

CUT BANK CITY COUNCIL
October 20, 2025
6:30 P.M. – CITY HALL & ZOOM

THIS MEETING WAS HELD VIA ZOOM & AT CITY HALL

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Mayor Winchell called the meeting of the Cut Bank City Council to order at 6:30 PM, Monday, October 20, 2025. The following persons answered roll call: Mayor Winchell, Councilperson Doug Vermulm, Maynard Nygaard, John Reynolds and Kacie Fey. Also present were Police Chief Schultz, Clerk/Treasurer Schultz, City Superintendent Damberger, and Building Inspector Sandon. All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

VISITORS:

Vernon Thomas
Gary Quenzer
Craig Erickson
Ryan Smith

ABSENT:

City Attorney Bugni

ADDITIONAL ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION NOT ON THE AGENDA: none

PUBLIC COMMENT: none

CONSENT AGENDA:

Councilperson Reynolds moved to approve the minutes from October 6, 2025, as distributed. Payroll Summary for October 9, 2025, for \$101,941.88. Councilperson Vermulm seconded the motion. The Mayor called for a vote on the Consent

Agenda. The Motion carried 4-0.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:

Building Inspector: no comments

Clerk/Treasurer: Asked the Council if they would be willing to hold a special meeting so claims could get approved.

Police Chief: There was a Coroners inquest into an officer shooting. The jury came back with the verdict that it was a justified shooting. The police department is looking at different grants to apply for to fund the 9th officer. Mayor Winchell stated that she met with one of Senator Sheehy's representatives about funding for a 9th officer. Senator's Sheehy's representative stated that he would bring it back to Washington D.C.

NEW BUSINESS:

Approval of the contract between the City of Cut Bank and the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 400. Councilperson Fey made a motion. Councilperson Vermulm seconded the motion. The Mayor called for a vote. The motion carried 4 to 0.

Approval of the 2026 Participation and Member Agreement with the Montana Main Street Program. Councilperson Fey made a motion. Councilperson Nygaard seconded the motion. The Mayor called for a vote. The motion carried 4 to 0.

Approval of Fee Proposal for Architectural/Engineering Services for the City of Cut Bank Police Department Renovation and Garage Addition. (Nelson Architects). Councilperson Nygaard made a motion. Councilperson Reynolds seconded the motion. The Council questioned that for the proposed scope of project that it seems like a lot of money for just a garage. The project was for a shell for a garage and then if had extra money could add on later. Mr. Ryan Smith from Nelson Architects stated that \$400,000 was not out of line. They would build the garage and get it functional then could do extras at a later date. Soil & geo-tech will need to look at when excavation is done. Hazardous testing should be a minimum because only 10 sq feet of the wall will be removed from the existing outside wall of the police department. The design of the garage would include room for 4 vehicles and a mezzanine for storage. The shell of the garage does include the concrete slab. Nelson Architects will compare the cost of steel and a wood structure. Mr. Smith stated that doing a pole barn might not be cheaper than the other two options. Mr. Smith also stated that a pre-fab wouldn't save the City that much because of transportation costs. Mr. Smith stated the best option would to build the garage on

site. The interview room would be left out of the bid but it would be pretty basic and someone local could just do it. Chief Schultz stated that the police department has been doing a lot to save money on the interior of the police department so that they could have this garage.

Vern Thomas of 20 4th St SW stated that he had talked to Montana Shed Center and you could purchase 24 x 32 with installation, doors and electricity for around \$46,000. That cost would increase \$3,000 to \$4,000 more if you were to put that on a concrete slab. Mr. Thomas also stated that he looked into a steel building. He said for an insulated garage with roll up doors with a concrete slab it would cost around \$48,000. To add electricity and a gas furnace it would increase \$10,000 to \$12,000.

Gary Quenzer of 148 4th Ave NW stated that he worked 33 years as part of the City Crew. He stated that he knew that the police needed a place to store vehicles but for \$400,000 you could buy any building in Cut Bank. He stated that there are other multiple uses for the money. The Civic Center parking lot and driveway need fixed.

The Mayor asked to see where everyone is at. Councilperson Fey stated that she is satisfied now that the City got another RFQ. This fee proposal is right in line so she feels better about it. Councilperson Nygaard stated that he is good with the fee proposal. He asked why we give potential bidders the budget that we can spend. Chief Schultz stated that ARPA funds are public knowledge. Mr. Smith also stated that there is usually a schedule and budget. This helps potential bidders to get a bonding price. All projects usually include a range for the budget of the project. Mr. Smith also stated that when using federal money that you have to pay contractors a national prevailing wage. Councilperson Vermulm stated that he was ok with the fee proposal to put the project out to bid. He knows the Police Department need a garage but he is concerned with the cost of the project. He wondered why there isn't anything between the \$50,000 and the \$400,000 price marks. Mayor Winchell stated that our needs will never shrink so we don't want to rebuild the garage in 10 years because it wasn't big enough. Councilperson Reynolds stated that he sees that Nelson Architects do quality work. He stated that he is not sure of all the fees that go into this project.

The Council will be asked to approve the fee proposal then the project will go out to public bid and then the Council would approve the winning bid. Mr. Smith stated that you must do certain standards with federal money.

Craig Erickson of Great West Engineering stated that the ARPA money must be obligated with the federal government by December 31, 2024. It could be reclassified if the money was obligated last December. Mr. Erickson stated that if we did not use the money for the garage project then

we would have to return the money to the federal government. There would be no extensions to spend this money. The Treasury will take the money back if it is not expended by December 31, 2026. Mr. Erickson also stated that the Davis Bacon funds will apply. There is no such thing as free money. That the local steel garage wouldn't work when using federal funds. There are standards that need to be met when using federal money. Mr. Erickson stated that the prevailing wage would add about 20% to contract costs.

Gary Quenzer stated that he was unaware of all the federal standard stuff. He stated that you should get what you can for what you got.

Vern Thomas stated that he talked to the Federal League of Cities and Towns. He stated that you could use the ARPA funds for anything you bought for 3 years previous. He suggested using the money for a street sweeper and trucks.

The Mayor called for a vote. The motion carried 4 to 0.

Correspondence: none

WORK SESSION: none

EXECUTIVE REPORT:

The Mayor went to Montana Cities and Towns League training. The Mayor learned about special TIFF districts. These districts are to encourage growth. The Mayor stated that Cut Bank would be a great place to do this. The Mayor stated that you could go on-line and check what other communities did with this special district. She also stated that another Mayor that has a TIFF district would be willing to come and talk to us about it.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Port Authority: The Port Authority approved new grant policy that would give grants quarterly. They also do grants as a 6% interest loan for 2 years. If the grantee pays on time they will get the principle back.

Board of Health: In the ordinances it states that the Board of Health Shall do certain things. The board would like to change the language in the ordinances to may assist instead of shall. Also, this is flu season and they want to remind people to get the flu vaccine. The vaccine is effective 2 to 3 weeks after you get it and lasts up to 3 months.

Public Comment:

none

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Council, **Mayor Winchell adjourned the meeting at 7:30 PM.** The next regular meeting is scheduled for November 3, 2025 at 6:30 PM.

Attest:

Approve:

Donni Schultz, Clerk-Treasurer

Kimberly Winchell, Mayor