

# Billings City Administrator Weekly Report

September 17, 2020

- 1. Public Safety Mill Levy** – Thank you! Tuesday’s unofficial results for our public safety levy: For - 20,511 Against – 9,818. Thanks to everyone who helped educate our citizens. For those who were not directly involved, each and every one of you help build the community’s trust in our local government daily. Along with our recent school levies, investments in a new library, ballpark and performing arts center – our citizens have entrusted us to invest their resources wisely. Together, we are building momentum for an even brighter future for Billings.

For the first time in sixteen years, Billings voters have passed a public safety mill levy to increase funding for municipal fire, police and related public safety services. The “Repeal and Replace” Public Safety Mill Levy 2 passed September 15, 2020. The levy will generate an estimated additional \$4.12 million in public safety funding and allow the city to maintain current levels of service.

Originally passed in 2004, Public Safety Levy 2 (PS2) was capped at a fixed \$8.2 million dollars. The “Repeal and Replace” measure asked voters to repeal this original levy and replace it with one calculated at 60 mills. For the homeowner of a median value \$211,000 house, this will raise property taxes by \$4.75 a month. By using mills instead of a fixed sum, the levy will slowly increase with the value of property to help the city better meet future needs.

A resounding “Thank you” to our citizens for their engagement in the election. The city will do everything it can to ensure quality, reliable service with the funding authorized by the voters.

Preliminary data indicates that the levy passed in all but one voting district area. After the count is officially completed, we will share the data with the Council.

- 2. De-icer Material used by Public Works** – At the council meeting on Monday, September 14<sup>th</sup> staff was asked to report back to council regarding any safety hazards of the de-icer material that Public Works uses. The following are the known hazards:
  - If swallowed, it may cause nausea and vomiting.
  - If it comes in contact with skin, it may cause mild irritation and it is recommended to rinse with water.
  - If it gets in the eyes, it needs to be flushed and just like getting salt in an eye, will burn until flushed.

The overall health risk of the product is a 1 which is low.

- 3. New City Website** - The City of Billings is excited to announce the launch of its new website on Tuesday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>. A committee comprised of city staff from throughout the organization worked to design a modern and vibrant website that would better meet the needs of our community through a fresh new design with enhanced navigation, a new “Spotlight” section to highlight important news & announcements, dynamic photography to show off the beauty of our city, and features to greatly enhance the interface for mobile users. Collectively,

these changes were focused on providing easier access to information while enhancing the overall user experience.

- 4. Law and Justice Interim Committee** – This afternoon Chief St. John, Greg Dorrington and I had a brief call with Legislator Barry Usher, Chair of the committee. Unfortunately, through a miscommunication we missed the co-chair/vice chair Kathy Kelker. We are setting up another call to continue the conversation later this month. Both legislators are critical to all law and justice issues the city will face during the upcoming legislative session.

**Have a great weekend.**