

BELGRADE CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
July 7, 2014
7:00 PM

Mayor Russell C. Nelson called the meeting to order. Mayor and Council Members in attendance were: Russell C. Nelson, Brad Cooper, Ken Smith, Kristine Menicucci, Mark Criner. Others in attendance were: City Planner Jason Karp, City Manager Ted Barkley, Zane Williamson, Dennis Foreman, Lyn Stowers, Dave Casto, and Kathleen Wood.

Council Member Criner moved to excuse Council Members Koentopp and Youngberg. Council Member Cooper seconded the motion.

All voted aye, motion carried unanimously.

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE June 16, 2014 MEETING

Council Member Cooper moved to approve the minutes of the June 16, 2014, meeting. Council Member Menicucci seconded the motion

All voted aye, motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC FORUM

Mayor Russell called for public comment.

Mr. Zane Williamson, residing at 907 E. Missoula Ave in Belgrade, spoke regarding his concerns related to tolerance and religious freedom. Mr. Williamson provided additional printed information for each council member.

Mayor Nelson called two more times for public comment. There being no additional comment, public forum was closed.

PUBLIC HEARING

CONSIDERATION of Divine Mercy Academy Request for Conditional Use Permit

City Planner Karp reviewed the request to expand the existing CUP to allow the building to be used as a private elementary school. Karp noted the Planning Board findings, with their recommendation to grant the CUP with 7 conditions, specifically to install a direct exit from the lower level basement and to meet all applicable fire codes. Karp advised that the available parking spaces were a concern of the planning board, and so the applicant did provide a parking plan as well. Applicant was in attendance to answer questions. Karp also reported that in addition to notice being published in local newspapers, notice was also provided to all neighbors within 300 feet of the property, and a sign posted at the site.

Mayor Nelson called three times for public comment or questions. There being none, public comment was closed.

Following Public Hearing, Council Member Menicucci moved to approve the C.U.P. for the Divine Mercy Academy to use the building at 104 Al Place as a private elementary school as requested with the 7 conditions listed in the staff report as recommended by the Belgrade City-County Planning Board. Council Member Criner seconded the motion.

All voted aye, motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS

Mayor had nothing to report.

City Attorney was not in attendance.

City Manager Barkley commented on the challenge of constructing a new budget when the tax numbers were not available from the County at this time. These amounts were not available until the end of July or early August each year. Legislation from 2001 allowed the City to operate despite not having a working budget yet.

Reported that the Request for Proposals for both the Chip Seal Project and Sidewalk Project were published in local newspapers with proposals to be opened on July 28, 2014.

Reported that the MSU Town Harvest Organization, a cooperative partnership between MSU and the Gallatin County Foodbank, was now asking to use Clarkin Park on Tuesday evenings from mid-July to September. This was being brought before the Council now because this was the first time in the past six years of the program that they had asked to use City property. Barkley noted that he had no objection to their proposal. Council members indicated they had no objection.

Reported that the discussion regarding the formation of a Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) was ongoing. Barkley indicated that a local business had shown interest.

Reported contact with Opticom and ongoing concerns with unfinished construction and damages done in previous seasons. A contact number had been provided for citizens to speak with Opticom service representatives.

Reported that some of the wider public Right of Way areas on Jackrabbit are in need of attention. The City workers had been directed to mow some of the areas because they had become so overgrown. Ordinarily the adjacent property owner would be required to maintain the area between the street and the sidewalk, however these wider areas were in a different category because the property owners don't actually have access to those areas in the same way. If we want the arterials street to look better, it must be addressed. Barkley pointed out this would mean some additional mowing by the City, but it would greatly improve the look of those areas

along Jackrabbit, Main and Frontage Road that fall into this category. Barkley stated that he would direct PW to continue the practice if the Council had no objection. Council members agreed this was a positive direction and the City should continue to mow to improve the overall appearance. Removal of noxious weeds would also be considered as time goes on.

Reported that Kerry Cuchine had been hired as the City's new Accounting Clerk as of June 30th.

DISCUSSION AGENDA

CONSIDER Rhonda Smith's Request for Variance from Sidewalk Requirements

City Planner Karp reviewed the request. He noted the option had been granted in other similar situations where no other sidewalks were located close by. The Council discussed the problem of having many disconnected sidewalks. It was suggested that the Council could waive the requirement now with the understanding that it could be imposed by order of the City at a future date. This specific property was noted as being on a corner lot with a large amount of street frontage.

Mayor Nelson called for public comment, there being none, public comment was closed.

ACTION: Council Member Cooper moved to grant a variation from the sidewalk requirements to allow the existing home at 1156 Mayfair Drive to be replaced without requiring sidewalks at this time, however, the City reserved the right to impose installation of sidewalks at a future date to be installed adjacent to the property at the City's request. Council Member Menicucci seconded the motion.

Council also indicated this requirement would be binding upon the land, despite possible changes in ownership.

Roll Call vote: Council Members voting aye: Smith, Menicucci and Criner. Council Member voting nay: Cooper.

Motion carried 3 to 1.

CONSIDER Request for approval of an Improvements Agreement and Letter of Credit for Rabel Townhouse Minor Subdivision.

City Planner Karp reviewed the request. He noted the letter of Credit represented 150% of costs. He indicated this was a standard plan and a fairly low risk proposition for the City. Council inquired about possible expiration of the Letter of Credit before the work was completed. Karp indicated that the dates were tracked to avoid this. Dennis Forman was in attendance to represent the applicant.

Mayor called for public comment, there being none, public comment was closed.

ACTION: Council Member Cooper moved to approve the Improvements Agreement and Letter of Credit in the amount of \$18,000 to guarantee the completion of the water/sewer service lines and sidewalks for Lots 3 and 4 of the Rabel Townhouse Minor Subdivision. Council Member Smith seconded the motion.

All voted aye, motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDER Request for Final Plat Approval for the Rabel Townhouse Minor Subdivision

City Planner Karp indicated that with the approval of the Improvements Agreement noted above, they had now met requirements and the Planning Board recommended approval.

Mayor Nelson called for public comment, there being none, public comment was closed.

ACTION: Council Member Menicucci moved to grant final plat approval to the Rabel Townhouse Minor Subdivision finding that all conditions of preliminary plat approval had been satisfactorily met and the subdivision complied with the Montana Subdivision and Platting Act and the Belgrade City Code. Council Member Criner seconded the motion.

All voted aye, motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDER the City Manager's summary of the City's current financial condition and discuss goals and priorities with the Council for the 2014/2015 preliminary budget and beyond.

City Manager Barkley began with five priorities to develop the 2014-2015 Budget; (1) support levels of service and programs currently in place (2) engage the community in identifying future program and infrastructure priorities (3) develop an achievable and sustainable fiscal plan that reflects adopted priorities (4) develop and implement a basic economic development plan (5) and provide aggressive street maintenance, additional sidewalks and aesthetic improvements for major arterial street right of ways.

Barkley discussed several challenges the City of Belgrade had dealt with over the past 5 years in general, specifically citing increased costs along with declines in revenue. He reviewed the past property tax revenues, required amounts that should be in the City's reserve funds and consistent increases in health insurance costs, along with the effects on the City's general fund. He referred to various proposals for improvements including adjustments to the compensation structure, improved Street Maintenance, a Tourism Business Improvement District, and implementation of a Municipal Court Fee. We must develop additional funding to support the levels of service required.

Barkley indicated some funds would be reviewed for the Council at the next meeting. Overall Budget review would be planned for the second Council meeting in August to allow for

public hearings. Final Budget approval may come after Labor Day. The goal for next year would be to get in line with the regular Fiscal Year schedule, with amendments as needed.

Barkley indicated that Belgrade continues to charge the lowest water/sewer rates in the area as compared to Livingston, Bozeman, Billings and Butte – still much lower. Barkley invited questions. When asked about mil levy support for the Fire Department, Barkley explained this would come up in future discussions when the needs were known and put before the voters. Barkley also brought up a possible contract with Prospera to work on economic development plans due to our lack of staff. He indicated that Prospera currently administers all the area communities and their Revolving Loan Fund/Community Development programs, except for Belgrade. We would still be in control of the loan approval process.

The need for additional fees and taxes and future mil levy elections would need to be addressed. Barkley indicated the need for the public to be better educated on the issues, costs and funding required. Barkley stressed the importance of engaging the community for future projects, increased services and continued success.

CONSENT AGENDA

Payroll for June 2014

Council Member Cooper moved to approve Payroll for June 2014. Council Member Menicucci seconded the motion.

All voted aye, motion carried unanimously

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Council Member Criner inquired about trimming trees for better visibility on city streets. Barkley commented on the process of notification and compliance when complaints are received. The City's Community Service Officers is the contact for citizen concerns.

Council Member Cooper had nothing to report.

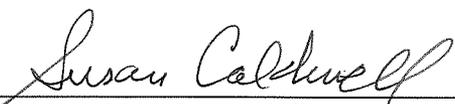
Council Member Menicucci had nothing to report.

Council Member Smith had nothing to report.

Mayor Nelson reported that he would not be able to attend the August 4th meeting.

ADJOURN

Council Member Cooper moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:14 pm.



Susan Caldwell,
Administrative Secretary



Russell C. Nelson, Mayor