

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS,
COLUMBUS, MONTANA HELD SEPTEMBER 5, 2023, AT 7:00 P.M.**

COUNCIL PRESENT OFFICERS PRESENT	The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Mayor Webb Mandeville began the meeting with the pledge of allegiance. Council persons present were Rick White, Terry Nystul, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Bob Fitzgerald, and Danen Johannes. Staff members present were Police Chief Gary Timm, City Attorney Ryan Addis, Public Works Director Scott Caton, and City Clerk-Treasurer Cherrie McAlexander.
SIDELINE IN PERSON	Marlo Pronovost, Kirk Ivankovich, Tim Hafla, Gretchen Crippin
PUBLIC HEARING	The Public Hearing for the Fiscal Budget for 2023/2024 was opened at 7:00 p.m. There was no public comment. Public Hearing closed at 7:02 p.m.
REGULAR MINUTES APPROVED	The mayor asked Council if they had reviewed the minutes of the August 21, 2023, regular meeting, and if there were any additions, deletions, or corrections. Danen Johannes mentioned 2 grammar corrections that should be made. Cherrie stated that she would make the corrections to the minutes. Terry Nystul, made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting as corrected, seconded by Cole Waltner; roll call for vote, Danen Johannes, Bob Fitzgerald, Cole Waltner, Tim Mayo, Terry Nystul, Rick White, all yea votes. Motion passed.
APPROVAL OF CLAIMS	The claims list for the 2nd half of August was presented to Council. Cole Waltner made a motion to approve the claims as presented. Seconded by Rick White; roll call for vote, Rick White, Terry Nystul, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Bob Fitzgerald, Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Motion passed.
PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS	NONE
FIRE DEPT.	Fire Chief was not present and did not provide a report.
POLICE	Police Chief was present, and provided a report. No questions from Council.
PUBLIC WORKS	The Public Works Director was present and provided a report. Scott let council know that the sewer project will be another 6 weeks before completion. No questions from Council.
ATTORNEY	The City Attorney was present and provided a report. Rick White stated that the number of criminal matters that Ryan is working on has increased. Ryan stated that it was summer and summer is always busy.
CITY JUDGE	The City Judge was not present and did not provide a report to Council.
CLERK-TREASURER	The Clerk-Treasurer was present and provided a report. Tim Mayo asked how things went with the auditors. Cherrie stated that things went very well and they left her with lots of things to work on.
PUBLIC COMMENT ON CURRENT AGENDA ITEMS:	NONE
COMMITTEE REPORTS-	NONE

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<p>UNFINISHED BUSINESS</p>	<p>Gretchen Crippen presented a written Proposal for Conversion of tennis courts to pickle ball courts. Danen stated that he spent the last few weeks observing the tennis courts and how often they were being used. Danen watched the courts morning, afternoon and evening. In that time, he did not see anyone using the tennis courts. Danen agrees that pickle ball can be a loud sport, but thinks that the distance of the homes from the proposed courts will not be that big of a concern. Danen would like to see more residents using the stuff provided for them at the parks. Danen would not be opposed to building a separate area in the park for pickle ball, if it would be utilized by our residents. Danen stated that anything that we can bring to our parks that will get residents outside, off their couches and off the video games, he is all for it. Gretchen stated the one of the contractors told her that it would cost \$8,000 to surface a new concrete pad for pickle ball. Terry Nystul asked Gretchen if the nets are removable from the courts, where would the nets be stored. Gretchen said they could just be set to the side. Terry stated that they would probably walk away. Gretchen mentioned that players could also bring their own nets. Gretchen asked what Council wants from her at this point. Rick asked Gretchen if the surface of a pickle ball court is the same as a tennis court. Gretchen said yes. Terry asked if Gretchen had a cost from top to bottom on what this is going to cost. Gretchen stated that she is not for sure what it would cost to pour a concrete pad. Tim Mayo asked what size would the concrete pad need to be? Tim Mayo stated that a 50X55 concrete pad would roughly cost \$13,600.00. Mayor mentioned all the different locations that people are putting pickle ball courts, shops, air plane hangars, gyms, but hasn't heard of anyone putting tennis courts in any of these locations. Mayor mentions that there have been successful lawsuits shutting down pickle ball courts and that there are lots of people who do not like pickle ball. Ryan discussed the pickle ball courts in Billings, MT. Tim asked Ryan is they are loud. Ryan says yes but not awful. Cole mentions that they have pickle ball courts, in Absarokee and they never got a noise complaint through the Sherifs Office. Tim stated that he could see if you had pickle ball and tennis courts right next to each other that could be distracting for each sport. Terry asked if the city has funds to pursue putting in pickle ball courts. Mayor states that this is not a process that will end tonight. Mayor encourages council to read the letter and articles that were in their council packets. Mayor encouraged Gretchen to come back with more information and reinforcements on showing the need and want by residents for pickle ball courts. Gretchen said she would need some time but will be back with more information. Mayor asked council what they would like to see from Gretchen at her next visit. Danen stated that he would like to see a separate area for pickle ball. Scott asked Gretchen if she could provide him with some of the contractors information she has been talking to about the pickle ball courts. Scott would like to reach out to them about getting some repairs done to the tennis courts.</p>
<p>NEW BUSINESS</p>	<p>Approval of Resolution No. 838-2023 – Resolution setting the levy in the lighting districts number 38 through 44. Terry Nystul made the motion to waive the reading of the resolution, seconded by Cole Waltner, roll call vote, Danen Johannes, Bob Fitzgerald, Cole Waltner, Tim Mayo, Terry Nystul, Rick White, all yea votes. Motion passed. Tim Mayo made a motion to adopt the resolution, seconded by Terry Nystul, roll call for vote, Rick White, Terry Nystul, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Bob Fitzgerald, Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Motion passed.</p>

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Approval of Resolution No. 839-2023 – Resolution adopting the Tax Levy for the City of Columbus for the 2023/2024 fiscal year. Terry Nystul made a motion to waive the reading of the resolution, seconded by Rick White, roll call for vote, Danen Johannes, Bob Fitzgerald, Cole Waltner, Tim Mayo, Terry Nystul, Rick White, all yea votes. Motion passed. Terry Nystul made a motion to adopt the resolution, seconded by Cole Waltner, roll call for vote, Rick White, Terry Nystul, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Bob Fitzgerald, Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Motion passed.

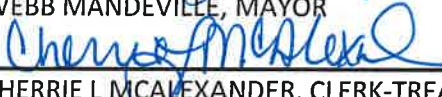
Approval of Resolution No. 840-2023 – Resolution adopting a Budget for the City of Columbus for fiscal year 2023/2024. Rick White made a motion to waive the reading of the resolution, seconded by Terry Nystul, roll call for vote, Cole Waltner, Terry Nystul, Rick White, Bob Fitzgerald, Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Motion passed. Terry Nystul made a motion to adopt the resolution, seconded by Cole Waltner, roll call for vote, Rick White, Terry Nystul, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Bob Fitzgerald, Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Motion passed.

Approval of Resolution No. 841 option A or B – Resolution of intent to revise and assess water and sewer rates for the City of Columbus. Council must approve option A or B. Ryan explained how the process will flow and what the steps are if the resolution of intent passes. Mayor stated that discussion is open for both resolution options. Tim asked if the sewer rate increase is the same for both options. Cherrie answered yes. Tim asked Danen if option A is what they were agreeing on at the last council meeting. Danen said yes. Cole asked what the current water base rate is for the city and what is the rate for each 1,000 over 3,000? Cherrie stated that the current water base rate is \$16.65 and per 1,000 gallon rate is \$4.83. Cherrie stated that the water base rate will increase by \$8.00 for 2023. Ryan stated that the rates will increase at the beginning of each calendar year. Bob stated that the reason he voted down the last rate increase was because it was only including 1,000 in the base rate. Bob states that options A is the option he could vote for. Danen stated that there is not much difference in options A and B. Danen does not feel that there are many residents in the city that use less than 1,000 gallons of water, so option B isn't really helping anyone. Danen hopes that option A will make the majority of residents happy. Danen stated that option A is the option the city should go with. Mayor stated that option A will bring in around \$100,000 less in revenue for the city, but option B increases our base rates, which is what is looked at for loans and grants. Mayor mentioned all of the projects the cities need to accomplish and all of the current loans the city has. Danen mentioned that he likes option A because it is increasing our base rates and that is what is important when trying to secure loans or grants not the usage rates. Ryan explained that option A will give the city better opportunities for loans because it increases our base rates, which is what lenders look at but, option B will increase our revenue, so loans may not be as necessary. Danen stated that it would be hypocritical to pass options B because that is the same option that was voted down last time. Danen Johannes made the motion to waive the reading of resolution 841-A, seconded by Rick White, roll call for vote, Rick White, Terry Nystul, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Bob Fitzgerald, Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Motion passed. Tim Mayo made a motion to adopt resolution 841-A, seconded by Terry Nystul, roll call for vote, Danen Johannes, Bob Fitzgerald, Cole Waltner, Tim Mayo, Terry Nystul, Rick White, all yea votes. Motion passed.

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COMMENTS NOT ON THE AGENDA	<p>Kirk Ivankovich commented on our city park. Kirk would like to see a fee to camp at Itch-kep-pe. He feels that if there was a fee to camp it would bring in a better clientel of campers. Kirk thought that we could use some of the revenue to help with the water and sewer projects that are needed in town. Kirk asked council if this has ever been mentioned. The mayor stated that there has been a Capital Improvement Plan done for Itch-kep-pe park. Some of the improvements mentioned in the plan were to number all camp sites, update restroom facilities and look at hiring a camp host. The mayor stated that Itch-Kep-pe is a valuable asset to the city and improvements are in progress. Ryan explained to Kirk how the different funds for the city are used. Enterprise funds must be self-sufficient. The city cannot use funds from parks (general fund) to pay for water or sewer projects (enterprise funds) this is against state regulations and the city would get dinged on the annual audit for this. Kirk also stated that he is onboard with the option A for water and sewer rate increase.</p> <p>Tim Hafla stated that there are not that many nice places to camp and Itch-Kep-pe is great. Tim feels that the city could charge \$20 a night to camp there and would still have lots of campers. Danen stated that any revenue that is brought in at Itch-kep-pe is used for upkeep on the parks.</p>
ADJOURNMENT	Webb Mandeville requested a Motion to Adjourn. Terry Nystul made the motion to adjourn at 7:54 p.m. seconded by Tim Mayo, roll call all yea votes.


 WEBB MANDEVILLE, MAYOR


 CHERRIE L MCALEXANDER, CLERK-TREASURER