

TOWN OF WHITEHALL
P. O. BOX 529
WHITEHALL, MT 59759
SEPTEMBER 14TH, 2020

The Whitehall Town Council held their regular meeting in the Council Chambers garage at 207 East Legion Street, Monday, September 14th, 2020.

PRESENT: Council Members: Katy James, Pat Peterson, Roy McBride, Shawn Hoagland, Bill Lanes, Logan Reiff, Mayor Mary Hensleigh and Deputy Clerk Angela Japhet.

VISITORS: Alison Richardson, Kristian Richardson, Bob Mogart, Colton Anderson, Leon Johnson, James Crain, Sheri Johnson, Lori Young, Amber Wagner, Colton Howser, Cord, Kountz, Zane Kountz and Lori Young.

Mayor Mary Hensleigh called the Council Meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

Roll Call was taken. All Council Members were present except for Roy McBride and Shawn Hoagland. Summer Fellows was excused.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

IV. AGENDA APPROVAL:

Pat made motion to approve the Agenda with Logan seconding.

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Katy motioned to approve the July 2020 minutes with Logan seconding.

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

VI. REPORTS:

Mayor's Report:

Mayor: A happy report, Jefferson County only has two active cases of Covid and we have done very well. Our next Council Meeting will be Tuesday, October 13th because of the Columbus Day holiday on the 12th. So, if you would please note that on your calendars. I would like to encourage everyone to fill out the census because Jefferson County is really lagging behind and it costs us \$20,000 for every person that doesn't fill it out. That's a lot of money that is at stake for the County and the Town. I'm also asking for your support in passing the Mill Levy. Whitehall hasn't asked for a Mill Levy increase in 50 years. The budget is very tight and things will have to be cut if we don't get this Mill Levy increased. I think we have done a really good job of managing your money but we can't live on a 1970's budget, it's impossible. I'm really asking for your support. I want to clarify on Boulevards and sidewalks. Boulevards and sidewalks are the owners responsibility to keep up. If you do not want to mow your boulevards, the Town will come and spray and kill everything if that is what you want. If you want to gravel your boulevards and pay for it, that is an option. If you want to plant grass or whatever, just come to the Town and ask but, the boulevards are your responsibility and if you want to do improvements, we are all for that.

Officer's Reports:

Attorney Report:

No report.

Clerk / Treasurer's Report:

No report.

Public Work's Report:

Kory: We filled quite a few potholes and we filled the edges of the roads with millings. We painted crosswalks at the school and we put guardrail in on the end of Main Street by the school so people don't drive through the fence and into the playground anymore. We took a ton of water samples last month. Lead and copper samples were taken and quarter samples I took twice. The first time we took them, they didn't read very good. We did fix a water leak at the fish tank. With the sewer, we also had a lot of samples to take. We took our biannual samples and quarterly samples. Two weeks ago, our lift station totally shut down. We had to bypass with our emergency pump. It ended up being a motor saver switch. So, its still a bypass, that part hasn't come in yet. We did two Cemetery cremation graves and we changed the oil in the one-ton flat bed and the mower. We winterized the baseball concessions and Town Hall building. I still have about two weeks of blowing out sprinklers at the parks and cemetery. We will continue to work on the roads and side streets with millings.

Fire Chief's Report:

Colton: Since the last meeting, we've had 3 total calls in City limits. We got called to a car fire but it was just burnt oil. We had a 100-gallon diesel spill at Town Pump. We got that cleaned up and Town Pump helped us with that and over at McLeod, a semi clipped a power pole and knocked it down so we checked that out.

Sherriff's report:

No report.

Committee / Board Reports:

Planning Board:

Lori: We had our meeting on Tuesday, September 8th due to Labor Day. We amended Leon Johnson's at 201 W. 2nd for a fence permit. He originally wanted a 6-foot-tall fence in the front but he did not realize that that is against our Ordinances. So, we amended it to 4 feet tall for the first 25 feet in front and on the side then it will be 6 feet after that. We did approve the Business License for Amber Wagner. We approved Colton Anderson at 34 Rocky Mountain Drive for a garage with living space on the second floor. Cord Kountz at 105 Yellowstone Rd, we did amend that to make it bigger to 24 x 40, we signed and the Board approved. Ryan Strozzi was not present at the meeting and did not contact us prior to for his 21 East Legion new shop and storage. We are in contact with the State and he has applied for a license as of August 24th. The State did inform me that it would be a 3-5 week wait before that is approved or not approved. Sheri and Erik Johnson's fence at 8 N. Division was approved, Michelle Tanner replacing her wood fence with a chain link was also approved and James Crain's steel structure.

Recreational Complex Board:

No meeting.

Pool Board:

Mayor: The Pool Board did not have an official meeting but I just wanted to give a little report from Allissa. It was a great season and it ran for 6 weeks. The weather was much better this year so they didn't have to close as often. There were no swim lessons due to the Covid-19 restrictions. To run the Pool for 6 weeks cost \$14,308.55. The Council budgeted \$12,000 so, a shortfall of \$2,308.55 will come out of the generous donations made to the Pool Fund. The donations that we have collected so far have been \$16,545. That leaves us a balance of \$14,236.45 to start next season. The Pool Committee is planning on kicking off more fundraising in the spring and I want to thank everyone for being so generous. It was a real bonus to have the Pool open for the kids. With so many things being cancelled it was a real bright spot.

Katy: Addition to that, the Pool Board will probably have their last meeting for the season on the 28th.

Mayor: Ok. That is correct.

Trees, Parks and Cemetery:

Logan: We met on August 25th. Everyone was there except for Todd. We talked about the Parks being a little dry but it was hot and Kory has been working on adjusting the water and getting coverage. The breaker panel went out but that was fixed in Legion Park. The Garden Club hasn't had very many meetings because of Covid-19. Ron asked the Garden Club to make more identity tags in Silver Tower Park to identify the types of trees. The fruit trees we are still interested in from the State Nursery, we have not received them yet. Ron was concerned about the Ash trees by Liberty Place not doing very well and Kory does not know why. The Library also received a \$2000 grant from the T.I.F.F. to landscape in front of the Library. We just need to remove an Aspen tree and the existing bench will be replaced with two new ones.

Water/Sewer/Garbage and Streets/Alley/Sidewalks:T.I.F.F.:

Alison Richardson: The T.I.F.F. Board met last month on August 19th and we will meet again this week I believe. We went over our open Grants again just for the project updates. A reminder that there are still T.I.F.F. Grants available. You'll start to see some of that project work being completed. Borden's just got repainted as well as Liberty Place and some other area businesses. That is a grant that is open and available so if you have any questions, you can come down to Town Hall or even stop into the Extension office and we can walk you through that. We had an ongoing project with banners up along Legion to make it look really nice. We've changed from banners to going with flags instead so that that is something we are working on. Future projects include just exploring sidewalk expansion. Some of the top priorities would include sidewalk expansion down by Stageline up to the Grocery store to make that accessible as well as over the railroad tracks to the museum and both railroad crossings. We also discussed fixing the drainage at the Bike Park. The Bike Park is getting a lot of action now with the kids up there.

CTAC:

Alison Richardson: CTAC meets the second Thursday of each month in the Borden's conference room. It is open to any community members. You also have the option of attending via Zoom. I always provide doughnuts and coffee so please come. Our meeting was held September 10th. We heard from our Mine Manager and there are still no reportable injuries for 1,266 days. So, that's really good. The mill removal is progressing and they are still working on their permit to get the process going. Expect maybe some sort of community meeting in the future to give feed back on starting that concentrator back up again. They currently have 18 full time employees and 20 contractors and we expect over the next two years for that to increase pretty significantly if this all moves forward. We also get an update from JLDC and other community members. It's a great meeting to know what is going on in Whitehall. Alison continues. See recording.

VII. Public Comment:

Kristian Richardson: I am the Commander of the American Legion located at 11 North Division. I am representing all the Veterans of South Jefferson County. I just wanted to read an article that I authored today that I submitted to the Whitehall Ledger. The Whitehall Veteran's community appreciation dinner was a great success. The members of the American Legion post 24 and Ralph Sulender Memorial Veterans of Foreign war post 4603 in South Jefferson County, hosted the Veterans community appreciation dinner on Friday September 11th at the Barrick Pavilion in Whitehall. Luckily, smoke from wildfires from the Pacific north west was not a problem that evening. Yet, smoke from the barbeque grill filled the air with the sweet smell of hamburgers and hotdogs and attracted folks from all over the region. Well over 150 people came to dinner to support local veterans and have a great dinner which also included potato salad, baked beans, apple and pumpkin pie. Many people were happy to step away from home for a couple of hours and visit with friends in the community especially after being held up at home for months as many events were cancelled or postponed due to Covid-19. The Veteran's worked with the County Health Board and County Environmental Health to ensure measures were met to ensure guests were safe and healthy. Once again, we'd like to graciously thank this events marketing partners which included Stageline Pizza and Tona's Mint Bar without whom we would be unable to continue providing events like these to our community. Tina and Tona were awesome to work with and we would also like to thank Pepper Tree Deli for allowing us to use their grill. The Vet's are planning a similar event to be held around Veteran's Day in November so keep an eye out in the Ledger for more

information. We hope that you can all join us. As always, you can direct questions about this event or other issues to myself or any Whitehall Veterans and that information will be published in the Whitehall Ledger. On a personal note, I wanted to state that we do have approximately 90 military Veterans that are active members in the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars here in Whitehall. That number is increasing year over year. I just wanted to reach out to any of you here and those watching on your T.V.'s tonight to say that if you know a military Veteran that may need any type of assistance with a disability claim, lifting something heavy, dealing with a mental health issue or whatever the case might be, please do in fact reach out to myself or other members of the American Legion or VFW here in Whitehall for the assistance we can provide. I myself am a Montana Veteran's advocate and have a lot of information to help Veteran's receive the care that they quite rightfully deserve. Thank you.

Bob Nagart expressed his concern about the sidewalks in Town.

VIII. Consent Agenda:

Planning Board

William McLaughlin / 11 W. First St. / fence / tabled

Leon Johnson / 201 W. Second St. / fence / approved with amended stipulations.

Business License / Amber Wagner / 108 South Brooke St. / In home daycare. / approved

Colton Anderson / 34 Rock Mountain Drive / garage with living space on 2nd floor / approved

Cord Kountz / 105 Yellowstone Rd. / Wood structure residence / approved

James Crain / 207 South Whitehall St. / steel structure for personal use / approved

Ryan Strozzi / 21 E. Legion / new shop and storage for business use / tabled

Sheri and Erik Johnson / 8 North Division St. / fence / approved

Michele Tanner / 5 Kelly Rd. / replace wood fence with chain link fencing / approved

Business License

Amber Wagner / 108 S. Brooke St. / Wagner's Playhouse in home daycare

Fire Department

Chad Randall

Logan motioned to approve the Consent Agenda with Pat seconding.

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

IX. PRESENTATIONS

No presentations.

X. Unfinished Business

A. Health Board

XI. New Business:

A. Discussion on Public Safety Mill Levy increase.

Pat: I would just like to say that we are going for a Mill Levy for Public Safety. It would go to help fire and law enforcement. So, money would be dedicated to those two areas. It's not going into the General Fund it would be specifically for public safety.

Mayor: By law, the Town is required to have four things, Sheriff, Judge, Attorney and Fire Department. We spend \$112,000 a year for the Sheriff contract, \$40,000 for the Judge, \$40,000 for the Town Attorney and \$20,000 for the Fire Department for a total of \$212,000. So, that's almost half of the Town's budget, it takes a big chunk. Does anyone have any thoughts or questions about the mill levy?

Bill: We haven't had a Mill increase since the 1970's in our City and we have to make some adjustments to cover just the basis. So, we will be giving some rationale in the paper and so forth in the next weeks to come but I am in favor of that.

XII. BILL/ CLAIM APPROVAL LIST TO BE SIGNED BY ALL COUNCIL MEMBERS

Katy made a motion to approve the bill claim approval list with Logan seconding.

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

XIII. Adjourn:

Logan made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:11pm with Pat seconding.

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mayor Mary Hensleigh

Date

Town Clerk Treasurer

Date