

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE COMMITTEE  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
140 WEST PINE STREET  
MISSOULA MONTANA  
June 9, 2010, 1:05pm

**Members present:** Stacy Rye, Chair; Ed Childers; Renee Mitchell; Pam Walzer; Jason Wiener; Dick Haines; Lyn Hellegaard; Roy Houseman; Dave Strohmaier; Jon Wilkins; Bob Jaffe.

**Members absent:**

**Others present:** Ross Best, Brentt Ramharter, Marty Rehbein, Matt Leech, Dee Andersen.

**I. Administrative Business**

A. Approve committee minutes dated: [May 19, 2010](#)-approved as submitted.

B. **Public Comment on items not listed on the agenda-None**

**II. Consent Agenda**

A. Approve claims (accounts payable). -Consent Agenda (Brentt Ramharter)

**MOTION: The committee recommends the City Council approve [claims](#) totaling \$764,784.33 ([Detailed claims](#)) 06/15/10**

**MOTION: The committee recommends the City Council approve [claims](#) totaling \$307,763.01 ([Detailed claims](#)) 6/8/10 already acted on 06/07/10**

**MOTION: The committee recommends the City Council approve [claims](#) totaling \$304,576.90 ([Detailed claims](#)) 06/01/10 already acted on 6/7/10**

B. Approve the city's commitment to maintain at least 5% of outstanding SID debt in the revolving fund ([memo](#)).—Regular Agenda (Brentt Ramharter) (Referred to committee: 06/07/10) **REMOVE FROM AGENDA**

**MOTION: The committee recommends the City Council adopt a resolution creating a policy of the City of Missoula, Montana for the transfer of available funds to replenish the City's Special Improvement District Revolving Fund.**

Brentt Ramharter, Finance Director explained that this resolution is to reaffirm our policy. The original ordinance created in the 1930's is non specific. Our credit rating company, Standard and Poors asked us to create more specificity as far as maintaining 5% in the revolving fund, and to review and update the resolution as needed.

Jason Wiener asked what the percentage in the revolving fund is now.

Mr. Ramharter said between 5.2-5.3% of the outstanding bonds.

Mr. Wiener moved to approve the resolution.

Bob Jaffe asked for more clarification.

Mr. Ramharter explained instead of having separate bond reserves for the SID's we have a pooled reserve called the revolving fund.

Mr. Jaffe asked what the purpose of the reserve is.

Mr. Ramharter said if someone doesn't pay their assessment and we fall short in the debt service fund, this reserve is always there. Currently we have \$820,000 in there right now, which represents about 5.2% of the outstanding bonds. It's designed to give more strength. We also have liens on these properties which is another credit enhancement.

Mr. Jaffe said essentially we are bonding 5% more than what we need.

Mr. Ramharter said yes.

Mr. Jaffe asked if the decrease in the rate is worth always borrowing more than we need.

Mr. Ramharter said it's a requirement of the sale.

Rene Mitchell asked if we have ever fallen below 5%.

Mr. Ramharter said no. We have a really good history.

Dave Strohmaier asked for the language of the 30's era ordinance.

Upon a voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

### **III. Regular Agenda**

**A. Amend Council rules to change the Council's regular meeting schedule to two meetings per month ([memo](#)).—Regular Agenda (Marty Rehbein) (Referred to committee: 06/07/10) HOLD IN COMMITTEE**

Marty Rehbein, City Clerk, explained that some Council members had spoken to her about this and Mr. Wiener was going to make a referral. We did some analysis of this proposal as part of the budget process. There are some cost savings associated with this and the ability to redirect staff time toward other activities. She provided the following information:

- The last 3 years the average City Council meeting has been 1 hour 54 minutes.
- The Council meets 44 times each year.
- Taking into consideration the length of the meetings, there would be 40% less time spent in meetings.

Cost Savings:

- The Clerks Office has reduced its staff by one .5 FTE.
- If the Council approves the rule change we can save on transcription costs by 40%.

Another item of consideration is the Accounts Payable schedule. If you decide to pay vendors every 2 weeks, there would be minor savings on mailing costs, but she recommended they stay with the weekly pay schedule, to keep our vendors happy. The procedure would be similar to what happens now when a holiday falls on Monday. The claim detail and checks would be sent out weekly and the claims would be approved at the next Council meeting.

She reviewed the other Montana cities that meet bi-monthly:

- Great Falls meets every other Tuesday and has work sessions twice monthly.
- Billings meets every other Monday and has work sessions twice monthly-When holidays fall on Mondays they meet on Tuesday.
- Helena meets twice monthly and has 2 work sessions monthly.
- Kalispell meets every other Monday and has 2 work sessions monthly-When holidays fall on Mondays they meet on Tuesday.

Ms Rehbein ended her presentation by saying these are your rules and your meetings and this is your decision. In order to pass this we need 8 votes of the City Council, and asked for any comments or questions.

Stacy Rye clarified that the proposal is to keep the committee meetings on Wednesdays as is and have City Council meetings move to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month.

Mr. Jaffe said the bulk of the savings seem to be coming from the cut back of the .5 FTE and he said he didn't see the connection between the .5 FTE from the Clerks Office and the City Council meetings. He asked what the staff's obligations are.

Ms Rehbein outlined her staff's duties and explained the work load may be the same but there will be more time to do it and they will redirect some staff time to support the Office of Neighborhoods. She said to consider her time spent at Council meetings as time she is not available to be in her office working.

Mr. Jaffe asked how she manages her hours spent at Council meetings

Ms. Rehbein she says what ever time she spends each week in Council meetings is reduced from her normal work week in the office or she will end up with a hefty comp bank.

Ms. Rye asked what is the most hours you have had in your comp bank.

Ms. Rehbein said about 80, which doesn't come close to many of her colleagues.

Ms. Rye listed several other staff members who regularly attend Council meetings and she said by her calculations it averages out to be about 84 hours for each staff member per year.

Ms. Mitchell said since they would be reducing the time spent in Council meetings she suggested they reduce Councils pay accordingly. She also suggested going to a bi-monthly committee meeting schedule as well. She asked Ms. Rehbein if she had a comparison of pay with other City Councils in the state.

Ms. Rehbein said she could provide that information.

Ms Mitchell asked when the Council and Mayoral updates would be scheduled.

Ms. Rehbein suggested Council abandon abbreviated meetings and schedule updates on Wednesday.

Ms. Mitchell expressed concerns about not being available every Monday evening for citizens to attend Council meetings. She said the people who pay our salaries work during the day and the evening is the only time they can attend and give public comment.

Jon Wilkins said he is opposed to this as the Council has probably been meeting on Monday nights since the early days. Citizens know they can come down and speak on Monday nights. He thinks there are other places in the budget to cut. He thinks the citizens want us here every week and that's what they have elected us to do.

Ms. Rehbein said in the early days there were 3 Council members and they met once a month

Ms. Walzer supported the rule change and said the less time she spends in Council meetings the more time she would have to serve her constituents in other ways. She also supports Ms. Rye's comments on the amount of staff time that could be put to better use.

Dick Haines proposed having committee meetings every other Monday and Council meetings on the alternate Monday evenings.

Mr. Childers said there are a lot of possible configurations. In the 1970's Council had two year terms and now we have four. The amount of work that this body does will not change. It's possible that we will debate issues less, or maybe not. Meeting twice a month seems workable to him. It's easy to set up a special meeting when needed. It may save us some money and he said he is willing to give it a try.

Mr. Strohmaier followed up on Ms. Mitchell's comment on cutting the Council salary. He said it's a nominal salary not an hourly paid position and urged Council to refrain from too closely connecting the salary to the hours spent in Council and committee meetings. He said these positions are what

you make of it. We also have lives outside of Council. He said it's a matter of choosing how to invest his time. Monday nights are committed to Council business, and he said you never really know how long the meetings will last, however that is one less night that he has to attend a Neighborhood Council meeting or some other business that he sees is his responsibility to his ward. He is under no illusion about this reducing time spent on Council business. He simply sees it as a shifting of the hours from one Monday night to another. This will free up some evening hours to do other business for his ward. He is intrigued by Mr. Haines suggestion to have occasional committee meetings on alternate Monday evenings as he also realizes how difficult it is for folks who work during the day to attend committee meetings.

Lyn Hellegaard said she agrees with Ms. Mitchell the pay does need to be adjusted as there is no employer in this country that will cut your hours without cutting your pay. We chose to do this as a public service; she said she did not do this for the money. She said they need to take into consideration that they also receive a Cadillac Health Insurance Plan that most of the tax payers do not have. I would support cutting back on the Monday night meetings as well as the committee meetings. She moved to amend Council rules number 1 and 9 to change the regular meeting schedule to the second and fourth Monday and Wednesdays of the month for the off weeks of the planning board and to cut our salaries by half.

Mr. Jaffe requested to divide all 3 motions.

Ms. Rye confirmed the 3 motions would now be divided into the following:

- ✓ To meet every second and fourth Monday night of the Month.
- ✓ To meet every other Wednesday for committee meetings.
- ✓ To cut Council salary by half.

Mr. Jaffe requested those motions be taken in reverse order.

Ms. Rye confirmed the first item is to cut the pay by half.

Mr. Childers commented that money should be discussed in the budget process and not the Council Rules.

Mr. Wiener said he had a point of order on the pay, since it wasn't noticed as part of this meeting he doesn't feel it's proper to vote on it and he won't support it. It will only ensure that this public service is accessible only to the rich and retired even further. He said he did not take this position for the money; he did so to serve and has made significant sacrifices to do so. He cobbles together his living from several different sources and he will quit because he will not be able to pay his rent. He said he was open to changing the Council meeting schedule, but suggested they set the Council schedule by the calendar each year. With a little attention to when holidays fall and whether or not there would be weeks between meetings, we could custom craft a meeting schedule and set it a year in advance that might be a little more efficient than hard and fast rules. If we do change the schedule, he said we could use some Monday evenings for committee meetings, as some committees require more public participation. As far as staff time on Wednesdays, they are already on the clock and it makes sense to keep the majority of those meetings as is. We need to think this through as to how this will affect our work flow before moving it out to the floor.

Roy Houseman expressed deep concerns regarding the proposed cut in pay. He has struggled very hard this last year to find a new job and make it all work. To cut his salary right now would put him in danger of losing their home. As far as changing the meeting schedule he said he thought that was fair and he would be open to it.

Mr. Strohmaier commented on point of order and agreed with Mr. Wiener's comment that the first motion is out of order.

Ms. Rye agreed and said the first motion is out of order and they will not vote to cut Council's pay by half. She said they will consider the next two motions; the first is to go to every other

Wednesday for committee meetings and the next one is to change the Council meetings to the second and fourth Monday in the month. She then called for public comment-

**Public Comment:**

Ross Best, said he used to attend a lot of Council meetings in the 1990's but not so much any more as he has lost some hearing. He can't hear what is said in meetings. The sound system is bad and the air circulation system causes white noise. He said he is opposed to the proposal to reduce the monthly Council meetings by half. He said he didn't think anyone would mind if they reduced the number of meetings by several a year. But this is a radical change from what has been the norm for decades. This is not intended to save money. It is intended to have you spend less time in meetings. He said Missoulians have come to expect openness and accountability that may not be expected in other areas of the state. It is safe to assume that Missoulians are the most active citizens in the state. This will not serve the people well.

He said Council had been misinformed. You have been told there will be a 40% reduction in the time you spend in meetings. This suggests the meetings that are being eliminated have been a waste of time, and that somehow these meetings can disappear and you can produce the same product. He said you have been told that Council and Mayoral updates will be scheduled another time, what does that mean? He said instead of looking at how short some of your meetings are you need to look at how long some of your meetings are. In the last 12 months you have had ten meetings that have gone over three hours. Two of those went over four hours, one went more than five hours, and one went more than six hours. It was obscene that the anti-discrimination meeting went until 2:00am.

Rather than try to get out of meetings, why not encourage public participation and I propose you look at ways of equalizing the time demands by adjourning the meetings by 9:00 or 10:00pm. Please consider setting a public hearing on this question. It is inevitable you will find yourself pressured to pass things especially land use items, because you may not have the extra week you need. If you pass this proposal you will be giving less people a chance to speak, you will be doing less committee work and the City will suffer for it.

Ms. Rye asked Ms. Hellegaard to withdraw her motions and said they will continue to work on this in the coming weeks; however it is always messy when motions are left on the floor when we don't have time to vote.

Ms. Hellegaard agreed and withdrew her motions.

Ms. Rye said when she gets frustrated here her inclination is to get angry. My family has sacrificed a great deal for me to be here. My partner works nights and our family has 2 nights a week together. One of those nights I am gone. A couple of years ago I started telling groups who were having evening meetings, that I just can't do it. I just can't justify the time away from my daughter, she is nine years old and she has been to more meetings than most 30 year olds. She doesn't like them. Missoulians are insanely plugged in, that's not going to change. The only way we will know if something works is to try it. And then review it after a 3, 6, or 9 month trial period. The idea that someone in my circumstance shouldn't run for office is not a good argument in defense for democracy.

**B. Award the sale of City's \$885,000 Pooled Special Sidewalk, Curb, Gutter and Alley Approach bonds, Series 2010 ( ).—Regular Agenda (Brentt Ramharter) (Referred to committee: 06/07/10)  
**HOLD IN COMMITTEE FOR SPECIAL MEETING 6:45PM MEETING 6/14****

**III. Held in committee**

- A. Approve claims. (Ongoing) (Consent Agenda)**
- B. Approve journal vouchers. (Ongoing) (Consent Agenda)**
- C. Approve budget transfers. (Ongoing) (Consent Agenda)**

- D. An ordinance amending the municipal code as it relates to bike licensing. ([A&F](#)) (Returned from council floor: 12/15/08)
- E. Implications of establishing maintenance districts. ([memo](#)) – Regular Agenda (Bob Jaffe) (Referred to committee: 05/11/09)
- F. Clarify position of council member who also serves on the board of a non-profit agency that has dealings with the city. ([memo](#)) – Regular Agenda (Ed Childers) (Referred to committee: 07/20/2009)
- G. [Resolution](#) of the Missoula City Council establishing a tourism business improvement district consisting of non-contiguous lands within the City of Missoula for the purpose of aiding tourism, promotion and marketing within the district. ([Exhibit A](#)) ([Exhibit B](#)) ([memo](#)) ([A&F](#)) (Returned from Council floor: 10/05/09)
- H. Reappoint Sheila Lund as a regular board member for a term starting June 26, 2010 and ending June 25, 2015 and Joseph Pietro as a Resident Commissioner to the Missoula Housing Authority for a term starting June 26, 2010 and ending June 25, 2012 ([memo](#)).—Regular Agenda (Mayor Engen)
- I. Review the FY 2011-15 capital improvement projects (CIP). ([memo](#)) – Regular Agenda (Brent Ramharter) (Referred to committee: 04/19/2010)
- J. Resolution approving the project and authorizing the bond issuance for Sussex School Economic Development Bonds in the approximate aggregate principal amount not to exceed \$900,000 ([memo](#)).—Regular Agenda (Brent Ramharter) (Referred to committee: 05/24/10)
- K. Confirm the re-appointments of Peter Lambros and Paul Filicetti to the Public Art Committee for a term commencing July 1, 2010 and ending June 30, 2014 ([memo](#)).—Regular Agenda (Mayor Engen) (Referred to committee: 06/07/10)
- L. Authorize the Mayor to sign a contract between the City of Missoula and Northwestern Energy to conduct Green Blocks Pilot Project home energy audits using Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act ([memo](#)).—Regular Agenda (Chase Jones) (Referred to committee: 06/07/10)

**IV.      *Adjournment***

The meeting was adjourned at 2:05pm

Respectfully submitted,

*Dee Andersen*

Administrative Secretary