

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS,
COLUMBUS, MONTANA HELD APRIL 15, 2024, AT 7:00 P.M.**

COUNCIL PRESENT OFFICERS PRESENT	The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. Mayor Webb Mandeville began the meeting with the pledge of allegiance. The council persons present were Rick White, Dennis Holten, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Bob Fitzgerald and Danen Johannes. Staff members present were Fire Chief Rich Cowger, Police Chief Aaron Uecker, Public Works Director Scott Caton, City Attorney Ryan Addis, and Clerk-Treasurer Cherrie McAlexander.
SIDELINE IN PERSON	Charlie Denison and Joseph Acciani
PUBLIC HEARING	Public Hearing was opened at 7:00 p.m. The mayor asked if there was any public comment on the ordinance revisions for Sewer Service Charges. Joseph Acciani asked what the proposed change was for. The mayor explained the Ordinance revision with help from the Clerk/Treasurer. Joseph Acciani stated that the revision was a great idea. There was no other public comment. The mayor closed the hearing at 7:03 p.m.
REGULAR MINUTES APPROVED	The mayor asked Council if they had reviewed the minutes of the April 1, 2024, regular meeting, and if there were any additions, deletions, or corrections. Cole and Danen stated that there were some spelling errors that need corrected. Bob Fitzgerald made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting once spelling errors are corrected, seconded by Tim Mayo; roll call for vote, Danen Johannes, Bob Fitzgerald, Cole Waltner, Tim Mayo, Dennis Holten and Rick White, all yea votes. Motion passed.
SHUT OFF LIST	The shut-off list for the month of April 2024 was presented to the Council. Rick White made a motion to approve the list as presented, seconded by Cole Waltner; roll call for vote, Rick White, Dennis Holten, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Bob Fitzgerald, and Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Motion passed.
APPROVAL OF CLAIMS	The claims list for the 1st half of April was presented to the Council. Cole Waltner made a motion to approve the claims as presented, seconded by Dennis Holten; roll call for vote, Danen Johannes, Bob Fitzgerald, Cole Waltner, Tim Mayo, Dennis Holten and Rick White, all yea votes. Motion passed.
PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS	The mayor swore in the new Police Officer for the city – Jonathan Church
FIRE DEPT.	The Fire Chief was present and provided a report. No questions from Council.
POLICE	The Police Chief was present and provided a report. No questions from Council.
PUBLIC WORKS	The Public Works Director was present and provided a report. No questions from Council.
ATTORNEY	The City Attorney was present and provided a report. No questions from Council.
CITY JUDGE	The City Judge was not present and did not provide a report.
CLERK-TREASURER	The Clerk-Treasurer was present and provided a report. No questions from Council.
PUBLIC COMMENT ON CURRENT AGENDA ITEMS:	NONE

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COMMITTEE REPORTS-	NONE
UNFINISHED BUSINESS	NONE
NEW BUSINESS	<p>Approval of lease agreement between the City of Columbus and Devon Pinkal and Heather Meier (Beartooth Beanery) for the period of 7/1/24 to 6/30/25. Cole Waltner made a motion to approve the lease agreement, seconded by Tim Mayo; roll call for vote, Danen Johannes, Bob Fitzgerald, Cole Waltner, Tim Mayo, Dennis Holten and Rick White, all yea votes. Motion passed.</p> <p>Approval of Public Works Construction Agreement between the City of Columbus and Four Beers Inc. dba Stillwater Excavating in the amount of \$6,500.00 plus gravel total contract not to exceed \$15,000. Tim asked if this would cover the upper and lower Itch-Kep-Pe Park roads. Scott replied yes. Dennis Holten made a motion to approve the agreement, seconded by Cole Waltner; roll call for vote, Rick White, Dennis Holten, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Bob Fitzgerald, and Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Motion passed.</p> <p>Approval of Invitation to Bid for the City Hall HVAC Project. Dennis asked if this was one of the HB355 projects. Cherrie replied yes. Bob Fitzgerald made a motion to approve the invitation, seconded by Dennis Holten; roll call for vote, Danen Johannes, Bob Fitzgerald, Cole Waltner, Tim Mayo, Dennis Holten and Rick White, all yea votes. Motion passed.</p> <p>Approval of Change Order for Pratten St. Railroad Sewer Crossing Project decreasing the original contract price by \$4,148.00. Tim Mayo made the motion to approve the change order, seconded by Dennis Holten; roll call for vote, Danen Johannes, Bob Fitzgerald, Cole Waltner, Tim Mayo, Dennis Holten and Rick White, all yea votes. Motion passed.</p> <p>Approval of Pay Application #5 for the Pratten St. Railroad Sewer Crossing Project in the amount of \$8942.00. Cole Waltner made the motion to approve the pay application, seconded by Tim Mayo. Rick asked if this was the final payment for the project. Scott replied yes. Roll call for vote, Rick White, Dennis Holten, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Bob Fitzgerald, and Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Motion passed.</p> <p>Approval of Special Use Permit for the Event Columbus MTGives on May 3rd, 2024, from 2 pm until 10pm. Tim Mayo made the motion to approve the permit, seconded by Rick White. Dennis mentioned that the address on the application is incorrect. Ryan stated that since the event will be selling alcohol that a liquor liability endorsement needs to be provided. Roll call for vote, Danen Johannes, Bob Fitzgerald, Cole Waltner, Tim Mayo, Dennis Holten and Rick White, all yea votes. Motion passed.</p> <p>Approval to Purchase a new Backhoe for Public Works. Dennis asked which option was the best for the city. Scott stated that the Case is a better option for the city, it has less miles and a hydraulic thumb. Dennis Holten made a motion to approve the purchase of the Case backhoe, seconded by Bob Fitzgerald; roll</p>

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call for vote, Danen Johannes, Bob Fitzgerald, Cole Waltner, Tim Mayo, Dennis Holten and Rick White, all yea votes. Motion passed.

First reading of ordinance 371-2024 – Ordinance amending section 13.08.080 of the Columbus Municipal Code for Sewer Service Charge Established. Cole Waltner made a motion to waive the reading, seconded by Rick White; roll call for vote, Rick White, Dennis Holten, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Bob Fitzgerald, and Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Motion passed. Dennis Holten made a motion to approve the revision, seconded by Tim Mayo; roll call for vote, Danen Johannes, Bob Fitzgerald, Cole Waltner, Tim Mayo, Dennis Holten and Rick White, all yea votes. Motion passed.

Approval of changes to the City of Columbus Personnel Policy amending section 7.0 Overtime/Comp time and section 24.1 Travel. Dennis Holten made the motion to approve the changes, seconded by Tim Mayo; roll call for vote, Rick White, Dennis Holten, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Bob Fitzgerald, and Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Motion passed.

Approval of Collective Bargaining Agreement between City of Columbus and Columbus Police Association. Dennis asked if the Police Commission worked on the CBA. The mayor replied no and explained that it was himself, Tim, Cole, Cherrie, City union rep and Police Association rep that negotiated the CBA. Bob Fitzgerald made a motion to approve the CBA, seconded by Dennis Holten; roll call for vote, Danen Johannes, Bob Fitzgerald, Cole Waltner, Tim Mayo, Dennis Holten and Rick White, all yea votes. Motion passed.

Approval of Memorandum of Understanding between City of Columbus and Columbus Police Association. Cole Waltner made a motion to approve the MOU, seconded by Rick White; roll call for vote, Rick White, Dennis Holten, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Bob Fitzgerald, and Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Motion passed.

Approval of Job Description and Announcement for Public Works Director. Dennis Holten made a motion to approve the description and announcement, seconded by Rick White, Dennis stated that he understands Scott's frustration with the position. He asked Scott if he will be staying on with the Public Works Department. Scott replied yes if that is an option. Dennis asked if the city could afford to keep Scott on and hire the new Public Works Director. Dennis stated that he wants to make sure that there will be no raising of taxes, water, sewer or storm drain rates because of this change. Dennis asked if Scott's wage will go down when he is no longer the PWD. Dennis stated that he would like to see some numbers on how this will affect the budget. The mayor replied that we do not have anything to pass out to you, but the starting wage is listed in the announcement, and it is in the range of what Scott currently makes. The mayor stated that having Scott staying on and working with the new PWD is a great thing for the city. The public works department is understaffed and there are lots of projects that can get accomplished with added staff. We have more money than manpower. Things aren't all mapped out, but the city can afford a new PWD, keep Scott and hire other staff. Dennis stated that he has a list of things that the PW Department can do with added help. He wants to see this list getting done if we are going to hire a new PWD and have 5 guys. The job

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description states that the Zoning for the city is contracted out. Dennis stated he feels with the added help the city does not need to contract out any zoning. The new PWD needs to do the zoning. He handled all the zoning with 4 guys. Dennis stated that he would like the wording about Zoning to be stricken from the Job Description. Tim Mayo made a motion to amend the first motion and approve the Job Description with the Zoning wording stricken, seconded by Cole Waltner; roll call vote, Danen Johannes, Bob Fitzgerald, Cole Waltner, Tim Mayo, Dennis Holten and Rick White, all yea votes. Motion passed. Dennis made a motion to approve the announcement, seconded by Tim Mayo; roll call for vote, Rick White, Dennis Holten, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Bob Fitzgerald, and Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Motion passed.

Approval of City Health Benefit Allowance of \$1590.00 per month per employee. Dennis Holten made a motion to approve the allowance, seconded by Bob Fitzgerald; roll call for vote, Danen Johannes, Bob Fitzgerald, Cole Waltner, Tim Mayo, Dennis Holten and Rick White, all yea votes. Motion passed.

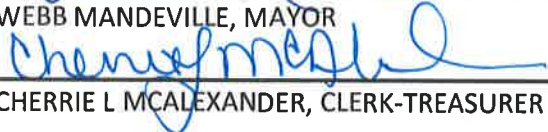
Approval of a Taxable Cash Benefit of 50 percent of the City Health Benefit Allowance per month to employees that waive all Health Benefits. Dennis asked how many people are currently not on the city's benefits. The mayor replied two, possibly 3. Dennis asked what kind of effect this benefit will have on the budget. The mayor stated that it cost the city \$9.17 per hour for each employee on health benefits. Cherrie stated that if an employee waives their benefits, it saves the city \$9.17 per hour which is almost \$20,000.00 per year. The mayor stated that it creates an inequity between employees who choose the benefit and those who waive the benefit. Dennis asked if this benefit would save the city money. Cherrie replied that it could save the city over 25% of the \$20,000.00 per employee that waives the benefit. Dennis asked if this benefit would be looked at every year. Cherrie replies yes. Tim asked if there are other cities that offer this benefit. Cherrie replied yes, MMIA does and over 30 other cities and towns. Bob asked where this value came from. Danen also asked where the \$9.17 amount came from. The monthly allowance X 12 months / 2080 hours = \$9.17. Bob states that it looks like the city did lots of research on this, Bob asked the mayor if he thinks this is a fair trade off for employees that waive health benefits. The mayor replied yes. He also stated that fundamentally he does not like the idea, but it eliminates an inequity between employees. One employee gets a benefit of \$9.17 per hour while another employee gets no benefit. The mayor stated that this is a good compromise. Bob asked if this was a negotiated item, not part of a CBA but something that was discussed between the mayor and the employees. The mayor said what happened was two employees were hired by the city that did not take benefits, which saved the city \$19,000.00 per employee. This year it was asked to be looked at and what options were out there. Danen asked if the employee would get an extra \$4.58 per hour on their paycheck. The mayor explained that it would be a once-a-month taxable payment on their check separate from their hourly pay. Danen asked if our insurance will allow anyone to join at any time. Cherrie explained that there must be a qualifying event such as an employee losing health benefit. Danen stated that he has mixed feelings on this benefit because he does not get this option himself. He did express that by offering this benefit employees may opt to take other insurance outside of the city which would save the city some money

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	<p>and that is good for the city. Danen stated that he agrees that if an employee waives all health benefits, they should receive something for that. Dennis asked if this would be reviewed every year. Cherrie replied that this would be voted on every year along with the insurance benefit allowance. Bob Fitzgerald made a motion to approve the benefit, seconded by Danen; roll call for vote, Rick White, Dennis Holten, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Bob Fitzgerald, and Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Motion passed.</p> <p>AIRPORT Approval of Capital Improvement Plan CIP for 2025-2030 – Woltermann Memorial Airport. Dennis Holen made a motion to approve the CIP, seconded by Tim Mayo; roll call for vote, Rick White, Dennis Holten, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Bob Fitzgerald, and Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Motion passed.</p> <p>Approval of Flemmer Land Lease. Bob Fitzgerald made a motion to approve the lease, seconded by Dennis Holten; roll call for vote, Danen Johannes, Bob Fitzgerald, Cole Waltner, Tim Mayo, Dennis Holten and Rick White, all yea votes. Motion passed.</p> <p>Approval of Easement for electrical service to t-hangar complex. Dennis made a motion to approve the easement, seconded by Cole Waltner; roll call for vote, Rick White, Dennis Holten, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Bob Fitzgerald, and Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Motion passed.</p>
COMMENTS NOT ON THE AGENDA	<p>The mayor held up the council packet from the meeting and stated that this is a lot of information to read through before the meeting. The mayor stated that he doesn't know how anyone can read through all this before the meeting and truly have a feel/understanding for all the information. Mayor asked council if there was a better way to get the material to them so they will have more time to review. Danen stated that the council packets used to be ready on Friday and about 5 years ago that stopped. The mayor stated that we can have the packets ready by noon on the Friday before the meeting. Cole asked if it is hard to put the packet in an email. Cherrie stated no. Cole would like to receive an email with the council packet attached. All the Council agreed that getting the packets on Fridays would help greatly.</p>
ADJOURNMENT	<p>Webb Mandeville requested a Motion to Adjourn. Rick White made the motion to adjourn at 7:52 p.m. seconded by Dennis Holten, roll call all yea votes.</p>



WEBB MANDEVILLE, MAYOR



CHERRIE L MCALEXANDER, CLERK-TREASURER