

**CITY OF COLUMBIA FALLS  
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
HELD MAY 21, 2018**

**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: Karper, Shepard, Fisher, Lovering, Piper and Robinson

ABSENT: None.

**ROLL CALL**

Also present were City Manager Nicosia, City Clerk Staland, City Attorney Breck and Police Chief Peters.

Pledge of Allegiance

**PLEDGE**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

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

**AGENDA  
APPROVAL**

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

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

**CONSENT  
AGENDA  
APPROVAL**

- A. Approval of Claims - \$ 99,593.52 - May 21, 2018
- B. Approval of Payroll Claims - \$ 62,751.14 - May 18, 2018
- C. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes - May 7, 2018
- D. Approval of Amended Agreement between Morrison-Maierle, Inc. and City of Columbia Falls for Nucleus Ave Pedestrian Safety Improvement Project (adding north side of 7<sup>th</sup> St West) and authorize City Manager to sign.
- E. Approval of Standard Agreement between Morrison-Maierle, Inc. and City of Columbia Falls for Transportation Alternates Grant Application and authorize City Manager to sign.
- F. Approval of Employee Assistance Program Service Agreement Modification #1, extending the program for 2 years, July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2020 and authorize City Manager to sign.
- G. Authorize Agency Service Agreement with PayGov.US, LLC and authorize City Manager to sign.

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**VISITOR/PUBLIC COMMENT:** (Items not on agenda)

None.

**VISITOR/PUBLIC  
COMMENT**

**A. NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING:**

Mayor Barnhart read the Hearing Notice for June 4<sup>th</sup>: Notice Is Hereby Given, that the City Council of the City of Columbia Falls, Montana, will hold a public hearing on June 4, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. in the Columbia Falls City Hall, 130-6<sup>th</sup> Street West, Columbia Falls, Montana, to appropriate funds within the Tax Increment District Fund.

**NOTICE OF  
PUBLIC HEARING**

The City will receive current year tax funding estimated to be \$221,000. The City Council will appropriate funds to be spent as provided for in the Tax Increment District Statement of Need in addition to the current \$94,363 appropriation. All approved appropriations will carry over to the 2019 FY budget.

Current and proposed projects comply with the Urban Renewal District Plan adopted in September 2015 and include, but are not limited to wayfinding signage, downtown alley improvements, sidewalk improvements and public safety enhancement and façade lighting.

Taxpayers are encouraged to attend the hearing and give written or oral comments on the proposed appropriations. Written comments may be mailed to the City Clerk, 130 6<sup>th</sup> Street West, Room A, Columbia Falls, Montana, 59912. Questions regarding the proposed items can be made by contacting City Manager Susan Nicosia at 892-4391.

Mayor Barnhart asked City Manager Nicosia if she had anything to add at this time. Nicosia reminded Council that the hearing and subsequent appropriations are all based on the Urban Renewal District Plan adopted in 2015. Mayor Barnhart recommended handouts over a PowerPoint presentation. Nicosia will send Urban Renewal District Plan to council members.

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

Mayor Barnhart said the road construction traffic is atrocious and he expressed concern for emergency services.

**REPORTS FROM  
MAYOR AND  
COUNCIL**

**CITY MANAGER:**

Public Safety Committee met on May 14<sup>th</sup> to review Fire and Police capital, staffing levels and operations for the 2019 FY. Columbia Falls is one of the fastest growing communities in MT based on the census statistics from 2000-

**CITY MANAGER  
REPORT**

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2016. The City has maintained 8 full-time police officers since 2001 despite an additional 1,323 citizens. The committee concurred with the recommendation to add an officer to the 2019 FY preliminary budget. As the City approaches 2<sup>nd</sup> class city status, the City must move toward a paid Fire Department. Nicosia and Hagen applied for a SAFER Grant to provide funding for a Fire Marshall position. The City Council and staff will begin a long-term evaluation of providing the appropriate level of police and fire service. Mayor Barnhart added that the Committee discussed the need for a voted public safety levy in the near future.

The City is upgrading from the original copper centrex system with Centurylink to their fiber service. The monthly fee for service will be less than it is now with better and easier options. Our City Hall mail phone line will still be answered by a person, not just a phone tree. The system is scheduled to be installed in July and is to be relatively seamless.

Nicosia said she discussed the littering condition on the truck route within one week of the Clean the Falls day at the Solid Waste Board meeting. There is a littering ordinance in Flathead County but it is hard to enforce. Nicosia reported that Commissioner Krueger suggested that the City require garbage pick-up in the City. The other flathead cities have their own garbage collection enterprise operations in place, but it is not inexpensive. Councilman Shepard said we have discussed this in the past and it never passed.

Nicosia reported that we will hold public hearings in mid-June to complete the Municipal Code clean up that we started in 2012. As soon as all of the Ordinances are adopted, the municipal code will be codified.

The City is contracting with Morrison and Maierle to complete the Transportation Alternative (TA) Grant application for the Railroad Street sidewalk/path project. M & M proposed a cost-share with the City paying 1/2, or \$6,000 to complete the proposed engineering. This is the first TA grant that the City has applied for and they are highly competitive, with requests significantly exceeding available resources. With the \$135,000 reserved by the City Council for the project, the application should be competitive. We will have to gather community support and traffic/pedestrian counts for that neighborhood.

Nicosia reported that building activity has increased within in the City as well as an increase in building projects commencing without proper building permits. Nicosia also reported that proper building permits are required for accessory apartments and it is not a simple project to convert a garage into

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living quarters. Nicosia is working on a fact sheet to add to the website.

Chief Peters reported that the City has hired two probationary Patrolman and are excited to have an increase in staff.

**INFORMATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE** - List available for Review

**CORRESPONDENCE**

A. REPORTS:

a. Finance - April

**ADJOURN**: Upon motion duly made by Councilman Lovering and seconded by Councilman Shepard and the meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

**ADJOURN**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

ATTEST:

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

APPROVED BY COUNCIL ACTION: June 4, 2018