

CUT BANK CITY COUNCIL
MARCH 2, 2020
6:30 P.M. – CITY HALL

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Mayor Raemaeker called the meeting of the Cut Bank City Council to order at 6:34 PM, Monday, March 3, 2020. The following persons answered roll call: Councilpersons Tim Curtiss, Erik Nelson and Doug Vermulm. Also present were City Superintendent James Suta, City Attorney Robert Smith and Clerk-Treasurer Burley. All present stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

ABSENT: None

VISITORS: Tanya Harper

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

CLAIMS: Councilperson Curtiss moved to approve the claims through February 27, 2020 for \$66,845.20, which includes warrants 58212-58308. Councilperson Nelson seconded the motion and motion carried 3-0.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION: Franchise agreement with Energy West.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Councilperson Curtiss moved to approve the February 18, 2020 minutes and the payroll from February 20, 2020 for \$85,680.79. Councilperson Nelson seconded the motion. Motion carried 3-0.

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:

At this time Councilperson Kipp joined the meeting.

City Superintendent Suta presented his report. The crew has been replacing water meters with new warranty meters. The wastewater plant had a violation for total nitrogen last month. The crew built two spool pivots for the water lines and extended the working platform in the solids handling building. We now have the 2001 Chevrolet ½ ton 4x4 pickup, serial #1GECK14W31ZA44686, as surplus and can be auctioned off once declared surplus. Council would prefer the truck be used by the City Animal Control Officer in the winter. The pickup will be transferred to the police department for use by the Animal Control Officer. **Councilperson Curtiss moved to accept the City Superintendent's report and Councilperson Kipp seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.**

OLD BUSINESS:

Councilperson Curtiss moved to forgive the water bill at 13 W Main Street, in part or in whole. Councilperson Nelson seconded the motion. Motion was defeated by a 0-4 vote.

NEW BUSINESS: None

CORRESPONDENCE: None

WORK SESSION: Energy West asked the Council to grant them an exclusive franchise at a previous meeting. The City held an election to get the voters' permission but now that it has been approved by the voters, Energy West has no interest in having the exclusive franchise. They feel that there is a very slim chance that another company would come into town and lay the lines necessary to deliver gas to Cut Bank residents. With no fee for such franchise, the City doesn't stand to benefit from a franchise either.

City Superintendent Suta asked the Council to think about adding policy regarding propane tanks in city limits. There are more and more tanks coming into town and he would like some direction as to their size and location.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Councilperson Kipp reported that the Chamber of Commerce has set its Banquet date for April 18th and it will be held at the Civic Center again. They have plans in the making that will make it a fun event.

City Superintendent Suta reported that he attended the last North Central Montana Water Authority meeting. They gave their last money to the tribe.

Safety meetings are going well and being held monthly. The cash incentive to report safety issues is working nicely. Glacier Electric is not currently doing any safety training that includes the City.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the Council, **Mayor Raemaeker adjourned the meeting at 7:12 PM.** The next regular meeting is scheduled for March 16, 2020 at 6:30 PM.

At this time Tanya Harper asked if she could address the Council again. **Mayor Raemaeker opened the meeting again.**

Ms. Harper asked the Council how they came about their decision to not forgive any of the bill at 13 West Main. She stated that the City did not follow its own rules so she should not be responsible for the portion of the bill that was charged beyond the time when the service should have been disconnected due to a delinquent bill. Councilperson Curtiss explained that it is not legal to give water away at no charge and that if this were to be forgiven it would have to be absorbed by other rate payers and that would not be fair. Even the Community Garden is not allowed to get water for free. Clerk-Treasurer Burley explained that this bill is for between 4 and 5 months usage as the average bill is very high at that property, with it supplying water to 2 apartments and one business. Ms. Harper asked the Council to review the issue one more time and then send her a letter with their decision. Council agreed to review it again at their next meeting.

Mayor Raemaeker adjourned the meeting.

City Attorney Smith asked the Council for direction regarding a request he received from the Airport Authority. They have not received any funding from Glacier County, and they are in dire need of it in order to keep operating. The Authority would like the City to sue the County for its portion of the funding.

At this point, Mayor Raemaeker called the meeting to order again since there was a quorum present.

The County has agreed that they owe the money, but they have no cash with which to pay the Authority. The Authority needs a minimum of \$50,000 in order to keep operating until the County can put the mills on next year's tax bills. Possible options discussed were loaning the \$50,000 to the Airport Authority with the County repaying the loan once they have the mills coming in from taxes. A general concern was whether the County would be able to pay back the loan. If the loan were paid back by the Authority, the Authority would not have the funds to pay it back until the County was caught up on their funding. Other options brought up were leasing and possibly selling some of the airport land. City Attorney Smith asked the Council to consider what action they would like him to take and it will be put on the next agenda.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to come before the Council, **Mayor Raemaeker adjourned the meeting at 8:05 PM.** The next regular meeting is scheduled for March 16, 2020 at 6:30 PM.

Attest:

Approve:

Linda Burley, Clerk-Treasurer

Dan Raemaeker, Mayor