

BELGRADE CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
December 1, 2014
7:00 PM

Mayor Russell Nelson called the meeting to order. Council Members in attendance were: Brad Cooper, Anne Koentopp, Ken Smith, Kristine Menicucci, and John Youngberg. Council Member Criner was not present. Others in attendance were: City Manager Ted Barkley, Planning Director Jason Karp, Rick Ramler, Jay Williamson, Cristina Thomas, Tom Henesh, and Tim Thomas.

APPROVED MINUTES OF THE November 17, 2014 MEETING

Council Member Youngberg moved to approve the minutes of the November 17, 2014 meeting. Council Member Smith seconded the motion

All voted aye, motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC FORUM

Mayor Nelson called for public comment 3 times. There being none, the public forum was closed.

PUBLIC HEARING

There were no items set for public hearing.

REPORTS

Mayor Nelson had nothing to report.

City Attorney Ramler had nothing to report.

City Manager Barkley reported on expecting the Ryen Glenn Preliminary Plat Phase I to be brought before the Council next month.

Barkley reported preparations to offer a number of surplus items for sale through both local advertising and the website used to dispose of government items. In regard to City employees bidding on items being put up for sale, Barkley discussed a possible perception of conflict, particularly in regard to items such as seized vehicles. Council members felt it was not a concern since no one at the City was in control of the auction process and it was handled through a third party.

Barkley reported that a Request for Quote on a Skid Steer had been put out to the public. He expected the whole process to be closed by the end of December.

Barkley reported that the FCC License application for Public Works' radios is also undergoing the review process.

Barkley reported that Jefferson Lines, the company providing the regional intercity bus service, is exploring the possibility of providing a bus station location near the Flying J Truck Stop. This would represent a greater convenience to our local population. Confirmation on this should be coming soon. This is a commercial coach service that took over for Greyhound and Continental Trailways.

Barkely reported on the progress of the Mill Levy Proposal work committee. A proposal was taking shape and they would bring it to the Council for consideration at the December 15th meeting. If acceptable to the Council, this would allow them to set a public hearing for January 5, 2015.

Barkley reported he would be participating as a panelist for the Local Government Commission training sessions being held in Bozeman on December 8th and 9th.

DISCUSSION AGENDA

CONSIDER Proposed Ordinance 2014-4 West Ridge Property Rezone – First Reading

Planning Director Karp reviewed the proposed Ordinance requesting a change in zoning from B-2 to R-4. This property is located at the corner of Jackrabbit and Main Street and the change would make it contiguous to other R-4 properties. When the buildings were constructed in 1997, they were designation as an extended stay motel. The zone change would allow designation as apartments and would make it easier for the new owners to enter into long-term lease agreements. The Planning Board voted unanimously to approve this zone change. The impact of how this zoning change would affect the water services rates was realized late in the review process and Karp indicated the need for further review so the rates are proportionate to the size of each unit. A motel is charged one base rate for the entire group of rooms, whereas an apartment building is charged for each separate living unit. The apartment designation would considerably increase water service costs.

Karp indicated the need for further analysis of what other apartment complexes are being billed for water service for comparison purposes. The Planning Board voted 5-1 to recommend that the Council consider taking a closer look at the water rate structure because the base rate for units such as this, 1 bedroom or studio units, does not appear to be in proportion to the amount of water actually being used.

Karp indicated that the request for rezoning by West Ridge Property did comply with the Belgrade Area Growth Policy and State Law, and the Planning Board voted to recommend approval. If the Council approved, Karp recommended scheduling the date for public hearing as January 5, 2015.

Tom Henesh, with Big Sky Consulting, spoke in reference to the water service rates. He agreed that the water service rates were a major concern for the property which amounted to 30

units. He indicated a possible action would be for the Council to table this request for rezoning until the water rate structure could be reviewed. The current zoning allowed a motel rate. If the new zoning was approved, under current regulations, the water rates would rise significantly. The zoning change was initially requested to allow for long term tenants rather than month-to-month.

Cristina Thomas, of West Ridge Properties, indicated the water costs would increase approximately \$9,000 per year based on the current rates. The current usage per month has not been above 47,000 gallons. Apartment rate structure would automatically raise the base gallons to 240,000 per month because the base amount allowed is 5,000 gallons per month per unit. She noted that this amount of water is nowhere near the amount the apartments have ever used. She also noted that the base rate of \$43.12 per 1 bedroom or studio unit was not proportionate when considering the same rate is charged for a five bedroom single dwelling house.

Discussion followed regarding the base rates that other apartment units were being charged. Council Member Youngberg commented that the base rates for apartments must be kept consistent. Karp confirmed that typically an apartment building is fitted with one meter and the number of individual units is noted on the account in order to calculate the monthly minimum charge for water service.

City Manager Barkley referred to the planned review of water rates scheduled for the Spring of 2015. Between now and the public hearing in January, he indicated that City staff could do research to clarify what the issues are in relation to this property.

Council members commended the new property owners for their efforts in cleaning up and improving the look of the property. On-site management seemed to be an added advantage.

ACTION: Council Member Youngberg moved to approve Ordinance 2014 – 4 on First Reading to change the zoning of property at 19601 Frontage Road to R-4 and set date for public hearing on January 5, 2015. Council Member Cooper seconded the motion.

Jay Williamson, of First Security Bank, stated as a lender on the project, they were in support of the rezone request.

It was clarified that no review of the rate structure could be accomplished until the Rate Study is provided. It was also noted that after public hearing, the applicant may still choose not to go forward with the rezone due to the water rates and could ask that this matter be tabled so that water rate structure could still be reviewed.

All voted aye, motion carried unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

Payroll for November 2014

Council Member Menicucci moved to approve the Payroll for November 2014. Council Member Smith seconded the motion.

All voted aye, motion carried unanimously.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Mayor Nelson had nothing to report.

Council Member Cooper had nothing to report.

Council Member Koentopp inquired about the upcoming Festival of Lights. It will be held on Friday December 5th.

Council Member Smith reported driving past the schools on North Jackrabbit where there were no street lights which made it hard to see the cross walks, none of the vehicles south bound were stopping for the pedestrians. Visibility was very poor. Around the schools there are no lights, very dark. There should also be more cross walk signs. Other Council Members pointed out that the Schools were not traditionally included in Lighting Districts. City Manager Barkley indicated they would be contacted on the subject. Schools fall within a different category and other lighting districts have been created after a petition was submitted by property owners. Creating a single lighting district for the entire City of Belgrade was mentioned as a goal by City Manager Barkley.

Council Member Menicucci reported on the upcoming Festival of Lights, including a choir, book sale and treats.

Council Member Youngberg reported he will not be at the next council meeting due to his upcoming vacation before the legislative session. He planned on being in attendance at the meeting scheduled for January 5th.

ADJOURN

Council Member Menicucci moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:37 p.m.



Russell C. Nelson, Mayor



Susan Caldwell,
Administrative Assistant to the City Manager