

Butte-Silver Bow Study Commission Minutes

Meeting Date: April 7, 2005

Time: 5:30 p.m.

Place: Butte-Silver Bow County Courthouse, First Floor Conference Room

Call to Order: Chairman Bob Worley brought the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m. Chairman Worley proceeded to call roll with the following results:

Members Present: Tony Bonney, Ristene Hall, Dave Palmer, Meg Sharp, Northey Tretheway, Bob Worley, Shag Miller and Ron Rowling.

Excused absence: Cindi Shaw, Wayne Harper

Others Present in Addition to the Speakers: Raymond Rask, Danette Harrington, and Lori Maloney

Approval of Minutes: Shag Miller moved that the minutes from the March 31, 2005, meeting be approved; Northey Tretheway seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Comments from Ron Rowling: Ron reported that Jean Pentecost could not be here tonight and thanked the Public Works officials for being here. Ron verified that Shag Miller and Cindi Shaw would be speaking at Gamers at noon on April 27, 2005, to the Pacaderm Club.

Citizen's Comments: None

Guest Speakers:

Chairman Bob Worley began by welcoming the **Public Works Department**. He introduced John VanDaveer, the new Public Works Director. John thanked the Study Commission for inviting them. The Public Works staff introduced themselves as follows: Rich Dwyer (Public Works Dept.), Bob Rowling (Park & Recreation Superintendent), Bill Daly (Treatment Plant Superintendent, Metro Sewer), Bob Farren (Rate Superintendent, Metro Sewer), Jim McCarthy (Road Superintendent, Road Department), Gary Keeler (Landfill Superintendent/Transit Director), Rick Gelling (Equipment Superintendent), and Wally Choquette (Sewer Maintenance Superintendent, Metro Sewer Maintenance Department). John VanDaveer then introduced Jennifer Kerns (Community Relations Specialist) who prepared and presented the PowerPoint presentation.

A handout of the presentation was provided. Jennifer began by reporting that Public Works is the largest department in terms of both personnel and budget, employing 117 people with 15 bargaining units. In 2004, Public Works employed approximately 46 summer help workers. The total budget for Public Works for FY 04/05 is \$25.2 million

which is 29% of the total Butte-Silver Bow budget. The presentation included budget amounts and information for the following departments: traffic control {\$217,182}, traffic control signs, parks and parking lot signage; animal control {\$169,059}; parks and recreation {\$474,332} (including playground equipment, the swimming pool {\$43,500}, and golf course {253,032}); the road division {\$2,341,142} (including paving, flushers and sweepers, hot plant and crusher, snow removal, and bridges {\$256,489}); metro sewer maintenance {1,932,565} and metro sewer treatment plant {\$2,431,563}, the metro sewer rate office; water utility business office {\$3,616,028}, water transmission & distribution {\$2,448,178}, water division leaks, water treatment {\$1,768,188}, Basin Creek Dams, Silver Lake operation and maintenance; transit {\$651,790}, landfill {\$2,453,544}, recycling; central equipment and maintenance {\$1,002,203}, the maintenance shop, Public Works special projects such as special improvement districts, the detention center, demolition of condemned homes, etc.

After Jennifer's presentation, John VanDaveer opened it up for questions, but he first stated that the Public Works Department is pretty expansive and very impressive. They hope to continue to work towards more integration and engagement in the business because they are running it as a business -- being effective as they can be for the community. We are a maintenance business in a service industry, but at the same time they need to look at it from a business perspective.

Shag Miller began by asking John VanDaveer if he had any controls or is he instituting any controls in regard to the irregularity in timesheets that Chief Executive Babb uncovered. John responded that the business in the past was what it was, right, wrong, or otherwise. What they are doing now is looking forward and examining work management, what it takes to get the job done, and being consistent with the policies of Butte-Silver Bow in regard to overtime and compensatory time. Shag then asked how much water is left of the allocated water to Butte-Silver Bow for commercial purposes, and is there any chance that we can get the remainder of that water for the residential system considering the drought that we are looking at this summer. Discussion followed about water resources, capacity, and water treatment.

Bob Worley asked how things were going with the Basin Creek Watershed and the meetings with the Forest Service. John reported that discussions continue regarding the beetle kill, logging, fire threats, etc. Dave Palmer asked about a grant that was received to replace the dam. John said the grant was for structural modifications for the Basin Creek dam and upgrading the distribution system. The Basin Creek dam falls under the State dam site regulatory process, which needs to meet certain structural stability criteria, and it was found that the structural stability is fine, but work needs to be done on valving and distribution work.

Dave Palmer asked Jim McCarthy if the optimal time to put mag chloride (magnesium chloride) on the streets was before or after it snowed. Mr. McCarthy replied that there are two different theories for mag chloride: 1) is pretreatment which is applied before a storm. If you apply a thin layer before a storm the snow will not stick; it will melt and be a wet surface instead of a slick surface. 2) Afterward it is a deicing which melts the ice

and snow on the street. Dave asked if it is better to use sand or mag chloride. Jim McCarthy said there are different tools: 1) straight sand, 2) sand and mixture of salt (mag chloride or salt with calcium material). They use different applications and materials at different weather temperatures. When it is really cold and snowy, the sand won't stick on the icy street; it is like throwing marble on a table or glass and if it is windy it blows off. If they get the surface wet and apply sand to it, the sand will stick and it will get an abrasive on the street and better for traction. Jim McCarthy further explained the application process. Shag Miller stated that our street maintenance program in the winter for sanding and plowing is so far superior to our peer cities (Missoula, Bozeman, Billings, and Great Falls) that it's amazing. The Road Department should be congratulated. They are out there at 5:30 in the morning.

Ristene Hall asked for costs of the materials for sand and mag chloride and then her next question was regarding oxide that protects aluminum (on wheels) and how it destroys the aluminum, which in turn rusts the aluminum, and also how it destroys cement on bridges. Jim McCarthy responded by explaining that Butte is in a significant area because it is next to the Berkley Pit and all the tailings and mine waste dust. According to the Health Department, we are classified as a PM10 area (particulate matter in the air); therefore, we are limited to what we can do about putting more sand on the street to exaggerate the dust problem. Missoula, for example, cannot use any sand at all because they are close to the river and they use mag chloride by the ton and also use sulfate. All salts are corrosive. He continued by explaining the State standards and materials used. John VanDaveer said the way he looks at it is the first issue is the health issue and the second issue is safety.

Tony Bonney said that Charlie O'Leary mentioned at an earlier meeting that it might be better to separate the Water Division from Public Works. John VanDaveer said that it is a pretty effective operation right now; he would have to study what the benefit or downside would be to change it. John mentioned that there is a lot of integration among the different businesses. You would have to look at a full scope rather than selected interests. Other questions brought up and discussed were developed and undeveloped park properties that have been inventoried and appraised. The preliminary inventory will go before the Park and Recreation Board. They will look to see what parks they would want to retain or possibly sell. Park equipment replacement was also talked about. Bob also responded to a question about parks that he would be reluctant to take on any more parks at this time because of maintenance. And, as other departments are, they are strapped. The issues with and negotiations made for the new YMCA pool and Stodden Park's pool were discussed.

Dave Palmer asked if there was anything the Study Commission could do to make things easier for the Public Works Department or could the SC make any recommendations. John VanDaveer responded that they are trying to do this internally as a business. They are trying to give everybody the opportunity to get integrated as a collective operation. He wants to give everyone the accountability and flexibility to run their business, but to keep in mind how their decisions will affect somebody else. Included in the discussion were manpower concerns, a rumor about an expanded golf course (there are no plans that they are aware of) credit card charges at the clubhouse (call Mr. DeWitt at 494-7900),

how the Public Works Department measures success, landfill (two other counties contract to use the landfill) profit of the landfill (landfill charges are \$45.37/residential unit, 16,000 landfill units, 5,000 commercial units and take in \$250,000 from Anaconda/Deer Lodge County (@ \$52.37)), landfill reserve and expansion is adequate, spring clean-up issues were discussed at length, and holding citizens of Butte-Silver Bow accountable for clean up, and having crews pick up garbage on the streets when they drive by.

Grant money, NRD funding, and FEMA grants were talked about as well. The storm sewer system was discussed as well as the ARCO settlement. They don't have any funds to maintain the storm sewer system. The total cost to maintain and repair the system are \$23 million. They only work on about two percent per year. They are looking at ways to get more money.

Animal control, the Humane Society, and Pintler Pet issues were brought up. John VanDaveer reported that discussions are taking place on these issues. Right now BSB is on an annual contract with Pintler Pets. It was brought up that the costs in transporting animals to Anaconda must be high. John VanDaveer said that he would find the answers and report back when he attends the next Study Commission meeting. Ristene said from the research that was done on Chelsea Bailey that the land was donated by ARCO, Chelsea Bailey put a small building on it, BSB put a \$50,000 addition on it and the building was deeded back to the County and then leased to Chelsea Bailey.

Metro Sewer is running at ½ its capacity (the total is 8.5 million gallons running at 3.5 million gallons/day). They are running into a nutrient problem. By 2008, they have to come up with the solution on how they are going to treat the nutrients. They might need to upgrade their plant. From June to September you cannot have high nutrients. It would cost \$10,000,000 to upgrade the plant to handle the nutrients. Rates have not been raised since 1995. Bob Farren explained their plan to voluntarily reduce the nutrient level within three years. He reported that BSB is ¾ of the way there.

New equipment purchases were discussed (the new sweeper with the heavy duty vacuum and a new camera van). The Public Works Department is also going to inventory and assess all their equipment. John VanDaveer talked about their 5-year Master Plan for Public Works. They are working on a short-term and long-term business plan and priorities.

Shag Miller asked if they thought there should be established in the government, an ombudsman, a buffer between the citizens and Public Works (a complaint department). Jim McCarthy believes there are 12 ombudsmen, our 12 commissioners. They field complaints. Sharon Crase already handles a lot of the calls with safety issues taken care of right away. One person wouldn't be able to handle all the calls; the calls come in 24/7.

Other topics of discussion included traffic control, traffic signals, the Metro sod farm, and Rick Gelling's shop, which handles 530 pieces of equipment with five mechanics, city buses, and old buses at the dump. Also, it was brought up that a lot of the mandates on Butte-Silver Bow come down from the State. The Public Works is also looking at seeing

what makes sense whether or not they should do things another way such as contracting work out. The Study Commission thanked everyone for coming.

The meeting continued and Bob Worley passed out the presentation that was given to the Exchange Club; he also passed out the Duffield memo given to him by Tom Malloy that came from a gentleman from Missoula that had preliminary comments on the Settlement Term Sheet. He suggested everyone read it before they meet with Jon Sesso. Bob also talked to Bobbi Stauffer who will be doing a report on the Study Commission; he discussed advertising in the Montana Standard and setting a target date.

Tony Bonney suggested that it would be a good time to watch the Anaconda Study Commission in action on May 2. He also thought a letter could be written to ask the Anaconda Study Commission if they could meet with the Butte-Silver Bow Study Commission beforehand. 2004-2005 Budget books are available for review. Bob Worley mentioned getting a rough draft going before summer. They need County Attorney Bob McCarthy at the meetings to answer questions.

Survey Report: Dave Palmer discussed the most recent draft of the survey. He discussed adding the Sheriff's idea of asking for a mil levy to pay for more police officers on the street. Survey fine-tuning continued.

Paul Babb has been invited to speak before the Study Commission on April 28. Jeff Miller will be speaking on April 14. Bob Worley asked Ron Rowling to have Jeff Miller give the commission a break down on the costs of operation for paid and volunteer fireman - total budget and individual budgets. Tentatively on April 21st, Tim Clark, Dan Dennehy, Jed Hoopes, Dan Powers, Rick Larson, Rob Macioroski, and Bob Sullivan.

Date for Next Meeting: The next meeting will be in the Council Chamber Room on 3rd Floor on April 14, 2005 at 5:30 p.m.

Adjourn: Chairman Worley entertained a motion to adjourn. Meg Sharp made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Dave Palmer seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:50 p.m.