

Billings City Administrator Weekly Report

January 13, 2022

1. **Tonight's Public Safety Forum** – An In-Depth look into Public Safety, January 13, 2022, 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM at the Billings Public Library. There will be an opportunity to ask questions to the group of panelists including Brian Gootkin, MT DOC Director; Rep. Barry Usher, Chair of the Judiciary Committee; Scott Twito, Yellowstone County Attorney; Mike Linder, Yellowstone County Sheriff; Rich St. John, Billings Police Chief; and Stacy Zinn-Brittain, DEA Agent.
2. **Tree Removals on Montana Avenue** - The Forestry Division began work on removing 10 Canadian Red Cheery trees on Montana Ave. These trees were installed in the planters along Montana Avenue back in 1998. These trees have outgrown the planters and are root-bound. This is causing them to be more vulnerable to frost cracks and disease. Most of the trees have begun to lean and are becoming a hazard. Forestry began a five (5) year program to remove and replace these trees and is now in the third year of that program. The replacement trees are better adapted to the environment and multiple varieties are being installed so a single disease or issue won't force mass removal again. The new varieties will be planted during spring planting season 2022.
3. **Public Information Officer** - Victoria Hill will begin as the City's first public information officer on February 28th. Please give her a big welcome as she shifts from anchoring Q2's morning show to the city. We are very excited!
4. **Council Initiatives** – Please see the attached Council Initiatives.
5. **City of Billings Marijuana Business License** – Andy Zoeller, Finance Director released the following in a press release on Wednesday.

As of January 13, 2022, the City of Billings will begin accepting applications for marijuana related businesses. Applications and general information can be found on line at <https://www.ci.billings.mt.us/3027/Marijuana-Business-License>. Questions related to marijuana businesses can be emailed to businesslicense@billingsmt.gov.

City Ordinance 21-5785 limits the maximum number of medical marijuana dispensary licenses to eight (8). The City Finance Department will accept completed applications for medical marijuana dispensaries until March 31, 2022. After that time, if needed, a lottery will occur, and eight (8) licenses will be issued. Completed applications can be submitted at City Hall located at 210 N. 27th Street.

Adult-use (recreational) sales are prohibited within the city limits.

6. **Council Orientation Schedule**
 - a. Friday, January 14 – 9:00-11:00 Law Enforcement, 4810 Midland Road
 - b. Friday January 21 – 9:00 – 11:30 Planning and Community Development + high level discussion on Tax Increment Financing, Miller Building, 2825 3rd Avenue North

- c. Friday January 28 – 9:00 - 12:00 Planning and Community Development + Tax Increment Financing with Downtown, East Billings Industrial District and South Billings Urban Renewal District, Miller Building, 2825 3rd Avenue North

7. Holiday - Offices will be closed on Monday, January 17th in observation of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Have a good weekend.

**COUNCIL INITIATIVES
APPROVED SINCE JULY 2021**

Date	Sponsor/Initiative	Action	Resolved	Assigned To
02/08/16	COUNCILMEMBER SULLIVAN: Made a motion to review all ordinances over four years with the opportunity to fast track any ordinances to match citizen/council needs, seconded by Councilmember McFadden. APPROVED.	Departments are reviewing Municode comments, questions and recommendations and adding those of their own. Zoning Code was amended on 1/25/2021 by Ord. 21-5748. More work to be done on other sections of the Code.	In Progress	Gina Dahl Denise Bohlman
12/21/20	COUNCILMEMBER CHORIKI: Moved to direct staff to put the flowing issues on future work sessions. Staff will inform the council of any existing work on the issue and for the council to “brainstorm” possible solutions to these issues: 1) Staff and the Parks Board provide an informational presentation to council at their earliest convenience on their work identifying possible funding for the operations and maintenance of parks, including new capital projects, seconded by Councilmember Neese. APPROVED 2) Discussion of a policy and a funding source for completing the sidewalks and trails, including safe routes to schools; and 3) Staff provide a detailed cost of services report by March 15 th , seconded by Councilmember Neese. APPROVED.	1) City Administration and Parks presented funding options at the 3/15/21 City Council Work Session. 2) Presentation on Trail Funding was presented at the 4/19/21 Work Session. 3) This item has been pulled out and had separate discussion to determine next steps by the FY23 budget cycle.	1) Completed 2) Completed	
02/22/21	COUNCILMEMBER SHAW: Moved that the City Administrator direct staff to develop best-practice regulations and ordinance language to regulate (not prohibit) medical marijuana dispensaries and/or storefronts in Billings City limits; present proposed regulations to council at a works session to facilitate feedback and give notice of a public hearing and first reading for ordinance adoption, seconded by Choriki. APPROVED.	Since this initiative was launched a new law addressing regulation of recreational marijuana was made law by the MT Legislature and Governor. Multiple Council Work Sessions, a staff and Council Marijuana Working Group and hours of work and meetings resulted in Council passing new zoning regulations and business license regulations for marijuana businesses as well as taking a vote to	Completed Implementation in Progress	Gina Dahl Wyeth Friday

Date	Sponsor/Initiative	Action	Resolved	Assigned To
		Billings residents on recreational marijuana sales, prohibiting in the City.		
05/24/21	COUNCILMEMBER RONNING: Moved to direct CA Kukulski to form a committee made up of Citizen Police Advisory Board (CPAB) steering committee members, city councilmembers and appropriate City staff to develop resolution language that would be re-establish a CPAB for the four key objectives: 1) Recruitment, retention and workplace diversity; 2) Crime prevention and diversion; 3) Community support and engagement; and 4) Data collection and analysis. Committee to present proposed resolution to City Council at a work session to facilitate feedback and set a public hearing for resolution adoption, seconded by Councilmember Joy. APPROVED	Chris Kukulski is in the process of forming the committee and working on the resolution language. Resolution 21-11013 established 9/27/2021.	Complete	Chris Kukulski
09/13/21	COUNCILMEMBER NEESE: Moved to initiate an amendment to the Zoning Code to regulate Marijuana businesses, seconded by Councilmember Yakawich. APPROVED.	Multiple Council Work Sessions, a staff and Council Marijuana Working Group and hours of work and meetings resulted in Council passing new zoning regulations and business license regulations for marijuana businesses as well as taking a vote to Billings residents on recreational marijuana sales, prohibiting it in the city.	Completed Implementation in Progress	Wyeth Friday Gina Dahl
10/11/21	COUNCILMEMBER RONNING: Moved to direct staff to put establishing a City Charter Review Committee on a work session and invite Dan Clark, Local Government Center, to advise council of the process of reviewing the City Charter, seconded by Councilmember Neese. APPROVED.	Work session held in March 2022.	In Progress	Chris Kukulski
11/22/21	COUNCILMEMBER YAKAWICH: Moved to direct staff and the future council to design, implement and install a standalone COVID19 memorial within the first year the new law and justice center/city hall is used in honor of those whose lives were lost due to COVID in Yellowstone, seconded by Councilmember Choriki. APPROVED.	Mike Yakawich and Mayor Bill Cole have convened a committee to explore ideas.	In Progress	Kevin Iffland
11/22/21	COUNCILMEMBER YAKAWICH: Moved to direct staff to implement regulations for recovery residences also known as sober living housing to reduce the amount of disturbances and building and code enforcement issues, seconded by Councilmember Choriki. APPROVED.	To begin researching the issue in 2022.	In Progress	Chris Kukulski Rich St. John Wyeth Friday Gina Dahl

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11/22/21	COUNCILMEMBER EWALT: Moved to direct staff to work with the Department of Corrections (DOC) and legislators to limit the number of probationers, parolees, and inmate releasees with a cap of how many can be released to Billings, seconded by Councilmember Purinton. APPROVED.	Merged with the 12-20-21 council initiative by Purinton.	Complete	
12/20/21	COUNCILMEMBER PURINTON: Directed the City Administrator to print on Council letterhead the drafted letter to Governor Gianforte concerning limiting the number of DOC releasees to Billings, to be signed by all councilmembers wishing to sign it, seconded by Councilmember Shaw. APPROVED.	Letter was mailed on December 27, 2021.	Complete	
12/20/21	COUNCILMEMBER EWALT: Directed the City Administrator to work with Public Works staff for a resolution that would charge 20% out-of-city limits customers to be set aside in a landfill fund to pay for future capital improvements at the landfill. The 20% charge would start in FY23 and continue until changed by future councils, seconded by Councilmember Yakawich. APPROVED.	Will include in annual rate setting resolution in June.	In Progress	Debi Meling