

**TOWN OF ENNIS COMMISSION MEETING
NOVEMBER 18, 2021
7:00 PM
ENNIS TOWN HALL**

Open Meeting Mayor Leavitt opens meeting at 7:02 pm

Commission Present: Mayor Leavitt, Schroder, Ranson, Roberts, Hardy, Bancroft

Pledge to the Flag

Minutes: Review and Vote on Minutes from November 3, 2021

Bancroft moves to approve. Hardy seconds. Roberts asks for clarifying verbiage to be added to her comment made regarding CUP and height restrictions for text amendments.

Call to vote. All vote yes.

Public Comment(s) on Non-Agenda Matters

Christian Pederson directs question to Roberts, asking why funds were taken from Public Works to pay attorney for alleyway litigation. Roberts states she is unaware of what Pederson is referring to.

Ginger Guinn states that \$25,000 was borrowed from Public Works with the term of a 5-year payback, annually at budget time.

North 40 Phase 6: Final Plat review and vote to approve/disapprove

Vujovich gives updates and provides construction progress.

Bancroft asks about areas marked as parks, makes comment with concern on safe place for kids.

Hardy asks Vujovich about the terms for completing paving. Vujovich clarifies a 5-year term is standard but he does not have any intention to take that long.

Roberts references the amendment of #19 regarding condominiums. Vujovich states he will add to his disclosure.

Schroeder moves to approve final plat. Bancroft seconds.

Ranson calls to vote. All vote yes.

Attorney Greenbaum comments in favor of mentioning findings of fact in motion for final plat.

Roberts moves to approve the Madison County Planning Subdivision Report #E PP 2101 on North 40 Subdivision Phase 6 prepare on 07/22/2021 by Alex Hogle with the findings of facts determined by the MCPB and with the conditions of approval number 1-19 with the amendment previously adopted on 08/25/2021.

Ranson seconds. No discussion.

Leavitt calls to vote. All vote yes.

Resolution 563-2021: Review, discussion & Vote on a Resolution setting application fee for Annexation requests

Leavitt reads resolution.

Resolution reads to impose annexation fees to \$500 plus \$100 per acre, nonrefundable.

Hardy moves to approve. Ranson seconds. Leavitt calls to vote. All vote yes.

Greenbaum comments that there must be public comment.

Leavitt opens for public comment. No public comment given. Vote stands.

Resolution 564-2021: Review, discussion & Vote on a Resolution increasing Library employee's wages and withholdings

Leavitt makes mention to commission that there is a letter from some Town of Ennis employees to review.

Leavitt reads motion.

Resolution reads to amend the 2021-2022 budget by increasing wages and withholdings in the amount of \$14,903.29 and \$1,341.29 respectively – funds to come from cash reserves.

Roberts moves to approve. Ranson seconds.

Hardy comments that it may make sense to address all Town employee wages simultaneously.

Ranson comments in favor of addressing all Town employee wages.

Discussion and clarification on future annual raises for the Library.

Roberts comments in favor of passing this proposed resolution now and doing other departments in the future.

Guinn raises question about pay structure referenced for the Town of Ennis, states that there is no pay structure.

Ketchu clarifies that they are referencing hiring wages of recent new employees.

Guinn comments that her and fellow employees feel that their longevity (24-31 years) has not been considered.

Roberts comments that benefits and retirement are a benefit of longevity.

Guinn corrects Roberts those benefits do not improve or increase with longevity.

Schroeder comments in favor of taking a look at other departments as well, stating that would only be fair.

Roberts comments on increase of Town's budget with taxable value increasing.

Guinn makes clarifying statement on budget, mills, leavying, etc. States concern on commission saying that the Town budget is increasing because of tax value increasing but that the number of mills the Town can levy actually went down so the budget has not increased as much as commissioners make it seem in discussion.

Discussion on increasing business licensing, zoning and annexation fees to help increase revenue of Town. Guinn comments that expenses are also increasing while bringing in additional professional help.

Hardy clarifies that the money used for increase in wages is coming from the Library Cash Reserves.

Statement that the Library was slated to have \$19,000 in cash reserves at the end of 2022. With wage increases that will change to be approximately \$3,000.

Mayor Leavitt opens for Public Comment

Pederson comments in favor of looking at the whole town at once and not approving the library increase until looking at the entire town employee pay. Comments with concern of slighting other employees by only raising the library at this time.

Ranson comments on PW increases two years ago.

Discussion on increases for employees, mayor, commission, reviews for all employees, possible future Town Manager position.

Guinn comments in favor of also taking a look at the PW Director wage as current director retires and position is filled.

Lori A from audience asks about the wage increase for the library compared to the increase that other employees received during budget time.

Guinn comments that library increases at budget time were 3-7.5% and these additional increases range up from 16-41%.

Bancroft comments in favor of the library staying within their budget, comments that he was unaware of specifics to the library budget even though he was on the board.

Hardy comments in favor of raising the wages that are below \$15/hour, clarifies that these positions at part time and do receive benefits.

Guinn poses question to incoming commission member (Nikki Hankins) in audience that they will continue looking at reviews and wage comparison for other departments.

Ranson confirms they have full intention of moving forward with other departments. Hankins comments in favor as well.

Brittney Hirsch states concern on the inconsistent treatment between the Library additional wages and Police Department additional wages. References recent meetings when John Moore was scrutinized and hounded repeatedly regarding where he would get funding for future years of salary (current year to be used by grant); he was even required to start the process on a mill levy. Raises concern for the increased responsibility of the Friends of the Library – references prior meeting where it was mentioned that the Friends are currently under pressure to increase their fundraising.

Ketchu clarifies that the library business plan moving forward stems from cutting expenses from the Library Town Budget and put them on the Friends of the Library (fundraising) so that the town could pay for increased wages. States that she anticipates library revenue will increase with a higher mill value and town employee structure may change. Comments that the Library board is on board with the current plan and it has been their choice to put more fundraising responsibility on the Friends.

Hardy questions if the Library Board approved the increased wages. Ketchu confirms.

Leavitt calls to vote. Bancroft abstains. Others vote yes.

Resolution 565-2021: Review, Discussion & Vote on a Resolution of Intent to Annex Property into the incorporated limits of the Town of Ennis

Leavitt reads resolution.

Attorney Greenbaum asks what the process for annexation is and raises concern over multiple steps in the process that have not been presented prior.

Sprout presents her documents on file. Guinn explains past processes. Discussion continues on how to proceed with time frame requirements referenced in 7-2-3707.

Annexation put on hold until December meeting.

Text Amendment(s) to the Zoning Code: Setback requirements chart discussion and decision to proceed with setback changes

Discussion on leaving TND from last meeting. LCR and CCR districts have footnote three.

Roberts suggests addressing height limits in LCR, CCR, C-I and P-I be 35 feet high.

Discussion referencing chart, setbacks, conditional use permit suggests from MCPB.

Decision to have a draft prepared, first public hearing and next steps for December meeting.

Guinn to check in on regulations for process.

Roberts asks about Sterling Codifiers being bought, comments in favor of looking for other options because the transition to American Legal is not user friendly, especially on mobile devices. Ranson agrees.

Discussion on scanning code as PDF on web page for ease of access, searchability.

Department Reports:

Library

Written report. Ketchu mentions Bancroft's resignation from the Library Board, states that commissioner needs to be appointed to the board. Roberts suggests a parking time limit on Main Street.

Roberts asks about hot spot usage after business hours. Ketchu comments October was 12-21 people per day using the hot spot wifi after hours.

Hardy asks Ketchu's position on the Master Plan and impact on Main Street Parking. Ketchu says that the outdoor seating proposed would take away one parking spot from the library.

Ketchu states that 5-7 Main St parking spots are permanently occupied by the neighbors.

Roberts comments in favor of an ordinance adjustment to limit parking time on Main, contacting business owners to get their opinion. Suggests that perhaps with the additional police officer that enforcement of parking could be increased.

Discussion on drainage issues and parking.

Police

Written report.

Roberts comments on the addition of the radar sign being installed on W Main Street, asks where funding came from for that sign.

Commission gives thanks to Fortner for opening a spot for Officer Fisher to go to the Academy in January.

Schroder requests status update on mil leavy.

Public Works

Written report.

Eric Olson mentioned the purchase of a new plow, in need of four-wheeler and a new sander. Future plans on auction for Town. States that he will be working on road bond resolution; would like that on the December meeting.

Zoning

Written Report.

Discussion on 310 W William St - was sent to county but pulled back to be used as lodging and boarding. Sprout states the commission will see that project since it falls under TND.

Riverside project will not be seen until after the new year.

Discussion on other pending projects.

Hardy comments on water rights with annexation.

Clerk

Written report. Mentions adding Deputy Clerk to future agendas for report.

Hirsch notifies that there is now an update to the website for anyone to subscribe to Town News & Events at ennismontana.org.

Hirsch comments on marijuana business license applicant in Lone Elk Mall denied due to recent Madison County Ordinance that passed which restricts a retail shop being within 250 feet of a daycare.

Suggestions on updating Town marijuana ordinance and business licenses since Jan 1 will include recreational marijuana use.

Question from audience on background checks. Discussion on ordinance, opting out, free market, county enforcement.

Suggestion from Lori in audience to treat marijuana license like liquor license – where it must be posted in the paper, owner's name, two-week period for comments.

Ranson asks Guinn if she is close on cash reconciliation. Guinn confirms yes.

Mayor: Comment and report

Mayor Leavitt brings up outstanding items that need attention: street bond, business license, noise ordinance, IT proposal to be forwarded to the December meeting agenda.

Requests Olson and Sprout to prepare draft of street bond.

Requests examples be sent from Hirsch to Commission for business license.

Requests draft proposal from Greenbaum for noise ordinance.

Commission Comment

Schroeder comments in favor of delegating out tasks from agenda in order to make sure items are accomplished. Suggests incoming council to have a plan for 'unresolved' agenda items.

Ranson states that the Ennis Schools passed the bond language. Comments on the County Commissioner appointment, official Nov 23.

Ranson mentions that Ennis Schools and County are ending WebEx, virtual viewing of meetings and wanted to bring it up as discussion for Ennis commission to possibly vote on.

Commission training on January 11 from Dan Clark.

Ranson comments in favor of putting lights on the east side of main street. Mayor Leavitt says if we can get MDT approval then he is all for it.

Roberts comments in favor of annexing the fish access and another parcel south of Town, in addition, moving the 25 MPH sign on the south side of the bridge.

Discussion.

Ranson comments in favor of certification for raises.

Hardy comments in favor of a structure for employee wages. States he would like to have a meeting with incoming elected officials.

Claims: Review & Vote

Bancroft moves to approve. Ranson seconds. No discussion.

Call to vote. All vote yes.

Adjourn the Meeting

Bancroft moves to adjourn. Ranson seconds.

Call to vote. All vote yes.

Meeting adjourned at 9:08 pm

*Live recording of all Town of Ennis Public Meetings is available for viewing on YouTube at the following link or by searching “Town of Ennis Montana Public Meetings”

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCFA-L4QnVfTQqOD2QEOsWVA>

Blake Leavitt, Mayor

Brittney Hirsch, Deputy Clerk