

Billings City Administrator Weekly Report

April 22, 2023

1. **Park and Recreation Projects** – Construction has started again on several projects within the parks.

Central Park Tennis Courts (PD1 funded) - The rebuilding of the tennis courts at Central Park is underway. Site work was completed on 4/14/2024 and concrete work began on 4/17 and finished on 4/18. Approximately 50 truckloads of concrete went into the courts. Fencing will be installed starting on Monday 4/24, and the final surfacing and striping will take place after the concrete has a month to cure. This would place the opening of the courts around June 1st.

Arrowhead Playground (PD1 funded) – The playground at Arrowhead Park is being replaced. The play area will increase in size, an ADA accessible route will be established, and new equipment will be installed. The playground equipment has been ordered and is scheduled for delivery in June.

Comanche Playground (CBDG funded) – The playground at Comanche is being replaced using CBDG funding. The play area will increase in size, an ADA accessible route will be established, and new equipment will be installed. The equipment is scheduled for delivery in the last week of April.

Castle Rock Park Playground – Construction of the playground at Castle Rock Park has resumed. The playground equipment has been delivered and the installer is onsite doing the installation. Once installation is complete and before opening to the public, we will concentrate on finishing the irrigation and sodding. The Castle Rock Park Playground Project is over budget by \$52,607. This is due to increases in installation costs, over the originally budgeted amounts, and the costs for fall protection. A budget amendment will not be needed, as Park District 1 will have sufficient vacancy savings in FY23 due to the project manager position that has gone unfilled for approximately eight (8) months.

| | <u>Budget</u> | |
|--|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| FY21 CIP PD1 | 400,000.00 | Budget Adoption |
| Castle Rock Cash In Lieu | 121,000.00 | Budget Amendment 6/13/22 |
| PD1 Reserves | <u>75,499.96</u> | PD1 Reserves, 7/11/22 |
| | 596,499.96 | |
| | <u>Actual</u> | |
| Cushing Terrell | 25,500.00 | Design |
| 3 Bull Contracting Northwest Playgrounds | 224,499.96 | Approved 7/11/22 |
| Steve's Install | 292,357.53 | Playground Equipment Purchase |
| Fall Protection | 79,000.00 | Approved 12/28/2022 |
| | <u>27,750.00</u> | Contract pending |
| | 649,107.49 | |

2. **Heights Water District Mtg** – Jennifer Duray and I had our 3rd meeting with the HWD. We shared the City’s written request to the Attorney General regarding our disagreement over right of way construction fees. The city collects a modest fee to cover the cost of review and inspections to ensure the ROW is returned to its original condition after projects are completed. We discussed collaboration on collecting delinquent sewer bills. Without the ability to turn off water, we have relied on collection agencies and tax liens to collect unpaid sewer bills. This process is more costly and less effective than turning water off. We discussed improvements the city can make to notify HWD of Public Works projects that are taking place within the HWD so that they can ensure coordination and limit interruptions to their services. We also discussed future development and if we are going to collaborate or compete for services. I continue to voice one of our primary concerns as the extension of their water utility without the same land use review and annexation requirements that are used throughout the remainder of the city. Several hundred acres of future development are under review on the edges of the city in the Heights. Some can effectively be served with water from either HWD or the city, while others primarily have access to HWD water and city sewer. For developments that are not annexed into the city but are served by HWD, they benefit from using safe clean drinking water city ratepayers produce without helping to pay the cost of police, prosecution, streets, storm water, parks and other city services they use. If we can resolve this issue of annexation, both HWD and the City can thrive and coexist.
3. **Legislative Committee** – with only 10 days left in the legislative session, work is intensifying. Committee members and staff are trying to stay on top of legislation affecting land use, elections, tax increment financing and the budget. In the final days most of the decisions are being made in meetings or on the floor without direct access by the public. Therefore, we need to rely on conversations by phone, texts, emails and in the hallways.
4. **Operations Committee** – the committee worked through the ordinance prohibiting weapons, firearms, and explosives in city facilities.
5. **TEDx Billings** – Steve Arveschoug did an excellent presentation on gratitude at the Yellowstone Art Museum Thursday evening.
6. **Next Week’s Meeting/Task Forces**
 - a. Heights Task Force, Tuesday, April 25th 7:00 pm Oasis Water Park, 943 Aronson
 - b. Budget & Finance Committee, Wednesday, April 26th 9:00 am, City Hall Conference Room
 - c. Legislative Committee, Wednesday, April 26th 4:00 pm City Hall Conference Room

7. **From the PIO Desk:**

Information regarding the settlement of the franchise fee case

<https://www.billingsmt.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=2470>

City of Billings in the news...

Franchise Fee

Instructions issued for claiming refund for illegal Billings utility fees

https://billingsgazette.com/news/local/instructions-issued-for-claiming-refund-for-illegal-billings-utility-fees/article_33d2a1e8-deec-11ed-9644-3b3f61833ecb.html

City Hall

Want to buy Billings City Hall? Here's your chance

<https://realnewsmontana.com/ixp/628/p/want-to-buy-billings-city-hall-heres-your-chance/>

Energy and Conservation Commission

<https://www.usgbc.org/articles/how-volunteer-commission-led-billings-montana-leed-cities-gold>

BFD

DEA's national take back day happening soon in Billings

https://www.kulr8.com/news/deas-national-take-back-day-happening-soon-in-billings/article_fbd444d6-df04-11ed-9db7-9395bb4a0dfe.html

BPD

More guns seized by BPD in step with more shootings

https://billingsgazette.com/news/local/more-guns-seized-by-bpd-in-step-with-more-shootings/article_4f3eec68-da1c-11ed-aaaf-8b778fdcae4b.html

Local law enforcement and religious leaders fight back against hate crimes in Billings

https://www.nonstoplocal.com/billings/news/local-law-enforcement-and-religious-leaders-fight-back-against-hate-crimes-in-billings/article_82b05e28-d6c5-53ee-b25a-ad54ca422f22.html

Law enforcement, faith leaders talk fighting hate crime in Billings

<https://www.ktvq.com/news/crime-watch/law-enforcement-faith-leaders-talk-fighting-hate-crime-in-billings>

Photo: Teen boy shot on South 31st Street

https://billingsgazette.com/news/photo-teen-boy-shot-on-south-31st-street/article_0e60ea22-dd21-11ed-90ae-079271b25a38.html

BPL

Letter to the editor: Billings is lucky to have amazing library

https://billingsgazette.com/opinion/letters/letter-to-the-editor-billings-is-lucky-to-have-amazing-library/article_53af0fb6-d87e-11ed-aaa7-8f044ad93394.html

Meet and greet with Montana author at Billings Public Library

https://billingsgazette.com/news/local/meet-and-greet-with-montana-author-at-billings-public-library/article_edcb9f1c-da16-11ed-8e4c-4f307852adc5.html

In other news...

Underpass construction in Billings expected to last through summer

<https://www.ktvq.com/news/local-news/underpass-construction-in-billings-expected-to-last-through-summer>

Texas city officials visit Billings

https://billingsgazette.com/news/local/texas-city-officials-visit-billings/article_880c12b4-da17-11ed-8fe0-cf59bcb12ee6.html

YWCA Billings opens new emergency shelter

https://billingsgazette.com/news/local/ywca-billings-opens-new-emergency-shelter/article_164b5c60-da22-11ed-9dad-c343b99160a9.html

Construction on I-90 between Laurel and Billings set to begin

https://billingsgazette.com/news/local/construction-on-i-90-between-laurel-and-billings-set-to-begin/article_d226ad40-dad6-11ed-99f7-57d6159d325f.html

The 53rd annual MSUB Powwow happens this weekend

https://billingsgazette.com/news/local/the-53rd-annual-msub-powwow-happens-this-weekend/article_5477257c-ddfc-11ed-bde1-337426e62f60.html

Great American Cleanup returns to Billings and Yellowstone County

https://billingsgazette.com/news/local/great-american-cleanup-returns-to-billings-and-yellowstone-county/article_7cad035a-daf9-11ed-8138-7ff8b470ff61.html

Free trees for Arbor Day from the Yellowstone Conservation District

https://billingsgazette.com/news/local/free-trees-for-arbor-day-from-the-yellowstone-conservation-district/article_fa7e2646-d988-11ed-ad92-9b70958ce3b4.html