

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING ----- FEBRUARY 18, 2025

The Regular Council Meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Mayor Karst. The following Council members were present: Heitman, Carr, Ozark, Nistler, Koski, and Austin. DPW Skubinna and Judge Morehouse-Mix were in attendance. Candy Lagerquist, Patrick Gilchrist, Jeff Remus, Rene Clampitt, David George, Ed Malone, and Emmah Morehouse-Mix, and John Bach from Interstate Engineering were also in attendance. City Clerk Amundson, City and City Attorney Pekovitch attended via Google Meets. The media was represented by Michelle Bigelbach of the Glasgow Courier.

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 February 18, 2025 in the amount of \$212,177.43 and the minutes of the February 3, 2025 Regular Council Meeting. The motion was seconded by Council member Austin, and carried unanimously.

Patrick Gilchrist was in attendance to talk to the council about a new food bank location. He mentioned the current food bank is located behind the county shops and it's on a small lot. He said that it has been renovated, but they are running out of space. He had received plans from Jason who is from Missoula and works for the fire lab for a shop that he had built and they have an engineer's stamp on them. They want something that is going to last 50-100 years or more. One of the areas they have looked at is the land that is between the Armory building and the National Weather Service Building. The piece of property does have water, sewer, electrical and gas that is near the lot. He wanted to know if the council would be willing to do a long-term lease to the food bank for 75-100 years. There was discussion on if that piece of property is located within the city limits. DPW Skubinna doesn't think that it is, but would look into it further. Council member Ozark said the process of annexing that piece of property into the city should be started. Council member Nistler and Koski said that they do not have an issue with a long-term lease with the food bank on city property. Council member Heitman said he doesn't have an issue either as long as it gets annexed into the city. DPW Skubinna suggested having a site plan drawn up and to include what the drive through area would look like. DPW Skubinna said that he is unsure of where the lot lines are located, so there may be a subdivision process that would have to be followed to portion of the piece of property just for the food bank. Council member Koski wanted to know how many people the food bank has go through there facility on a monthly basis. Jeff Remus said it's usually around 280, but lately it's been about 200. Council member Ozark suggested Patrick to work with DPW Skubinna and City Attorney Pekovitch to get the process moving forward.

Council member Koski made a motion approving the December 2024 financials. The motion was seconded by Council member Austin, and carried unanimously.

Mayor Karst explained the reason for Change Order #5. The initial contract for testing the concrete and soil was \$6,000.00. He said that Interstate didn't receive any invoices for testing materials for 4 months. He also mentioned that when they received the 1<sup>st</sup> invoice was over \$30,000.00. This change order will come out of the swim pool budget and not city funds. Council member Austin said that he had contacted the contractor about this change order and from what he understood is that the testing wasn't done strategically and every time they came back to test, they were charging mileage. John Bach from Interstate Engineering said they have changed this specification in their bid documents since this issue has come up. After further discussion, Council member Austin made a motion to approve Change Order #5. The motion was seconded by Council member Heitman, and carried unanimously.

Mayor Karst introduced and offered for adoption at first reading **Ordinance No. 990** – An Amendment to the Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Glasgow, Montana, Amending Glasgow's Manufactured Homes and Trailers Code to Address the Abatement of Blighted, Dangerous, Abandoned and/or Public Nuisance Buildings, Structures, and Properties. City Attorney Pekovitch explained that this is an addition to the original ordinance which gives the city a streamlined civil procedure to abate properties. The property owner would appear before the council at a public meeting and the city council would be able to declare the property a nuisance. Each step of the ordinance gives the property owner a due process before it would go to court if needed. Council member Ozark moved for the adoption of **Ordinance No. 990** for first reading. The motion was seconded by Council member Koski; whereby **Ordinance No. 990** was adopted at first reading. The second reading of Ordinance No. 990 will be held at the March 3, 2025 Regular Council Meeting.

Mayor Karst said Council member Koski has been in touch with City Clerk Amundson to see if it was possible for elected officials to participate in the MMIA insurance plan if they paid for their own coverage and not out of the city's budget. City Clerk Amundson explained that there are other communities around the state that allow their elected officials to participate in the MMIA insurance at their own cost; the council will just need to pass a resolution to allow this. Council member Carr said it should be available to elected officials as long as it's not costing the city any money. City Clerk Amundson will prepare the resolution for the next council meeting.

DPW Skubinna explained the changes to the water department supervisor job description. He added the requirement of supervisory experience. The other change that he made was to clarify the licenses that are needed to run the water and sewer facilities and the timeframe in which to acquire those licenses. Council member Nistler made a motion

approving the changes to the job description. The motion was seconded by Council member Carr, and carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was discussion on advertising an RFP for contracting the city's water and sewer operations and maintenance. Mayor Karst mentioned this was an item that came up during the water committee meeting. DPW Skubinna explained his thought process on this option. He does have experience with contracted services for operations and maintenance when he was employed at his previous jurisdiction. The wastewater plant was contracted out since 1977. He had brought to the water committee the cost of contract over a period of years. He said that usually when a facility is contracted, they will hire the employees that are currently working for the city and it's typically a union position. He said the water committee's thought process on this was to publish an RFP to see what responses would be received and what the cost would be to the city and not necessarily go this route. Council member Austin stated this would give the city options to consider. Even if the city were to receive responses to the RFP doesn't mean this will be a viable option and if doesn't meet the city needs, then the city continues the operating of the water and sewer plants. Mayor Karst stated DPW Skubinna would put together the RFP. Council member Ozark said one thing that needs to be considered is perception is reality. The supervisor job description changes were just approved and just made it tougher, as they would now need leadership experience. He also said that word is going to get out that the city is possibly looking at contracting their services and then the city may not receive any applications for the job and the current employees may look elsewhere for employment. Council member Ozark said it's not a bad idea to see what's out there, but we also have current employees that we need to take into consideration. Council member Nistler would prefer to advertise for the supervisor position and if there are no applications received; then look at taking the next step. Council member Koski said she can see both sides of the options that are being discussed. It's becoming difficult to hire personnel in any job because people aren't applying. DPW Skubinna stated hiring for water and sewer operators is a national epidemic and just not a Montana issue. It's difficult to find licensed operators. He's just trying to find options and potential solutions for the city. There was conversation on employee pay vs. contractor pay and if the city were to contract out the operations, who would do the billing of the water bills. DPW Skubinna said that everything would be stipulated in the contract. Council member Ozark wanted to know if the contractor would just do the distribution of the water or run the entire water and sewer plants. DPW Skubinna said the city could go with either option. There was discussion on the budgetary process of this option and the funds that have been set aside for the transmission main. Council member Ozark stated he would be good with DPW Skubinna putting together the RFP, but not to publish it at this time, as he would like to take a look at it before moving forward. Council member Nistler would like to see what the city receives for job applications before even moving forward in assembling an RFP. The directive from the council is to get the job opening advertised and over the next month work on the framework of an RFP to bring to water committee to review and then weigh out the options after those meetings.

Mayor Karst stated the applicant for the deputy clerk position has withdrawn her application since she took a job elsewhere, so City Clerk Amundson will advertise for a full-time position.

Unfinished Business – Levee Safety Committee Report – Nothing new at this time, but will meet after the legislature is done and they are waiting to hear on the final RDG funding package that is in the legislature at this time.

Committee Reports: There were no reports Water, Personnel, or Cemetery. Mayor Karst said City Grant Writer Byers told him the city received an additional \$15,000.00 for the Homerun Pond upgrades. City Attorney Pekovitch said she will meet with DPW Skubinna to review the large vehicle ordinance, she's working on the Short-Term Rental ordinance, and the one for water.

Department Head Reports:

DPW Skubinna mentioned snow removal is going well this year.

City Attorney Pekovitch said she will be in town on Thursday and will meet with the department heads and with Council member Koski at the Chamber Office.

City Clerk Amundson updated the council on the audit report.

Mayor Karst told the council that the BN buildings are torn down and the company will be working on clean up.

Public Comment: Ed Malone talked about the training that was held last week at the police department.

Council member Koski made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Council member Austin, the meeting adjourned at 5:59 p.m.

ATTEST:

*Stacey A. Amundson*

Stacey Amundson  
City Clerk-Treasurer

Rod Karst  
Mayor