
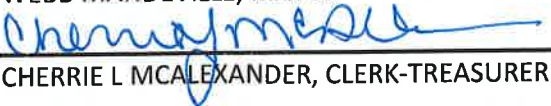


**MINUTES FOR A BUDGET WORK SESSION FOR THE CITY OF COLUMBUS,
COLUMBUS, MONTANA HELD August 12, 2024, AT 6:00 P.M.**

COUNCIL PRESENT OFFICERS PRESENT	The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. Mayor Webb Mandeville began the meeting with the pledge of allegiance. The council persons present were Rick White, Dennis Holten, Tim Mayo, Bob Fitzgerald and Danen Johannes. Staff members present were, Public Works Director Peyton Brookshire and Clerk-Treasurer Cherrie McAlexander.
SIDELINE IN PERSON	NONE
PUBLIC COMMENT ON CURRENT AGENDA ITEMS:	The mayor asked if there was any public comment on current agenda items. There was no public present.
NEW BUSINESS	<p>The council was presented with the entire preliminary budget and the cash report. The floor was opened for questions. Dennis asked what the Emergency Disaster Fund was. Cherrie explained that she is not entirely sure where the funds came from. They had been there before she was the Treasurer. Cherrie believes they are from FEMA and can be used for disaster clean up. Danen asked where all the donations for Itch-Kep-Pe are in the budget. Cherrie responded in the general fund under park revenue. Danen asked about the bathroom remodel and marking the campsites at Itch-Kep-Pe. Peyton stated that the bathroom project will be starting soon, and the campsites will be marked this fall. Danen asked if there were any funds left for the K-9 dog. Cherrie responded that there is \$1,000 left in that fund. Danen asked about the Gas Tax Fund revenue and what the money can be used for. Cherrie stated that the funds can be used for any road and street repairs or projects. Peyton asked Dennis about street opening permits and if the city still does them. Dennis stated yes and Cherrie stated that the revenue for that permit and all permits are received under the "all permits" line under the general fund. Cherrie presented to the council a document that showed what the revenue vs expenditures were for FY23/24 and the projected revenues and expenditures for FY24/25 for the 4 major funds for the city. The document also showed what the gains or losses were for the major funds for the city. Danen asked if the city has ever thought of hiring someone to work for the city to look for grants. The mayor stated that he was unsure but at one point the county had a grant writer. Tim stated that Big Timber had someone that was getting grants for that city. Cherrie stated that it's a possibility to start looking at this option but will have to have more manpower. Bob mentioned AI and that there are programs that will find the grant and write them for you. Cherrie asked council to increase the Police Department budget by \$5K to \$10K for crime lab fees and \$3K for cell phones for all polices officers. After discussions it was agreed to increase the budget \$9K for crime lab fees and \$3K for cell phones. Danen expresses his concerns with the uniform budget increasing to \$8,000. Danen stated that he does not feel that the city is being fiscally responsible by giving our police officer a \$9K to \$18K pay increase and continuing to increase the overall budget for the police department. Bob asked about the increase in the training budget for the police department. Tim stated that each officer needs so many hours of post certified training. The mayor read Aaron's report to the council from a previous meeting that explained in detail why he wanted to increase this budget line item. Danen asked about the increase in the maintenance line item for the police department. Cherrie stated that the</p>

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	<p>increase is because Aaron is looking at more maintenance needed due to the age and condition of our police vehicles. Rick stated that the city is in a bit of a hole from past decisions and it's going to take a bit more money to dig us out. Tim agreed. Dennis asked why the accounting line item in general fund went from \$18K to \$40K. The mayor explained that our auditors told the city what the new fees will be, take it or leave it. Dennis asked if there were other firms we could use. Cherrie stated that is hard to find an auditing firm and there are several cities that have not completed their audits for several years because they cannot find a firm that will work with them. Bob asked about the new computer for the city attorney and why it is so expensive. Cherrie explained that it is due to the agreement we have with our IT company that we use. All computers must be purchased through them. Bob asked about the mowing contract at the cemetery. Cherrie explained that it was an added expense that was not in the budget for last year. The cemetery was mowed by a city employee that employee went part time and with other staffing issues in public works it was decided to sub out the mowing at the cemetery. Peyton would like to increase his temporary worker budget and have James Caraway stay on for another 140 hours to start the GIS Project. James usually works in the summer and ends his employment when school starts. It was decided that the 140 hours and all associated expenses would go to the parks fund. Peyton requested an increase in his supply budget in the water fund. He explained that he has a serious lack of inventory to repair water issues for the city. It was decided that \$11K would be moved from the tank inspection budget and added to the supply budget for the water fund. Discussion about changing the budget for the new public works trucks from \$40k to \$65K. It was agreed to change the budget to \$65K.</p>
COMMENTS NOT ON THE AGENDA	NONE
ADJOURNMENT	Webb Mandeville requested a Motion to Adjourn. Rick White made the motion to adjourn at 7:37 p.m. seconded by Dennis Holten, roll call all yea votes.


 WEBB MANDEVILLE, MAYOR

 CHERRIE L MCALEXANDER, CLERK-TREASURER