to sign.

F. Approve Right-of-Way and Utility Easement to the City of Columbia Falls with Cameron Eugene Lee and Debra Ann Lee and authorize City Manager to sign.

G. Approve Right-of-Way and Utility Easement to the City of Columbia Falls with Davina S. DeShaw and Gregg Dougherty and authorize City Manager to sign

H. Approve Right-of-Way and Utility Easement to the City of Columbia Falls with David L. Nelson and Robert E. Nelson and authorize City Manager to sign

**APPOINTMENT-  
Loveall Police  
Commission 3 yrs**

**APPOINTMENTS:**

A. Police Commission – 3 year term expiring May 2018 – Will Loveall

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Councilman Shepard made motion to appoint Will Loveall as Police Commissioner for another three year term, second by Councilman Plevel and the motion carried unanimously.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

None.

**UNFINISHED  
BUSINESS**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**A. 2016 FY Council Goals Discussion**

City Manager Susan Nicosia asked for goals from Council for the 2016 fiscal year.

Fisher would like to see continuing with economic development and support of businesses, citing the recent Freedom Bank beautification program. Would like to prioritize park improvements and solicit public involvement on the Dog Park creation.

Petersen add to economic development for technology driven job creation. Per City Manager Nicosia CenturyLink and Montana West Economic Development will be at May 18<sup>th</sup> Council meeting to discuss technology in Columbia Falls and the Flathead Valley.

Karper would like to continue the dog park creation but would like to see it funded without tax dollars, with a private foundation, we already have enough parks supported with tax dollars; proponent of maintaining what we have in place.

Lovering would like to see the dog park developed with a foundation. Mayor Barnhart reported that he had talked with Cathy Cooney in Helena regarding the Columbia Falls Community Foundation and noted that the legwork of creating a foundation had been done.

Mayor Barnhart continuing economic development as the industrial hub of the valley; City of Columbia Falls support of the development of the industrial park, putting more people to work.

Plevel noted that her primary focus for 2016 FY is the dog park, would like to have a meeting focused on the foundation and would like good citizen involvement; it would be nice to develop the park without taxpayer funds. Plevel asked how much had been put into the budget item in this year's budget. Per City Manager Nicosia, council appropriated \$10,000 in this year's budget for dog park creation, had previously looked at fencing a portion of Railroad Street Park. Nicosia noted that the "pit to park" lease funds paid by Plum Creek (\$100,000) had been spent on the 4<sup>th</sup> Ave Bike path in 2003, the interest earnings at that time, approximately \$30,000 are held in the Park CIP fund. The City has set aside some funds to replace the \$100,000 as the City will have to develop the park in the near future. Nicosia noted that she would be reviewing the park report with council later this evening and then she would meet with the Parks Committee for in depth work on a Park Development plan.

Shepard would like to see hotel/motel in our City; council write a letter to landlords/owners reference the front of the buildings, and replacing sidewalks. City Manager Nicosia has a letter drafted

**NEW BUSINESS  
2016 FY Council  
Goals Discussion**

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encouraging improvements and noting the Freedom Bank funding available.

Fisher Would like to see an attractive entrance. Petersen noted that the intersection of Nucleus and Highway 2, people do not know that they are in Columbia Falls. Mayor Barnhart states they are working on right-of- away, along with the Attorneys and City Manager.

Petersen Columbia Falls Aluminum Company property development, along with quiet zones, and the path down to Rivers Edge from 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue West to Columbus Park.

Lovering added paving of the North Fork to Camas Creek and directional signs. Council noted that the County Commissioners and Chamber of Commerce need to get on board with paving of the North Fork.

Petersen intersection of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue West by Laurie's Deli to Coffee Traders reference putting in a boulevard in the middle City Manager Nicosia stated, the state will be repaving would like the light poles removed from the sidewalks for easier removal of the snow; City will complete a transportation study next year.

Mayor Barnhart would like the continuation of hookups for sewer this year with the goal of completing all of the hookups where a main is available; would also like the City to support the preservation of Old Main at the Veteran's Home; continue the Sidewalk replacement program. Mayor Barnhart also noted the quiet zones in the county and needing to get the Commissioner's on board with the project.

Nicosia thanked the Council for their input and thoughts. As the 2016 FY budget process progresses, Nicosia will bring these items back to Council.

**ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS:**

A. Resolution #1696 – A Resolution of the City Council of Columbia Falls, Montana, Amending Fund 2394 Building Code Enforcement Fund Budget Appropriations for the Fiscal Year 2014-15.

**NEW BUSINESS  
CONT'D 2016 FY  
Council Goals  
Discussion**

**RESOLUTION  
#1696 Amending  
Building Code  
Enforcement**

City Manager Nicosia reported that due to the significant increase in building permit revenues, the contract to provide building inspection is also higher thus requiring a budget amendment. Nicosia recommended increasing permit revenue in the amount of \$31,500 and contracted building inspection services in the amount of \$23,400. This amendment does not need a separate public hearing as the increased fee revenues cover the increased costs.

Councilman Shepard motioned to approve Resolution #1696 Amending Fund 2394 Building Code Enforcement fund Budget appropriations for Fiscal year 2014-15 , second by Councilman Plevel with Council voting as follows. YES: Fisher, Karper, Lovering, Petersen, Plevel, Shepard and Barnhart. NOES: None. ABSENT:

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**REPORTS/BUSINESS FROM MAYOR & COUNCIL:**

Lovering reporting receiving a citizen report that Chief Perry had been very helpful when dealing with a complaint on the spray painting of the curbs. Chief Perry stated he explained to the business operator that the property is not the homeowners; only the City can give permission for anything that goes on the curbs or roadway due to being a public right-of-away.

Karper Arbor Day celebration was held Friday May 1<sup>st</sup> and he expressed a big thank you to Julie, Darin, Louis, Ellis, Grady, and to who ever played the squirrel (Gene Woods), BJ for the park tours, DNRC and Forest Service for their support and Columbia Nursery. He reported that about 75 kids participated.

Petersen reported that he attended the recent Columbia Falls Academic Endowment fundraiser and approximately \$15,000 was raised.

Shepard wanted to remind everyone that the American Legion will have its first new plaque revealed to the public on Memorial Day. He also reported fundraising at Smiths for Boys' and Girls' State was very successful and he felt proud of how well the citizens step up in Columbia Falls.

Plevel also reported that Arbor Day was a great day. She said she would keep working with the Dog park group and look at the foundation.

Mayor Barnhart reported on the poor condition of the 4<sup>th</sup> Ave Railroad crossing and noted that the Fire Chief had directed the engines to avoid that crossing after a close call. Nicosia will contact MT DOT regarding the safety issues.

**REPORTS/BUSINESS FROM CITY ATTORNEY:**

None.

**CITY MANAGER:**

City Manager Nicosia provided an update on the Water/Sewer projects, noting that Frontage Road required additional work and the installation of new water service lines. The 13<sup>th</sup> Street Drainage project is substantially complete.

City Manager Nicosia reviewed a detailed Parks Facilities report as of April 2015. The report will be further reviewed with the Parks Committee and a Parks Development Plan will be brought back to Council.

Nicosia handed out the "Code Violations: Knowing the rules for being a good neighbor." Nicosia and Perry modeled this brochure after another city's program. The "report a violation" is active on the city website.

Mayor Barnhart noted that the newsletter should remind people to stop for pedestrians and to remind pedestrians to use the crosswalks. Nicosia noted that there will be zoning text amendments, and possibly subdivision text amendments, coming forward as a result of

**REPORTS FROM  
MAYOR AND  
COUNCIL**

**REPORT FROM  
CITY ATTORNEY**

**CITY MANAGER  
REPORT**

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legislative changes. Nicosia and Mulcahy have identified text amendments to the floodplain regulations, cluster development and accessory building height. She noted that there be a Board of Adjustment meeting on Tuesday May 5<sup>th</sup> to hear variance requests on accessory building height, one inside city limits and one is outside the City limits.

Nicosia reported that the owners of the Columbia Falls Industrial Park are completing the request for annexation and a minor zone change. She spoke with the TIF consultants and the City could begin the industrial TIF process in late May and loop it into our current downtown/business corridor time schedule; both TIFs would have 2015 as the base year. The Industrial Park will ultimately create a subdivision.

**MISCELLANEOUS:**

A. INFORMATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE - List available for Review

**MISC  
CORRESPON-  
DENCE**

**ADJOURN:** Upon motion duly made by Councilman Plevel and seconded by Councilman Fisher the meeting adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

**ADJOURN**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy City Clerk

APPROVED BY COUNCIL ACTION: May 18, 2015