

BELT
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

June 4, 2025

7:00 PM

The first regularly scheduled meeting of June 2025 was called to order beginning with the Pledge of Allegiance. In attendance were Mayor James Olson; Clerk-Treasurer Lynn Schilling; Council members including Paul Heikkila, April Wells, Sally Miller, Becky Gorton, and Michelle Stinson; Project Engineer Josh Sommer; Public Works Personnel Codi Heikkila; and members of the public including Rolf Johnson as Volunteer Flood Plain Admin. Asst.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

COMPLAINT LOG – The complaint log was reviewed with no action taken. The receipt of a formal complaint from Kamdyn Molenda related to water line damages and flooding damage in the course of the ongoing water project was acknowledged as received by the Council.

MINUTES – Reviewed and approved

CLAIMS & WARRANTS- Reviewed and approved with the exception of an invoice from Great West Engineering in the amount of \$3461.50 for Flood Plain NFIP administration. Payment is pending an itemized invoice requested by the Council.

NEW BUSINESS: Council discussed and approved by unanimous vote, contract Amendment #5 to award Great West an additional \$50,000 for administrative services, with an additional amendment expected at the end of July.

Council discussed and made a motion concerning annual pay increases. A \$1 per hour increase for all employees was approved by a vote of those present; Alderman Heikkila abstaining from the vote.

Preliminary Budget items were discussed, including Capital Improvement Planning and developing a plan for flood plain NFIP regulation costs. Alderman Heikkila stated that the fleet needed to be upgraded; Mayor Olson stated that the dump truck needs to be replaced and there is the possibility of getting one at a greatly reduced price from the City of Bozeman. Moving into the next fiscal year without contract flood plain administrative services was discussed. The possibility of creating a part-time position for flood plain administration was also discussed. No action taken.

The Council engaged in a discussion related to deficiencies in the way JR Civil is giving 24 hour notice for water shut offs. Alderman Miller stated that legal notice is very important, and it is just not being adequately given. This was confirmed by other Council members and the complaint log which shows a large number of complaints throughout the project for water outage with no notice. Miller further stated that it is unreasonable to expect citizens to be asked to open lines to protect their service line from rupture and damage when the contractor turns the water back on, especially

for those away at work or on vacation. Josh Sommer indicated that they were trying to assure that improvements were being made in that area. No action taken.

The Council considered the donation of concrete picnic tables from the Ralph Spiller Foundation. Alderman Heikkila indicated that the foundation would like to provide 4 concrete tables and 2 concrete garbage receptacles for Castner Park. The Council graciously accepted the donation. Placement of the units will be decided at a later date, but the importance of keeping them away from the tent area near the pavilion was emphasized.

OLD BUSINESS: The Council engaged in more discussion related to the upcoming contract renewal for law enforcement with the Cascade County Sheriff's Department. It was observed that ongoing and further discussions would be necessary, as well as a concrete contract with numbers, from the Sheriff's Department. It was also pointed out that it would be good for the Council to decide on contract parameters of their own; language addressing clearly which local Ordinances will be enforced by the Sheriff, specific amount of proposed increases to the contract reduction received for the Resident Deputy House, and percentage increases that will be acceptable to the town and realistically absorbed by the current budget. No action taken.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT – Codi Heikkila reported that the Little Belt Cowboys have not completed the city bathrooms in Castner Park and Mayor Olson stated that they will not be ready for rodeo. C. Heikkila went on to report that the Little League garbage cans are not being dumped by Little League members; the mayor instructed Heikkila to remove the garbage cans.

FLOOD PLAIN: Rolf Johnson proposed charging for flood plain building permits and developing a plan for administration moving into the future. He suggested \$250 for a permit applied for before building and \$600 for a permit executed after building was already started or completed. He stated his belief that awareness for enforcement was very important and proposed flood plain training for himself and all committee members.

COUNCIL REPORTS: Alderman Stinson reiterated how the city was planning to proceed with the formal water damage complaint. Alderman Heikkila pointed out that weed and grass violations needed to be addressed. Mayor Olson stated that he would have public works personnel make a city-wide assessment so the Clerk could send warning letters to all those in violation. Alderman Gorton stated that she would like to remove a small dead bush in Castner Park.

CLERK-TREASURER INPUT: None

MAYOR'S REPORT: Mayor Olson said that he would like to review at the next meeting, the city's policy and procedure for public works callouts for emergencies that happen after regularly scheduled work hours and on weekends.

PUBLIC INPUT: None