

## **Regular Town Council Meeting June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

A regular session of the Sheridan Town Council Meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. Mayor Robert Stump, Council members Mike Walter, Rahn Abbott, Tammy Todd and Z. Wade Hampton were present along with Clerk Ginger Galiger and Public Works, Duke Gilman.

Guests: Anne Wentz, Michelle M., Nancy Males, Frank Colwell, Carolyn Bartolomei, Tammi McCray, Debra Haymart, Cameron & Carrie Gibson, Darcy Salisbury, Claire Leonard, JoAnne Stephen, Richard & Beverly Smith, Michael & Cheryl Gordon, Corey Theis, Kate Rose, Dan Rose, Jordan Evans, Pete Rossiter, Jaclyn Wolf Tayler, Mary Pat Graham, Daniel J. Kenworthy, Ralph Sand, Gina Hodgin, Ty Todd, Duncan Hedges with Madison County Sheriff's Office, Maria Bartoletti, Kaylie Theis, Amy Pack-Young, Colleen Guinnane, Eileen Pearce, Curtis Green, Rick King, Monty Simonson, Julie Pearce, Robin Stafford, Jean Prough, Cherie Chisholm, Steve Dobb and Bob Bates.

### **Pledge**

#### **Madison County Housing Advisory Board – Mary Beth Walsh and Les Gilman**

Mary Beth Walsh is the Chairman of the Madison County Housing Advisory Board that consists of 9 members. Both Mary Beth and Les Gilman joined the board in 2019. Mary Beth began by reading the Guiding Principles 1. Locate new development close to existing services and communities. 2. Requires attention to environmental, public health and safety, recreation, and aesthetic concerns. 3. Requires attention to economic, environmental, and cultural issues. 4. Requires attention to fiscal and equity issues of concern to many County taxpayers and officials. 5. A reminder that Madison County officials will be cognizant of, and abide by, state and federal constitutional law as it pertains to private property rights. Consideration of this principle, however, will be balanced by consideration of the public interest, generally defined as the public health, safety, and welfare.

The definition of Affordable Housing is: The Federal government typically defines housing as affordable **when it consumes no more than 30 percent of a households' income.**

The definition of Workforce Housing is: Housing affordable to households earning between 60 and 120 percent of area median income (AMI). Workforce housing targets middle-income workers which include both blue collar and white-collar professionals; households who need housing but may not always qualify for housing subsidies.

The definition of "Attainable" Housing is: Housing that is affordable to those households earning 81% to 120% of the Area Median Income, also known as the "missing middle".

Mary Beth reported the 5-year data estimates from 2016-2020 census for Madison County, Town of Sheridan, Town of Twin Bridges, and the Town of Ennis.

The Ruby Valley, Average Sales Price for a single-family residence in May 2022 was \$480,274 and in April 2022 the County was \$656,309.

Twin Bridges is landlocked. One third of the teachers there live outside of town limits which has caused a teacher and student shortage along with a shortage of childcare and the ability to keep small businesses alive. The problem is an issue everywhere.

Les Gilman also spoke to the issues here in Sheridan with the problems associated with lack of housing. We need to keep rentals affordable to people who are willing to contribute to the community.

**Ruby Valley Medical Center – Amy Pack Young** Did not want to comment tonight.

### **Public Comment Not on the Agenda**

Mike Walter announced the council holding a nominal discussion that is in the works for June 28<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm, to discuss the pros and cons of the proposed subdivision. Location has not been determined at this time but would like to invite everyone to come.

Nancy Males read a letter that she wrote expressing her concerns regarding the proposed subdivision. This subdivision does not prevent the overcrowding of land, lessen the congestion on the streets or provide adequate light, air, water supply, sewage disposal and other public requirements.

The letter also addressed the lack of water source capacity to serve its existing residents. If the recommended amount of water were used to fight a fire, the town would have only 5,000 gallons left in storage. Nancy went on to say that “no one disputes that additional housing would be beneficial for our hospital workers, our school employees, and other workers in town. However, there is no need to crowd 83 units and 197 people onto 18 acres of land. Please consider our thoughts and deny this application as written”.

Mike (unable to get last name) who owns property in Jefferson Acres, came to talk about the character of the developer, Rick Remitz, who also owns property in Jefferson Acres. Stating, “what Rick has planned will not be providing **affordable** housing.”

Steve Dobb presented a file for the council with documentation and a petition signed by 251 individuals.

Anne Wentz asked, “Is this conversation as good as taking it to the council verses the Planning Board?” Mayor Stump talked about the process of the planning board making recommendations to accept the plan with certain conditions. We hope that the meeting scheduled for June 28<sup>th</sup> will help lead us to conditions not just for the Crossing subdivision but possible any future subdivisions.

Julie Pearce asked, “has an environmental study been done?” There is a copy of the preliminary plat at town hall and the library.

Carrie Gibson asked, “has a map been developed?” Mayor Stump said, “yes”. On May 16<sup>th</sup>, the preliminary plat was deemed sufficient and now the Planning Board has 80 working days to receive comments from the agencies. The planning board is hoping to hold the public meeting in August or September. All conditions have to be satisfied before the final plat.

Maria Bartoletti talked about the limits that we have since the Town of Sheridan does not have zoning. She feels that we need an expert to give us knowledge and guidance as we move forward. Mayor Stump said, “that is a very good point. The meeting that we are planning on June 28<sup>th</sup> will help with this. We want to create a list of real ideas that we can work with. “I am fed up with the personal attacks, we need to come together”.

Gina Hodgin brought up the dump not being sufficient for the residence currently. Gina also expressed her concerns with street parking. Bob agreed, it is a disaster. The dump is on our property, but it is operated by the County.

Kate Rose asked, “is there any way to keep “affordable” housing, affordable?”

Steve Dobb stated that the land is a swamp, and he has to run a sump pump throughout the summers at his house.

Colleen Guinnane stated that if this subdivision goes through, the children will need another school which will affect her taxes, that she cannot afford now. She is also concerned about the lack of water in the summer months. Mayor Stump discussed the water and sewer capacity. According to DEQ regulations, you have to take your largest well off- line to demonstrate you have adequate water. At this time, we are aware that we are lacking water today. Eventually, we will need a new storage tank, the current storage tank was built in 1976. Mr. Wetherbee was invited to come tonight to speak on behalf of the school but was in another meeting.

Jaclyn Wulf Tayler spoke next, I know that we need housing, but she doesn't think this is a good plan. “Sheridan can do better than this” she stated. Mayor Stump responded by saying, “If we just reject the plan, we will get sued.” Bob will be requesting the attorney's opinion on that. The town has to have a well drilled and operating before any subdivision can move forward.

Dan Kenworthy said, “I have lived here for over 30 years, we have never had a mayor that works as hard as Bob does. A lot of these issues run into legal issues. The position we are in, we don't have zoning and not everyone in town wants zoning. This is a problem all over and without zoning, we can't stop it.” Dan asked, “is there a process for this developer? Is there a performance bond to see that he finishes the project?” The Passamari is a perfect example.

## Department Reports

Sheriff – Captain Duncan Hedges introduced himself and gave the report for the month of May 2022. The department has seen a 50% increase in serious activities in the past month. DUI's, spouse abuse, drugs, theft, and traffic stops. Many of the calls they respond to take hours, not minutes. They have been receiving self-harm calls on this side of the hill. There is a need for additional mental health help. The Sheriff's Office is currently trying to hire 3 more patrols. Dispatch is very short handed and are also trying to hire. The county is currently starting up a substation in Ennis and soon in Sheridan. Substations will cut down on their response time.

Library –

Attorney –

Fire Department – Rahn Abbott reported May being pretty quiet. The town and rural board need to look at a plan moving forward when the new station is built.

Public Works – Reported being busy mowing and grading the roads. Bob and Duke recently replaced the sprinkler line in the Silve Park. The concrete pad has been poured for the amphitheater.

Clerk/Treasurer – Will be busy working on the budget.

## Boards and Committees

Park District Board – Mary Pat Graham reported that the pool is going to open, and the BBQ will be held this Friday from 5:00 -7:00. They have 4 returning guards and 2 new ones this year. The boiler should be here on the 20<sup>th</sup>. Nicki Benedict helped get an \$11,500 grant to help with the instillation of the boiler. The balance of the grant will go towards families in need and children's events.

Sheridan Community Charitable Foundation – Pete Rossiter reported that the materials to complete the amphitheater should be here in time for Sheridan Days.

## Public Comment Not on the Agenda – None

## New Business

### 1. Site for expanded horseshoe pits

Sheridan Community Charitable Foundation (SCCF) has been fundraising and have been working on projects in the park to show the donors where their money is being spent. The next step, they would like to relocate the horseshoe pits that are currently away from the park, by the manifold building. They would like to put them where the old ice-skating rink was at. There has been concerns raised regarding that location with the kids running from the playground to the baseball fields, a kid could fall on a stake. Mayor Stump discussed the number of pits being put in place and 5 pits would fit in the location of the old playground equipment. (Old swing and slide) Pete also said that the stakes can be removed or capped for safety. Mike Walter suggested relocating the playground equipment to the old skating rink location then the horseshoe pits would be out of the way of kids. Tammy Todd agrees with moving the pits to the east side of the park. There is 90 feet of usable space there. Pete feels that on behalf of the board, he thinks that would be amenable. No further discussion. Rahn Abbott moves to put the horseshoe pits east of the walking trail reserving the old skate rink area for new playground equipment. Tammy Todd seconded the motion. **Mayor Stump called the question for the council members.** The vote was passed unanimously.

### 2. Use of well by new owners of land on Kearney Lane

The old Hollensteiner well now owned by the town, is located on property that was previously owned by Esther Peterson and the Town of Sheridan has an existing lease on the property. Recently the land was bought by Paul and Emma Borntreger where they plan to build a family home as soon as possible. They are unable to drill a well for approximately 2 years as there are no well drillers available until then. Frank Colwell is asking on behalf of the new owners if they could use the Hollensteiner well until they can have one drilled.

Mayor Stump does not know the condition of the well but there is shared electricity to it. We don't want to lose the well but there is no way for the town to use it at this time. The landowners would be responsible for refurbishing the well and having it tested. The town needs to talk to MMIA regarding liability and a

Water Rights Attorney regarding the effect, if any on the town's water rights. Frank suggested including everything in the agreement. Rahn Abbott motioned to move forward with checking into the liability, water sampling and the water rights issue. If they are favorable, we could move forward in the future. Mike Walter seconded the motion. **Mayor Stump called the question for the council members.** The vote was passed unanimously.

### **3. Contribution to Madison County to help fund a Planning Director**

The County has been trying to hire a new County Planner. They are requesting contributions from the incorporated towns to come up with additional money to help fund this employee. We have not received a letter yet saying what this amount will be. Rahn Abbott asked if Big Sky would be paying into that? Mayor Stump said, "that's a good question." Z. Wade Hampton moves to TABLE the issue. Tammy Todd seconded the motion. **Mayor Stump called the question for the council members.** The vote was approved unanimously.

### **4. Expansion of Senior Center – conflict with the sewer main**

The Senior Center is wanting to build out 30 x 6 feet. The sewer main from the nursing home, which is one of the biggest water users in town, runs under the corner of the building. The new addition would be directly over the sewer line. One thought is to relocate it now with the help of an engineer for the proper slope. Curtis Green recalled a study being done and it was determined that it couldn't be rerouted due to the slope. Ralph Sands is looking at the most reasonable solution right now. Mike Walter is not a fan of a lift station, but the issue should be resolved now instead of making it worse by covering up more of the main. Mayor Stump would like to explore some options to see what's out there. The cost is on the Senior Center not the town. The question is, who allowed this to happen when the clinic was built? Mike Walter moves to TABLE the issue pending more information. Tammy Todd seconded the motion. **Mayor Stump called the question for the council members.** The vote was passed unanimously.

### **5. Mayor to continue working in the capacity of public works**

Mike Walter recalled when Mayor Stump started getting paid, it was long overdue. Duke Gilman feels that Bob helps out a lot as far as a second person and cost goes. He still knows way more than I do, and he has the best interest of the town. Mike Walter talked about other options being explored as far as having a 3<sup>rd</sup> person to cover on the weekends. Mike Walter asked Bob, "do you want to continue in the capacity that you have been?" Bob said, "I have so much invested so far." Rahn Abbott said, "at the time we agreed it would be for a temporary time. Bob does a great job, and he is an asset to the town." Discussion of some different options as far as hiring a temporary, part time or seasonal employee. Sometimes we are busy enough to need 3 people and other times it is slow for just 1 person. Tammy Todd said, "I am mostly concerned with the welfare of Bob but can also see how much he enjoys the work." Curtis Green is willing to take call and fill in if it's scheduled out. Mike Walter moves to look into our options as far as seasonal, temporary, part time help and then revisit this next month. Tammy Todd seconded the motion. **Mayor Stump called the question for the council members.** The vote was passed unanimously.

### **6. Wage increases for fiscal year 2022/2023**

Mayor Stump asked the clerk, Ginger Galiger to address wages. Last year the town employees were given a 5% increase due to the high cost of living. The years before that, it was generally 3%. The Social Security cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for January 2022 was 5.9%, the highest increase in 40 years, due to the current increased cost of living. It has been predicted that by January 2023 it could be as high as 8.9%. Bill Talbott has been the Librarian for nearly 20- years and he is the lowest paid employee of the town. When employee's get increases on a percentage, I feel that Bill gets the short end of the stick. Health insurance premiums went from \$718.00 to \$740.00 per month. Mike Walter and Tammy Todd talked about the importance of retention. Discussion. Mike Walter proposes a \$2.00 per hour increase for Bill Talbott and all other employees a 6.5% increase. Z. Wade Hampton seconded the motion. **Mayor Stump called the question for the council members.** The vote was passed unanimously.

### **Consent Agenda Items**

The minutes and claims were reviewed with one correction to add Mary Pat 's last name Graham. Rahn Abbott moves to accept the minutes with one correction to Mary Pat's last name and the payroll claims 88533-88541 and claims 17407-17436. Tammy Todd seconded the motion. **Mayor Stump called the question for the council members.** The vote was passed unanimously.

Mike Walter moves to accept the financials and the utility delinquent report. There is one delinquent utility account that a lien will be filed on as the water has already been shut off and is currently in probate. Mike Walter moves to accept the financials and utility delinquent report. Tammy Todd seconded the motion. **Mayor Stump called the question for the council members.** The vote was passed unanimously.

**Council Report**

Mike Walter work like to schedule a couple work meetings to review the Crossings Subdivision Plat. Mayor Stump will send out a link to the PDF.

Rahn Abbott would like a meeting with the Town Council and Rural Fire Board to decide on how to proceed once the fire department gets their new station built. Annexation or MOU?

**Mayor Report**

The developers of the subdivision are proposing to transfer 4 separate water rights to the town. One would be a shared water right which really wouldn't do us any good. We are working with the County to have them do some of the road work in the town. The County will bring their equipment and we will buy the road base from them, apparently is better quality than what RE Miller has.

Mike Walter moves to adjourn tonight's meeting. Rahn Abbott seconded the motion. **Mayor Stump called the question for the council members.** The vote was passed unanimously.

Adjourned 10:38 p.m.

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Approved: Mayor Robert C. Stump

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Attested: Clerk Ginger Galiger