

**TOWN OF ENNIS PUBLIC HEARING AND COMMISSION MEETING
FEBRUARY 10, 2022
7:00 PM
ENNIS TOWN HALL**

Public Hearings: 7:00 p.m.

1st Reading/Ordinance 145: An Ordinance Repealing and Replacing “Noise” from Title 11, Chapter 4, Section 5(J) of the Ennis Town Code and Replacing it with “Noise Ordinance: in Title 6, Chapter 8, Section 1

No public comment.

2nd Reading/Ordinance 146: An Ordinance Repealing and Replacing the District Minimums and Maximums Setback(s) and Area Chart of Title 11, Chapter 3, Section 4 of the Town of Ennis Zoning Codes

No public comment.

Town Commission Meeting

- 1. Open Meeting: 7:03 pm**
- 2. Roll Call of the Council: All present.**
- 3. Pledge of Allegiance**
- 4. Approval of Minutes of January 13th Meeting**

Bancroft moves to approve. Palmerton makes comments on a few grammatical errors. Palmerton makes motion to approve with corrections. Hardy seconds. All vote yes.

5. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

Mayor Hass makes statement of clarification that Public Comment is not a time for conversation with the council, but rather a time to hear statements or questions from the public. States that the council will not be interacting during public comment.

Christian Pederson asks for a status update on the Armitage Alley arbitration.

6. Unfinished Business

a. Vote on Council Chair Nomination of Kristy Ranson

Palmerton motions to approve Ranson as Council Chair. Hankins seconds. All vote yes.

7. Presentation of Preliminary Engineering Report Contract for Water System for consideration pursuant to MCA 7-5-4301 (2)(a)-Collette Anderson of Great West Engineering

Collette Anderson presents proposal from Great West. Analysis on water flow, distribution, capacity, potential water loss, pressure, storage facilities, condition, etc. Identify significant needs and prioritize potential improvement projects. Public meetings will be held throughout the process. Typically, a six-month process.

Eric Olson asks how often a PER should be completed. Anderson says 5 years is a standard to stay eligible for grants.

Hardy asks about grant funding. Anderson makes comment on rate analysis and states that each grant agency has different requirements.

Tony asks for clarification on rates. Asks about well process. Asks about private funding.

Discussion on target rates and annexation. Bancroft comments against allowing any further annexation until Town knows true capacity and comes online with standards.

Trevor Lockhart asks for clarification on the study and status of hydrogeologic study. Anderson states water supply is definitely priority and will be incorporated into PER study.

Discussion on contract details, time frame, etc.

Ranson asks about impact fee recommendations. Anderson says GWE can offer guidance on impact fees.

Mayor asks about updating documents (Emergency Response Plan). Anderson states that she will be making any recommended updates as she goes along the next process.

Ranson moves to approve Task Order #7 with Great West Engineering regarding water system. Palmerton seconds. Mayor calls to vote. All vote yes.

8. Presentation of Preliminary Engineering Report Contract of Waste Water Management for consideration pursuant to MCA 7-5-4301 (2)(a)-Collette Anderson of Great West Engineering

Collette Anderson presents proposal from Great West. Nearly identical process for waste water as water. Discussion on discharge limits and capacity, pollutant measurements, infiltration and inflow.

Hardy asks about accuracy of measuring sewage flow and sump pump usage. Anderson comments in favor of encouraging everyone to reduce or limit the usage of sump pumps. Comments on the importance of educating citizens on the impacts of sump pump usage.

Palmerton asks about funding in the budget. Mayor Haas comments on ARPA money, meetings with County Commissioner Heckler regarding potential of additional funds from the county.

Ranson moves to approve Task Order #8 with Great West Engineering regarding waste water system. Palmerton seconds. No public comment. Mayor Haas calls to vote. All vote yes.

9. Ordinance #146: Commission discussion and vote on Ordinance 146/Zoning Code Changes (as described above)

Ranson moves to approve Ordinance #146. Hardy seconds. No public comment. Mayor Haas calls to vote. All vote yes.

Attorney Greenbaum recommends the Commissioners mention findings of fact in support of the adoption. Commissioners will provide findings of fact with the resolution of adoption in the March Meeting.

10. Ordinance #145: Commission discussion and vote on the 1st Reading of the Noise Ordinance (Changes made to reference times for indoor/outdoor activities)

Ranson moves to approve Ordinance #145 first reading. Palmerton seconds. Mayor calls to vote. Ordinance first reading passes 3-2 vote. Palmerton votes no. Hardy votes yes. Bancroft votes no. Hankins votes yes. Ranson votes yes.

11. Adoption of Meeting Policy Town of Ennis Drafted Policy for public and council participation at meetings

Hardy moves to approve Town of Ennis Public Meeting Policy. Palmerton seconds. No commission comments. Mayor calls to vote. All vote yes.

12. Resolution of Intent by Ordinance to abolish Ennis Ambulance Service per the Town Charter Article II 2.03 (1)

Mayor Haas reads resolution 568-2022.

Discussion on upcoming process and reasoning behind the need to readdress the Ambulance.

Palmerton makes a motion to approve. Ranson seconds. Mayor calls to vote. All vote yes.

13. Resolution of Intent by Ordinance to lease space to MVMC per the Town Charter Article II 2.03 (7)

Mayor Haas reads resolution. Ranson moves to approve resolution 567-2022. Hardy seconds.

Discussion on proof of insurance, lease agreement, rent amount, etc.

Mayor Haas calls to vote. All vote yes.

14. Department Reports

a. Library

Written report. Landscape proposal attached to written report for north side of building.

b. Law Enforcement

Written report.

c. Public Works

Written report.

d. Zoning

Written report.

e. Clerks

Written report from Clerk/Treasurer.

Verbal report from Deputy Clerk –

Online Customer Portal for Utility Accounts – Hirsch will be requesting funds from current budget from water/sewer funds, if available, to implement an online utility account management and payment portal for the Town of Ennis Utility Customers. Portal would allow customers full access to their accounts with ability to make payments, view history, set up

recurring payments, and more. System portal will fully integrate with current billing software, Black Mountain Software and will cut back on data entry for Deputy Clerk.

Delinquent Utility Accounts – Hirsch states that she has started to tackle the persistent delinquent utility account issue. Ordinance 10-5-3 covers action that can be taken by Town to handle delinquency. Shut off letters are sent after 60 days but do not seem to be effective, and in the past have not typically been followed through on. Hirsch spent the last week making courtesy calls to accounts 60+ days delinquent which consisted of tracking down accurate contact information, leaving messages, following up, etc. – a very time-consuming project. With those efforts, the number of 60+ day delinquent accounts were cut back from 53 accounts to 22. Commissioner Hardy requested dollar figures and Hirsch confirmed that after the calls, the balance owing was reduced by roughly \$8,000 and that the remaining balances owed by the 22 accounts was right around \$15,000.

Discussion on current ordinance, plans to stay on top of delinquency once this outstanding list is reduced, comments on Low Income Water Assistance availability. Hirsch comments in favor of increasing the penalty for delinquent payments because the time preparing, printing and stuffing delinquent envelopes plus postage, paper, etc is not even close to covered with such low penalties. States that other communities around Montana have also raised their penalties due to the same reasons. Current penalty is 2% of past-due balance. Discussion on current users and comments from audience. Hirsch comments on the possibility of needing to write off two old accounts due to inability to reach the customer - they have moved, the Town did not have liens filed before they sold house, etc. Comments on the option for a ‘budget billing’ system. Hirsch will look into that option. Discussion on ways to effectively communicate with all water/sewer users – bill postcards that are sent out are not customizable; could look into other announcement systems available through BMS.

Helping Clerk/Treasurer prep for Audit.

15. Commission Reports/Comments

Hardy comments on grant opportunities. Hardy asks about status of Master Plan. Mentions Farmer’s Market would like to be held again at Lion’s Park May 28 – Oct 1.

Bancroft comments on discussion among Lion’s Club to add a dog park.

Hankins comments would like to send a Thank You on behalf of the Town for the added signs on the East end of town. Hankins asks for an update on Armitage Alley. Hankins asks for update on marijuana tax plans.

Ranson comments on the school bond not passing and says school is going back to the drawing board. States that the school may need to use mobile classrooms next year.

Palmerton asks for future training opportunities. Requests budget training. Currently working on Capital Improvements Plan.

16. Mayor Report

Comments on Local Emergency Plan. Comments on marijuana tax on future ballot. Comments on working on MOU with County for road maintenance. Pretreat ordinance in the works. Comments on GIS mapping with Staley Engineering being updated. Comments on adding reader board on the front building of Town Hall. Comments on implementing a fragrance -free policy for public meetings. States that the Town will be adding an electric reader board to the front of Town Hall building.

17. Unscheduled Matters: Any item(s) not listed for the current meeting. At the Commissions discretion a brief discussion and decision if the matter discussed it to be placed on a future Agenda.

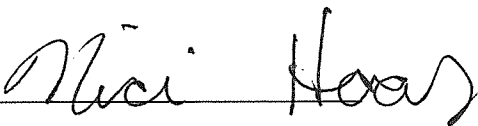
Work session in need for: claims, business license ordinance, pretreat, marijuana ordinance.

Maria Lake - Request for an update on litigation in future meeting. Requests to set a meeting for Zoning Board of Adjustment. Meeting set for Wednesday, Feb 16, 10 AM.

18. Adjourn: 9:38 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>



Nici Haas, Mayor



Brittney Hirsch, Deputy Clerk