

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS,
COLUMBUS, MONTANA HELD FEBRUARY 18, 2025, 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. The council persons present were Rick White, Dennis Holten, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Bob Fitzgerald and Danen Johannes. Staff members present were Chief of Police Aaron Uecker, Public Works Director Peyton Brookshire (Via Zoom), City Attorney Ryan Addis (Via Zoom), and Clerk-Treasurer Cherrie McAlexander.
SIDELINE IN PERSON	Hannah McAlexander, Mason Sheppard, Lane Desaveur, Kathy Grotbo, Drea Obert, Pam Aumueller, Blake Haug, Daniel Vesbach, Silas Vesbach, Kelley Vesbach, Sarah Peters, Stephanie Johnson, Dana Holten
PUBLIC HEARING	NONE
REGULAR MINUTES APPROVED	The mayor asked the council if they had reviewed the minutes of the February 3, 2025, regular meeting, and if there were any additions, deletions, or corrections. Bob Fitzgerald requested a correction be made on page three the word slash should read splash. Cole Waltner made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting with correction, seconded by Dennis Holten; roll call for vote, Dennis Holten, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Bob Fitzgerald, Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Rick White abstained due to missing last meeting. Motion passed.
SHUT OFF LIST	The shut-off list for the month of February 2025 was presented to the Council. Rick White made a motion to approve the list as presented, seconded by Tim Mayo; roll call for vote, Danen Johannes, Bob Fitzgerald, Cole Waltner, Tim Mayo, Dennis Holten, Rick White, all yea votes. Motion passed.
APPROVAL OF CLAIMS	The claims list for the 1st half of February was presented to the Council. Cole Waltner made a motion to approve the claims as presented, seconded by Dennis Holten; roll call for vote, Rick White, Dennis Holten, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Bob Fitzgerald, Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Motion passed.
PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS	NONE
FIRE DEPT.	The Fire Chief was not present but did provide a report.
POLICE	The Police Chief was present and provided a report. Danen Johannes stated that he was worried about the K9 program. There was a lot of fundraising done to get the dog and he would hate to see there not be a dog handler hired for the dog. Aaron stated that he understands Danen's concerns but if he cannot find an officer that wants the dog, he does not want to force the dog on anyone.
PUBLIC WORKS	The Public Works Director was present (zoom) and provided a report. Peyton asked council their opinion on hiring a contractor to remove the snow in town. Dennis stated that he was all for it and that the city has done that in the past. Dennis mentioned that gas tax funds could be used for snow removal.
ATTORNEY	The City Attorney was present (zoom) but did not provide a report.
CITY JUDGE	The City Judge was not present and did not provide a report.

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CLERK-TREASURER	The Clerk-Treasurer was present and provided a report. Dennis asked about the work sessions for the budget. Cherrie explained her plan for the work session. Dennis and Tim both liked the idea. Cherrie stated that she would send out an email to the council asking them what days and times they would prefer for the work session.
PUBLIC COMMENT ON CURRENT AGENDA ITEMS:	Payne Bower, pool manager for last season, stated that he feels the pool is very important to the city. There were over 50 children that took swimming lessons, multiple daycares used the pool, and over 500 people who attended the pool. The pool is a safe place for parents to drop off their kids. Kathy Grotbo stated that the pool is very important to the city. There are all ages that use the pool including elderly but when you drive by a splash park all you see is toddlers. She would like to see the city looking for solutions for the pool. She would like to see some proactive work done while the pool is open and running. The mayor mentioned that the city is looking for solutions for the pool and the repairs are extensive. The city is having problems finding contractors to provide bids. Daniel Vesbach stated that he is in support of having a pool for the city. He thinks that the city lacks things for kids to do. Anything that will get kids off their phones and out of their homes is good. It is healthy for our community and the kids that work at the pool. If the kids aren't swimming in the pool, they will be swimming in the river. It's good for kids to know how to swim. He was a lifeguard all through high school and he loved teaching swimming lessons. Water aerobics was very popular at the pool last year. Daniel stated that there must be more resources available for the pool. Peyton stated that the contractor that will be coming to look at the pool is out of Idaho. He and Cherrie have been struggling to find anyone willing to provide them with numbers to present to the council. Tim Mayo asked if the current boiler at the pool might be usable for this upcoming season. From what Peyton understood from the contractor the boiler is shot. Dennis asked if there was a leak inside the boiler. Peyton said yes.
COMMITTEE REPORTS-	NONE
UNFINISHED BUSINESS	Approval to purchase a boiler for pool: option 1 \$59,500.00 or option 2 \$31,500.00 or option 3 no boiler. Bob asked where option two was, he did not receive a copy of the quote. Peyton stated that he received a verbal quote for option two because the contractor was unable to provide a paper one in time. Dennis commented that he has the quotes that were presented to the council months ago and asked about the difference in prices. Peyton stated that the price difference is the installation. Bob asked Dennis what the difference in the two boilers are. Dennis responded that the major difference is the efficiency of the boilers and that it would take a very long time to recoup the difference. Bob Fitzgerald tries to make a motion to approve, and Dennis cut him off and asked for more discussion. Cole Waltner stated that you must motion first before discussion. Dennis and Tim both stated that they wished that the leak situation was on the agenda. Dennis stated that he feels like its déjà vu from last year when they found out that there was no manager for the pool. Dennis stated he wants the pool to be open even with the leak, he wants the new boiler installed for \$31,500.00 and he wants to start planning now to prepare to fix the leak

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	<p>this fall. Danen Johannes stated that he looked through all his notes and the only thing he could find was a pinhole in the boiler. He spoke to the boys, and they said it worked last year. Danen said he is with Dennis, and we need the pool open. Danen stated that the people who ran the pool last year did an awesome job, and he heard no complaints. Danen said that even before the article in the paper he had spent 15-20 hours on this issue. Danen asked Peyton if the boiler could be repaired and work for the season. Peyton said that he would get with the contractor and see if that is an option. Peyton said that the pool was dumped on his lap in June, and it was not a major priority for him. Peyton reminded council that he brought up the boiler issue with the pool months ago. Bob asked Peyton if the boiler is not fixable how long it will take to get a new boiler installed. Peyton said lead times are not an issue and the boiler can be installed before the pool season. Dennis stated that the piping around the pool is 40 years old and the boiler is 30 years old. Dennis stated that he doesn't understand why we need a pool contractor to fix the plumbing, it's just PVC. Dennis Holten made a motion to approve option 2 for \$31,500.00, seconded by Bob Fitzgerald; roll call for vote, Danen Johannes, Bob Fitzgerald, Cole Waltner, Tim Mayo, Dennis Holten, Rick White, all yea votes. Motion passed.</p>
<p>NEW BUSINESS</p>	<p>Approval of Special Use Permit for Shakespear in the Park on July 21, 2025, at Heritage Park. Rick White made a motion to approve the Special Use Permit, seconded by Cole Waltner; roll call for vote, Rick White, Dennis Holten, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Bob Fitzgerald, Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Motion passed.</p> <p>Approval of Close out of T-hangar Grant approval of forms, SF271, and SF425 close out of grant for t-hangar project at the Airport. Tim Mayo made a motion to approve the close out, seconded by Cole Waltner; roll call for vote, Danen Johannes, Bob Fitzgerald, Cole Waltner, Tim Mayo, Dennis Holten, Rick White, all yea votes. Motion passed.</p>
<p>COMMENTS NOT ON THE AGENDA</p>	<p>Bob Fitzgerald stated that pools cost money, and they always will. It is the price we must pay to keep our kids from going down to the river. Bob said he used AI to find out ways to fund the pool. Community Development Block Grant, Urban Parks and Recovery Program, Crowd Funding, Public/Private Sponsorships, Non-Profit Organizations, and other fundraisers like bake sales and swim-a-thons. These are six items that might help us with our swimming pool problems. We need to get someone to start looking into this in the community or somewhere to head this thing up.</p>
<p>ADJOURNMENT</p>	<p>Webb Mandeville requested a Motion to Adjourn. Rick White made the motion to adjourn at 7:29 p.m. seconded by Dennis Holten, roll call all yea votes.</p>

Webb Mandeville
 WEBB MANDEVILLE, MAYOR

Cherrie L McAlexander
 CHERRIE L MCALEXANDER, CLERK-TREASURER

