

## Missoula City Council Public Works Committee Minutes

December 4, 2024, 12:35 pm

Council Chambers (in person) or TEAMS (virtually)

Attend in person: City Council Chambers, 140 W Pine, Missoula MT

**Members present:** Stacie Anderson, Mirtha Becerra (chair), Bob Campbell, Daniel Carlino, Sierra Farmer, Gwen Jones, Kristen Jordan, Eric Melson, Mike Nugent, Jennifer Savage, Amber Sherrill, Sandra Vasecka

### 1. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

#### 1.1 Roll Call

#### 1.2 Approval of the Minutes

##### 1.2.1 Minutes from November 20, 2024

The minutes were approved as submitted.

### 2. PUBLIC COMMENT

### 3. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

#### 3.1 Bid Award to Western Municipal Construction for the RAS Valve replacement project

Adam Marsh presenting,

This project consists of removing and replacing twenty-six valves on the wastewater treatment plant. These valves range in size from twelve to eighteen inches in diameter. They need to be replaced because they no longer seep properly and water leaks right past the valves. There is also no way to isolate a pump in order to take it out for replacement.

**Moved by:** Amber Sherrill

Approve and authorize the Mayor award the bid for the RAS valve replacement project to Western Municipal Construction at a cost not to exceed \$1,126,800.

AYES: (10): Stacie Anderson, Mirtha Becerra, Bob Campbell, Daniel Carlino, Sierra Farmer, Kristen Jordan, Eric Melson, Mike Nugent, Jennifer Savage, and Amber Sherrill

ABSENT: (2): Gwen Jones, and Sandra Vasecka

**Vote results: Approved (10 to 0)**

#### 3.2 Ordinances amending Missoula Municipal Code Titles 3 and 12, for multiple code amendments related to the Public Works & Mobility Department

Ross Mollenhauer presenting,

The Public Works and Mobility Department is bringing some changes to Title three and Title twelve. The Mayor directed staff to recommend changes to the sidewalk program that would reduce the cost burden on individual property owners. Sidewalks are essential in our community for many reasons, including health, safety and property values. See the presentation for the specific changes and calculations.

Ms. Vasecka commented that the maximum amount charged should be \$3,500 and not \$9,000. Mr. Mollenhauer said that the maximum charge is still \$9,000 but with the deferral it could be reduced to \$3,500. Mr. Keene explained that if you have an amount larger than \$3,500 you can defer the cost between the \$3,500 and \$9,000 and that will come due when the property is sold.

Mr. Carlino asked about the interest charges. He stated that if someone were to defer the sidewalk charge with interest they would be paying more in the long run. Mr. Mollenhauer said that was correct. See the video and presentation for more explanation on the charges.

Ms. Jordan explained that if someone were to defer the amount that it might be difficult to get a line of credit in the future because the bank would be behind the City. Mr. Nugent also commented that this was correct and stated the City could pass and allow the citizen to get the line of credit. Ms. Griffing added that the city would do this and has in the past.

**Moved by:** Sierra Farmer

**Set a public hearing on January 6, 2025,** and preliminarily approve ordinances amending Missoula Municipal Code Title 3 entitled "Revenue and Finance," Title 12 entitled "Streets, Sidewalks and Public Places," to update the sidewalk deferral program eligibility requirements to be effective on February 5, 2025.

AYES: (12): Stacie Anderson, Mirtha Becerra, Bob Campbell, Daniel Carlino, Sierra Farmer, Gwen Jones, Kristen Jordan, Eric Melson, Mike Nugent, Jennifer Savage, Amber Sherrill, and Sandra Vasecka

**Vote results:Approved (12 to 0)**

### **3.3 Right-of-way improvements Project 22-028: Eaton Street Phase II – South 13th Street West to West Sussex Avenue**

[Returned to Committee on 11/18/24]

Kevin Slovarp presenting,

This project is back in committee due to the concerns of affected property owners. The main concerns were speeding, high crashes, cost of project with already high property taxes and the desire for curb side sidewalk and not boulevard. The attached presentation is designed to address these issues.

Ms. Jordan asked why streets with sidewalks on both sides get more attention than streets with no sidewalks. Eaton does have a sidewalk on one side. Mr. Slovarp said sidewalks on both sides are good urban infrastructure. Also when doing a project the city would like to do all the updates at one time rather than disrupting an area more than once.

Mr. Campbell said that he is concerned about citizens having to replace expensive fences or sprinkler systems. Mr. Slovarp said the city will have the contractor replaces sprinklers that are damaged.

Trinity Ferguson thanked the council for bringing this project back to committee. She is concerned that the city is doing bulb outs instead of a retaining wall and that will fall on the property owner if the hill slides. She also added that in addition to the cost of the sidewalk they would have cost of moving fences as well. She added that if she is paying the cost she would like the sidewalk to go around her property and look more complete.

Deborah Irvin thanked the city for adding the four way stop and she would also like to see on at Eaton and Strand. She is a low income person and she can't afford the cost of any of this. She only gets \$1,000 a month and is currently drowning. She added everyone is already paying so much for property taxes and other bills. She does not want to be forced to do this and doesn't feel the deferment helps because it is a hassle and less money when you sell. She would rather have curb sidewalks than the boulevard.

Mayor Davis thanked the staff and council for trying to limit the cost and burden on the tax payer. She added that she understands the need for sidewalks in this area. However she recommends that we pause this project and look at it further. Given where we are at with the high costs and concerns for the citizens.

Mr. Nugent appreciates the effort to put sidewalks in. However, he struggles with some of the requirements such as boulevards. He does not agree with the need to have to install boulevards everywhere. He added with the current costs of owning a home it does not seem right to add more cost to citizens at this time.

Ms. Vasecka said that in the tough environment she feels that we can postpone this to a different time.

Ms. Jordan understands the reasoning of sidewalks on both sides of the street but she disagrees with this. She would like to see at least one sidewalk down all of the roads first.

Mr. Carlino said as a government we should be paying for sidewalks.

Ms. Sherrill understands all the great things about the sidewalks and also understands that if we are not charging homeowners then we are charging everyone. She said all the city's money comes from taxes so we are just spreading the cost out to everyone. She is also struggling with the hard tax environment we are in now. She also would like to see more flexibility in putting in street side sidewalks and boulevards.

Ms. Savage that she is voting no because of the request of the property owners.

Ms. Farmer said that she understands the burden right now but she also does not see the value of waiting on this project because costs are not going to get any cheaper.

Ms. Becerra is in support of this project because postponing it will only make it more expensive. She feels the staff has come up with some great financial options. She said that she also knows several of the home owners that do want to see sidewalks in that area.

**Moved by:** Sierra Farmer

Approve and authorize the Mayor to sign the Resolution to order right-of-way improvements Project 22-028: Eaton St Phase II- S 13th St W to W Sussex Ave

AYES: (5): Stacie Anderson, Mirtha Becerra, Sierra Farmer, Gwen Jones, and Amber Sherrill

NAYS: (7): Bob Campbell, Daniel Carlino, Kristen Jordan, Eric Melson, Mike Nugent, Jennifer Savage, and Sandra Vasecka

**Vote results:Failed (5 to 7)**

#### **4. ADJOURNMENT**