

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING ----- MAY 5, 2025

The Regular Council Meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Mayor Karst. The following Council members were present: Nistler, Koski, and Austin. Council members Heitman and Ozark attended via conference call. Council member Carr was absent. Chief Weber was in attendance. Candy Lagerquist, Matt Poole, Josh Sand, and John Bach from Interstate Engineering were also in attendance. City Clerk Amundson, DPW Skubinna, City Grant Writer Byers, and City Attorney Pekovitch attended via Google Meets. There was no media representation.

Mayor Karst led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment on any Agenda Item: NONE

Council member Koski made a motion approving the consent agenda including the payment of claims for May 5, 2025 in the amount of \$120,895.56, Valley Court claims in the amount of \$3,962.20, the minutes of the April 21, 2025 Regular Council Meeting and the minutes of the April 21, 2025 executive session meeting. The motion was seconded by Council member Austin and carried unanimously.

The city received two (2) bids for the city's repurchase agreement. The first bid was received by Independence Bank. They are willing to offer the Montana Board of Investments STIP average monthly rate. It would be set the 1st of each month based on the average STIP rate of the previous month. It would accrue on a daily basis on the average account balance and be paid monthly. The average STIP rate for April was 4.29%. All excess funds would be placed in a standard business checking account and would be subject to bank policies and procedures. The second bid received was from Opportunity Bank. Their proposed interest rate is based on the Fed Funds target rate that is reviewed and updated daily. The rate for April 30, 2025 is 4.25%, 4.33% APY. The bids will be taken under advisement and a recommendation will be given at the May 19, 2025 Council Meeting.

The city received one (1) interest rate quote from Independence Bank for a new camera system for the Civic Center and Swimming Pool. A loan in the amount \$77,303.00 for a 5-year period the interest rate would be 5.25% and the same amount of a loan for a 7-year period the interest rate would be 5.50%. This quote will be presented to the Recreation Board to see if they would like to move forward before it's approved by the council.

Mayor Karst introduced and offered for adoption at second reading **Ordinance No. 991** – An Ordinance Amending Section 40-26 of Ordinance No. 938 to Change the Rules and Regulating the Use of Water in Glasgow, Montana, and Thereby Amending the Code of Ordinances of the City of Glasgow Montana. Mayor Karst said that this ordinance will have water accounts in the property owner's name and not the tenant's name. Council member Nistler wanted to know if the city would move to a budget billing process. Council member Koski asked City Clerk Amundson if it would be difficult to move to budget billing if the council decided they wanted to. City Clerk Amundson stated that Black Mountain Software may have a module that they would charge us for to do that. Mayor Karst said that some of the landlords have told him that they would just charge \$100.00 more per month for rent to cover the cost of water. He also mentioned that sometimes landlords get stuck with the bill after a tenant moves out and they have to pay it. Council member Nistler then asked who gave the city permission to use his shut-off valve. City Attorney Pekovitch said the shut-off valve is located in the public right-of-way, so if a water bill isn't paid, the city is able to shut the water off. Council member Nistler feels the city should own the curb stops so if there is something wrong with it, the city can fix it and shut it off. The curb stops should also be exercised every other year to make sure they are in working condition in case of an emergency. DPW Skubinna explained that the city's permission to operate and maintain the service line from the residence to the main is laid out in city code as being the responsibility of the homeowner and additional authority in the code to access and operate the curb stop as necessary. Mayor Karst said there are two (2) different issues being talked about right now and would like to go back to just the ordinance and have the water committee discuss the curb stop issue at a later date. Council member Koski moved for the adoption of **Ordinance No. 991** for second reading. The motion was seconded by Council member Austin; Council members Austin, Koski, Heitman, and Ozark voted for and Council member Nistler voted against, **Ordinance No. 991** passed 4-1. **Ordinance No. 991** will become effective June 5, 2025. Council member Nistler said he needs more than 30 days to let his tenants know. Mayor Karst told the council that a letter will go out explaining the process. City Clerk Amundson explained that the tenants that are currently in the rentals, the water will remain in their name until they move out. Once they move out the water will then be switched into the property owner's name and will remain that way. The city isn't automatically going to switch it into the property owner's name from the tenant.

Unfinished Business – Levee Safety Committee Report – DPW Skubinna mentioned he continues to work with congress on congressional spending specifically for the levee. He did receive another letter of support from the Glasgow Downtown Association. He has asked for funding to cover all of the projects within the SWIF plan upwards of 8-9 million dollars.

Committee Reports: There were no reports Personnel or Cemetery. Mayor Karst said the water committee will have to meet to discuss the curb stop issue that was discussed at tonight's meeting. City Grant Writer Byers gave an update on the fitness court. The city has received \$60,000.00 from the Washington Foundation, but we still need another \$75,000.00; about \$50,000.00 will come from the Traacy Foundation, and additional funding will come from some smaller grants. McKenzie had emailed an invoice for the fitness court in the amount of \$100,000.00 and she

would like to get the equipment sent out to the city. Ashleigh is asking for direction on how she should proceed. She mentioned she spoke with City Clerk Amundson today and that she would be more comfortable having all the funding in place before having the fitness court sent to the city. Mayor Karst would like to have a meeting with McKenzie, Ashleigh and Jory to discuss it again before moving forward. The city also received another \$90,000.00 grant for the Sullivan Park Home Run Pond area renovation from the Recreational Trails Program. The city also has \$75,000.00 from the TSP Grant, and \$15,000.00 from the Community Pond Program. With the TSP grant, the city can continue to ask for funding on an annual basis, and they would like to include the connectivity from Sullivan Park into the city. Council member Koski talked about the Pilot grant that was submitted and within that grant; trails is also included as a project. She is unsure of the amount of money until the budget is approved, but as soon as she receives notice on the amount, she will let Ashleigh know. She also has some other avenues for funding for the trails that the City of Billings has used. Chief Weber reported on the tentative MBCC award for VOCA, they are going to recommend the award of \$196,000.00, when they asked for \$250,000.00. City Attorney Pekovitch said that she emailed City Clerk Amundson two (2) ordinances for the next meeting and asked her if should could put the large vehicle one on the website so the public can review it before the next meeting.

Department Head Reports:

Chief Weber mentioned his department has been busy with enforcing traffic along Highway 2, Alex has graduated from the Academy, the new officer from Kansas has passed his background check and will be in town in a couple weeks to finish up a few more things and meet with the Police Commission to be approved and then will come in front of the council for their approval at the next council meeting, with a tentative start date of June 6th. Chief Weber stated that he has officially hit the less than one year until retirement and this is his one-year notice and will be officially retired as of May 1, 2026.

DPW Skubinna told the council that he has been through all the interviews with the water/sewer supervisor candidates and has requested references on two of them. He has received all of the reference check responses on one of them and is waiting on the other responses. Then hopefully an offer letter can be sent to one of them. The Hall Terrace/Hurly Drive project is moving forward. He has been reviewing the lead and copper service line sampling program to assist the city with figuring out all the unknown service lines. The city has been awarded \$150,000.00 through the Environmental Justice Grant, but it has not been released yet. Also working on a final PER for cast iron replacement and researching funding opportunities to complete it.

City Attorney Pekovich said that the city court docket has been full and working on some civil stuff with DPW Skubinna and Code Compliance Officer Dees.

City Clerk Amundson will get the large vehicle ordinance up on the city's website this week so there is plenty of time for the public to review it before our next council meeting. She is also working on getting a Planning Board Meeting scheduled, and there will be a resolution on the next agenda to approved the disaster mitigation plan from the county that Ed Malone had sent over.

There was no mayor's report.

Public Comment: Candy was in attendance to inquire on the Rundle Suite sidewalk progress. City Attorney Pekovitch mentioned that they decided to replace the sidewalks themselves. She is hoping for compliance from them this week and if not, she can start the process of filing against them in court. Matt Poole was in attendance to get an update on what was happening with his place up on Hurly Drive. He said he had received a certified letter in the mail that the council also received a copy of. He voiced his concern about the mail situation with the current construction project in his area. He attended the project meeting last week to discuss options with the valley gutter and to have it drain water from the northside to the southside of the road. He feels his suggestion to move the valley gutter 30' from the hydrant so he can fully develop his lot is falling on deaf ears. He did respond to the letter he received and hasn't heard anything back yet. From the start of this project, he has requested DPW Skubinna to meet with him at his property and he has not done this yet. He voiced his frustration working with DPW Skubinna and inquired if the council had any updates on this project. Mayor Karst told DPW Skubinna to get a meeting scheduled with Matt as soon as possible. Matt requested another person to be in attendance at the meeting with DPW Skubinna. DPW Skubinna stated he prefers to communicate with Mr. Poole in writing. Council member Austin said that we need to keep moving on this issue before it's too late and come to some type of resolution and communicate with Mr. Poole with a face to face onsite, no matter who else is there for the meeting. City Attorney Pekovitch stated that every encroachment permit has to go through the planning board and everyone's driveway is in the city's right-of-way and if the city decides to widen the roadway, they can and Matt's driveway extends further into the right-of-way then the city allows. Mayor Karst said both Council member's Austin and Koski will meet with Matt along with DPW Skubinna, they just need to know when. The council inquired on when the next planning board meeting is set for. City Clerk Amundson stated that she is planning on getting it set up next week and she will be in touch with Mr. Poole with the date and time as soon as she has it scheduled so he can also be in attendance. Matt continued to voice his concerns on the drainage issue and why the road needs to be widened. DPW Skubinna stated the part of the story that's not being told here is that the engineers have reanalyzed the issue with four different scenarios and there will still be water issues because the road was built in the bottom of a coulee. They also worked to come to the best solution that will work for everyone that lives within the city limits. Mayor Karst said he will push to get the planning board meeting set and keep moving forward to resolve all of the issues the best that we can.

Josh Sand was in attendance and wanted to know since the ordinance was passed, if the landlord has the right to shut the water off at the curb, since the city is pushing the entire issue onto the landlord. Mayor Karst said that the curb-stop issue will be discussed since Council member Nistler brought it up. Josh said if the curb stop needs to be repaired, it's pushed onto the property owner to fix. Mayor Karst also stated that with passing this ordinance it will protect the landlords from tenant's that move out and don't pay their final bills. Josh commented that the city doesn't lose a penny because it already goes back onto the landlord to recoup the bill. Mayor Karst said yes, the city has lost money in the past on water bills. City Clerk Amundson explained that is usually happens with rentals and the bill goes back to the property owner and can be assessed on the taxes, but if a property owner sells their house and doesn't pay their outstanding balance, after trying to collect the money for a period of time, it has to go to council to ask to be written off. Discussion continued on delinquent bills and when the water can be shut off.

Council member Koski made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Council member Nistler the meeting adjourned at 5:58 p.m.

ATTEST:

Stacey A. Amundson

Stacey Amundson
City Clerk-Treasurer

Rod Karst
Mayor