

**CITY OF COLUMBIA FALLS  
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
HELD JULY 15, 2019**

**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, Fisher, Lovering, Piper and Robinson

ABSENT: Shepard

**ROLL CALL**

Also present were City Manager Nicosia, City Clerk Staland, City Attorney Breck, Police Sergeant Murphy and Public Works Director Bradshaw.

Pledge of Allegiance

**PLEDGE**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

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

**AGENDA  
APPROVAL**

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

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

**CONSENT  
AGENDA  
APPROVAL**

A. Approval of Claims -\$ 129,373.14 - July 15, 2019

B. Approval of Payroll Claims - \$22,209.35 - June 30 Quarterlies

Approval of Payroll Claims - \$ 119,466.41 - July 6, 2019

C. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes - July 1, 2019

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

None.

**VISITOR/PUBLIC  
COMMENT**

**RECOGNITION:**

A. Volunteer Fireman Mike VanHaverbeke - Hydrant testing

Mayor Barnhart presented Volunteer Fireman Mike VanHaverbeke with a certificate of appreciation for testing 361 fire hydrants within the City. Fire Chief Hagen said Mr. VanHaverbeke was aware of the importance of testing all the fire hydrants and elected to take on the project. This was a tremendous task that took many hours to complete. Fire Chief said he and the rest of the department are appreciative of the work Mr. VanHaverbeke has completed.

**RECOGNITION-  
VanHaverbeke**

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**PUBLIC HEARINGS/NOTICES:**

**A. Notice of Hearings - July 15<sup>th</sup> - continued until complete:**

**PUBLIC  
HEARINGS**

Notice is hereby given, that the City Council of the City of Columbia Falls, Montana, will hold public hearings beginning on July 15, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. in the Columbia Falls City Hall, 130-6<sup>th</sup> Street West, Columbia Falls, Montana, for the following purposes:

Preliminary Budget

Presentation and consideration of the preliminary budget for fiscal year beginning July 1, 2019 and ending June 30, 2020. This hearing will be continued until final adoption of the budget after receiving the certified taxable valuation.

Special Assessments

Consideration of the adoption of the Street Lighting District and Street Maintenance District assessments for FY2019/2020. Council will hear any objections to the final adoption of the resolution levying special assessments for FY 2019/2020. Special Assessments are estimated as follows:

Street Lighting District	\$ 30,049
Street Maintenance District	\$316,000

Individual property payment schedules are available for inspection ten (10) days from this notice, in the office of the City Clerk, 130 6<sup>th</sup> Street West, Columbia Falls, Montana, during regular hours Monday through Friday, 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM.

Mayor Barnhart asked Nicosia for a staff report. City Manager Nicosia noted that this evening's hearings would include the Street Lighting, Street Maintenance and Permissive Medical Levy as they are required to have individual hearings. Nicosia noted that she and the administrative staff are reviewing the other budgets and will complete the preliminary budget estimates upon receipt of the resource information.

**Street Lighting and Street Maintenance:**

As reviewed with the Public Works Committee, City Manager Nicosia's recommendation is to reduce the Street Lighting Assessment by 10%, \$3,300 due to the current level of resources. The adjusted 2019-20 FY Lighting Assessment would be \$30,049. Based on the preliminary available resources, the Street Lighting Fund will have a \$21,996 reserve, 44% of budgeted expenditures below the maximum 50% statutory rate. Nicosia noted that the lighting expense has leveled off after the initial increase due to the decorative lighting replacements.

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Nicosia and the Public Works Committee recommend the Street Maintenance District be increased by 5%, \$15,000 due to the increased responsibilities and needs for Street Maintenance, particularly with snow removal on streets, sidewalks and paths. The City has not increased the Street Maintenance Assessment for 11 years.

With no public comment Mayor Barnhart opened and closed the Public Hearing on the street lighting and maintenance assessments at 7:18 pm.

Permissive Medical Levy

Consideration of adoption on the proposed tax levy to fund health insurance premium contributions for group benefits beyond the amount of contributions in effect on June 30, 1999. The actual mills for consideration will be made available upon receipt of the certified tax valuation for the year.

Mayor Barnhart asked Nicosia to present the Permissive Medical Levy report. Nicosia reported that this year the City did not increase City contributions for medical insurance from the 2019 FY levels. The budgeted Health Insurance cost in the General Fund and Street Maintenance employees totals \$256,143 for 21 employees, compared to \$175,830 for 19 employees in the 2019 FY. The City is allowed to permissively levy for the difference from the original 2000 FY base. The amount to be raised by mill levy would be \$170,828 or approximately 25 mills at the current assessed value. Nicosia reported that the actual number of mills will be amended upon receipt of the assessed values. Nicosia noted that as a small city, the change in insurance from single to family coverage or the addition of one or two employees on the health insurance can be significant, as noted in the 2020 FY expenditure numbers.

With no public comment on the Permissive Medical Levy, Mayor Barnhart opened and closed the public hearing at 7:19 p.m.

Nicosia reminded Council that they will discuss the Preliminary Budget on August 5<sup>th</sup>.

**B. Notice of Hearings – City Council Aug 5th:**

Mayor Barnhart read the notice of hearings: The Columbia Falls City-County **Planning Board** held a public hearing for the following items at their regular meeting on **Tuesday, July 9, 2019** at 6:30 p.m. at the Council Chambers of City Hall, 130 6th Street West, Columbia Falls, Montana. The Columbia Falls **City Council** will hold a subsequent hearing on **August 5, 2019** starting at 7:00 p.m. in the same location.

**NOTICE OF  
HEARINGS**

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1. **Request for a Subsequent Minor subdivision in the Columbia Falls Planning Jurisdiction for the Woodland Acres subdivision:**

Michael P. and Maria A Tamburelli are requesting approval of a 2 lot residential subdivision on Riverwood Drive in Columbia Falls. The 1.10 acre property is located 1899 Riverwood Drive and is described as Lot 12A of the Amended Plat of Lot 12, Riverwood Estates and Drift Water Way, River Terrace Estates, Phase 2 in Section 18, Township 30 North, Range 20 West, P.M.M., Flathead County. The parcels are within the City Limits of Columbia Falls and will utilize municipal sewer and water services.

2. **Conditional Use Permit Request for a Drive-thru Coffee Stand:**

Quad Shot LLC is requesting a Conditional Use Permit to place a drive-up Coffee Stand at 270 Nucleus Avenue. The property is a corner lot with access from Nucleus Avenue and A Street WN. The property is zoned CB-2 in the Columbia Falls Zoning Jurisdiction and the zoning regulations require a conditional use permit for drive-up restaurants. The property is described as Lots 10- 15 of Block 128, Columbia Falls Addition#3 in Section 8, Township 30 North, Range 20 West, P.M.M., Flathead County.

3. **Condition Use Permit Request for a Six-Plex Apartment Building:**

Alpine Homes LLC and Ryan Blanchette are requesting a conditional use permit to construct a six-plex apartment building at 10 Diane Road in Columbia Falls. The property is zoned CRA-1 (Residential Apartment) and the zoning requires a CUP to review parking, street improvements, parkland dedication and the like. The property is described as Lot 178 of Hilltop Homes, Section 18, T30N, R20W, P.M.M., Flathead County

Persons may testify at the hearing or submit written comments prior to the meeting. Written comment may be sent to Columbia Falls City Hall, Attention: Barb Staalnd, City Clerk, 130 6<sup>th</sup> Street West, Room A, Columbia Falls, MT 59912. For more information call Eric Mulcahy, Columbia Falls City Planner at 755-6481.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

A. BUILD Grant - Final Application Presentation

The Build Grant application was filed by Public Works Director Bradshaw. The final build request was \$11,758,530. Nicosia reported that the City received good support for our application from a variety of sources including both Senator Tester and Daines, State Senator Brown, Flathead County Commissioners and Health Department, businesses and organizations involved with transportation and alternative transportation

**UNFINISHED  
BUSINESS**

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and most importantly, the MT Department of Transportation. Public Works Director Bradshaw said next summer will be the investigation and design phase if the City is awarded the grant. Following those phases will be construction phase splitting the project roughly in half doing 9<sup>th</sup> St., Railroad St. and 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. and doing 13<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> the following year.

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

Councilman Fisher said we held a Parks Committee meeting with City Manager and Public Works Director and went over the preliminary master plan for River's Edge Park.

**REPORTS FROM  
MAYOR AND  
COUNCIL**

Mayor Barnhart said he received a phone call from Rick Skyberg who lives near the corner of 8<sup>th</sup> and Crescent Circle. Mr. Skyberg's issue is he cannot safely exit his driveway due to trees in the neighbor's backyard and vehicle high speeds. Mayor Barnhart asked about the clear vision triangle and would like to see a stop sign there to replace the yield sign. Nicosia said she had talked to Mr. Skyberg and visited the lot and it is not a clear vision triangle issue as the fruit trees are on private property. The Public Works Director and Police Chief will look into replacing the yield sign with a stop sign.

Mayor Barnhart said he has concerns on the tall weeds in the empty lot on 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. W. and 1<sup>st</sup> St. Mayor Barnhart asked if we can address it before it becomes a fire hazard. Mayor Barnhart said there is also a weed issue at 184 Nucleus and would like to have the Police Dept. notify them right away.

Mayor Barnhart gave additional thanks to Mike VanHaverbeke for all the time he put into checking all the fire hydrants.

**CITY MANAGER:**

Nicosia followed up on the Parks Committee meeting noting that the Public Works Director reviewed the last draft of the plan and noted the changes made by the Parks Committee based on the community input. Bradshaw said the Parks Committee reviewed the three alternatives and agreed to carry forward with option C for the master plan. Nicosia said the priorities are bathrooms and parking.

The pool was closed one afternoon due to sudden illness of the three lifeguards on duty, to be proactive we tested the water at the pool and the water tests came back good.

On Friday afternoon, July 12<sup>th</sup>, there was a contractor working on a service line and a large rock fell on the 10 inch water main causing it to break. The Water system lost water pressure city wide until the valves were shut off.

The Montana League of Cities and Towns Fall Conference is scheduled in October in Billings, please notify City Clerk for registration as soon as possible if you are interested in attending.

**CITY MANAGER  
REPORT**

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**CITY ATTORNEY REPORT:**

None.

**CITY ATTORNEY  
REPORT**

**INFORMATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE** - List available for Review

**CORRESPONDENCE/  
REPORTS**

A. REPORTS:

- a. Police - June Activity
- b. Fire - Calendar YTD Activity

**ADJOURN:** Upon motion duly made by Councilman Lovering and seconded by Councilman Fisher the meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

**ADJOURN**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

ATTEST:

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

APPROVED BY COUNCIL ACTION: August 5, 2018