

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS,  
COLUMBUS, MONTANA HELD OCTOBER 2, 2023, AT 7:00 P.M.**

<p><b>COUNCIL PRESENT OFFICERS PRESENT</b></p>	<p>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 Fire Chief Rich Cowger, Police Chief Gary Timm, City Attorney Ryan Addis, Public Works Director Scott Caton, and City Clerk-Treasurer Cherrie McAlexander.</p>
<p><b>SIDELINE IN PERSON</b></p>	<p>Jim Mandeville and Tim Halfa</p>
<p><b>PUBLIC HEARING</b></p>	<p>The Public Hearing for the Water/Sewer Rate Increase was opened at 7:00 p.m. Tim Halfa asked if all the sewer projects on the handout need to be completed in the next 5 years. Cherrie replied yes. Tim wanted to know why these projects came up all of the sudden. Scott explained that these projects came up 10 years ago and have been put off over the years. Tim asked if the new subdivision is the reason for all these sewer projects. The mayor explained that the sewer projects that are needed are not capacity issues and have nothing to do with the development of the new subdivision. Tim also asked if the pipe under the railroad was a capacity issue. Mayor stated that the pipe under the railroad is not a capacity issue. Tim asked if the new subdivision was costing the tax payers money. Tim Mayo stated that all utilities installed for the new subdivision will be at the developer's expense. Tim asked if there was enough money to complete the water project listed on the handout. Cherrie responded yes. Ryan explained that the Water Fund has benefited from over 2 million dollars in ARPA grants. Tim stated that he is not totally against a water/sewer rate increase. Tim expressed his concerns for the elderly in the city and how this increase will affect them. Jim Mandeville asked if the city would have made regular rate increases to the water and sewer rates over the years would the city's proposed rate be about where the city would have been. Jim also expressed that if there were regular rate increase over the years this current one would not be such a large impact on the community. The mayor stated that there were increases over the years but not adequate ones. Danen Johannes stated that he has been on Council for quite some time and the issue has always been that Council did not want to increase rates because of the elderly and fixed income families. Danen feels if the Council would of gone a different route and made regular rate increase things would probably be different. Danen stated that the city is at the point where Council needs to be more proactive for the future. Tim Halfa discussed the grant that Billings received to plant trees in their city. Tim asked if there were any grants for water or sewer projects. Scott stated we have looked everywhere for grants and so has our engineering firm. Mayor stated that in order to receive loans or grants the city must raise their rates. Cole Waltner stated that the grant that Billings got was a matching grant. Ryan again stated that the city received over 2 million dollars in ARPA grants for water/sewer projects. Public Hearing closed at 7:13 p.m.</p>
<p><b>REGULAR MINUTES APPROVED</b></p>	<p>The mayor asked Council if they had reviewed the minutes of the September 18, 2023, regular meeting, and if there were any additions, deletions, or corrections. Terry Nystul, made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting, seconded by Tim Mayo; roll call for vote, Danen Johannes, Bob Fitzgerald, Tim Mayo, Terry Nystul, Rick White, all yea votes. Cole Waltner abstained from voting due to not being present at last council meeting. Motion passed.</p>

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<b>APPROVAL OF CLAIMS</b>	The claims list for the 2nd half of September was presented to Council. Rick White made a motion to approve the claims as presented. 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.
<b>PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS</b>	NONE
<b>FIRE DEPT.</b>	Fire Chief was present, and provided a report. Tim Mayo asked if the new ambulance had a refurbished box only. Rich said yes. Rick White asked if this ambulance would eliminate the DOT awarded ambulance. Rich said no.
<b>POLICE</b>	Police Chief was present, and provided a report. Cole Waltner asked if the police department was looking at using 4 <sup>th</sup> street again for next year's homecoming route. Gary said yes. Cole asked if 6 <sup>th</sup> street was being looked at for a potential route. Gary said no, but department is definitely open to suggestions.
<b>PUBLIC WORKS</b>	The Public Works Director was present and provided a report. Scott gave an update on the RRxing project. Rick White asked when the project will be completed. Scott said 2-3 weeks.
<b>ATTORNEY</b>	The City Attorney was present and provided a report. No questions from Council.
<b>CITY JUDGE</b>	The City Judge was not present and did not provide a report to Council.
<b>CLERK-TREASURER</b>	The Clerk-Treasurer was present and provided a report. Tim Mayo asked about the elevator work order, wanted to know if there were any other elevator companies to get quotes from. Cherrie stated that she will be working on getting more quotes to present at next council Meeting.
<b>PUBLIC COMMENT ON CURRENT AGENDA ITEMS:</b>	NONE
<b>COMMITTEE REPORTS-</b>	NONE
<b>UNFINISHED BUSINESS</b>	NONE
<b>NEW BUSINESS</b>	Approval of Resolution No. 844 – Resolution for the City of Columbus to increase water and sewer rates. Terry Nystul made the motion to waive the reading of the resolution, seconded by Tim Mayo, roll call vote, Danen Johannes, Bob Fitzgerald, Cole Waltner, Tim Mayo, Terry Nystul, Rick White, all yea votes. Motion passed. Bob Fitzgerald 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.

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	<p>Approval of Resolution No. 842 – Resolution of Intent amending the Expenditure Budget for the City of Columbus for the fiscal year 2022-2023. Cole Waltner made a motion to waive the reading of the resolution, 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. Cole Waltner 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> <p>Approval of Public Works Construction Agreement between the City of Columbus and Four Beers Inc (DBA Stillwater Excavating) for the removal of old boat ramp and building of new boat ramp in the amount of \$74,882.00. Tim Mayo made a motion to approve the Construction Agreement, seconded by Cole Waltner, roll call for vote, Danen Johannes, Bob Fitzgerald, Tim Mayo, Terry Nystul, Rick White, all yea votes. Motion passed.</p>
<p><b>COMMENTS NOT ON THE AGENDA</b></p>	<p>Rick White asked if there will be a change to the time of the Council Meetings. Cherie stated that after getting feedback from the Council the Council Meeting start time will stay the same.</p>
<p><b>ADJOURNMENT</b></p>	<p>Webb Mandeville requested a Motion to Adjourn. Terry Nystul made the motion to adjourn at 7:32 p.m. seconded by Tim Mayo, roll call all yea votes.</p>



WEBB MANDEVILLE, MAYOR



CHERRIE L MCALEXANDER, CLERK-TREASURER