

TOWN OF BEARCREEK PUBLIC HEARING FOR PUBLIC COMMENT AND REVIEW OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW RECORD FOR THE BEARCREEK WATER SYSTEM

Council chairperson, Boos-Bader called the public hearing to order at 7:30 p.m., October 5, 2023 in the Bearcreek Town Hall. All council members and clerk were present. The department heads in attendance were Loni Hanson, Zoning Administrator; Dean Webb, Public Works Director; as was Gina Barry of Interstate Engineering.

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

The public hearing was turned over to Gina Barry of Interstate Engineering who presented the environmental review for the proposed Town of Bearcreek upgrade and repairs to the water system. She explained the purpose of the environmental review. (1) Funding grants and construction projects are subject to the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA). (2) The effects on the environment and on people from the proposed improvements must be considered. (3) The public is entitled to be informed and may ask questions or have their comments heard. Gina advised that the water project is not exempt from MEPA, therefore an environmental assessment (EA) must be made to determine if an environmental impact statement is needed. She noted that environmental letters have been sent to all applicable agencies for comment on the environmental impacts from the proposed project. Those responses will be incorporated in the EA. Some of the environmental categories to be considered are soils, wetlands, surface water, groundwater, floodplains, air quality, odor, solid or hazardous waste, mammals of concern, birds of concern, reptiles of concern, plants of concern, sage grouse habitat, wild and scenic rivers, leaking underground storage tanks, energy conservation, and cultural resources. The PER addressed the preferred alternatives: Rehabbing the spring box structures, deepening the pipe alignment via horizontal directional drilling (the Meeteetse Trail project to protect pipe from vehicular damage is already in progress), manhole rehabilitation, tank rehab, installing 6" PVC redundant transmission line along highway 308 and replace 4" AC main on North First Street with 6" PVC, construct looped connection on southeast corner. Addressing mitigation factors Gina noted (1) that there would be temporary mitigation for dust control and noise with best management practices implemented, with no long term effects from dust and noise. (2) There are no wetlands impacted in the project. Contractors are required to have Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan in place. This will entail maintaining erosion control practices. (3) The Town is exempt from sage grouse habitat. The transmission main work is in previously disturbed area therefore the sage grouse habitat will not be destroyed. (4) The majority of the Town's water distribution piping is asbestos cement which DEQ requires be removed and the project specifications will address. The asbestos pipe will need to be bagged and hauled off to a landfill, although the pipe removal will be minimized by offsetting new main from existing main. Interstate proposed due to a lack of wetland disturbance and all work within existing rights-of-ways and in previously disturbed areas, impacts are insignificant, and no EIS is necessary if the council agrees. Gina commented that after the 30 day review period which is Oct. 16, 2023, if the council accepts the findings of the EA a resolution needs to be passed. This could be done at their Nov. 2nd meeting. An additional EA will be conducted by DEQ since the Town is applying for a Drinking Water State Revolving Fund loan. Gina advised that she would take questions or comments from the audience. Those present didn't have any questions or comments but thanked Gina for a presentation well done. The council chair closed the public hearing.

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The regular meeting was called to order with all the same persons present.

A motion to approve the minutes, financial report and budget vs actual report was made by Harold. Paul

seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Betty moved to accept the claims as presented. The motion seconded by Harold passed 4-0.

There was no correspondence.

There was no public comments.

Dean started Dept. head reports by advising that he had taken a contractor to the spring boxes who thought he could start work the beginning of next week if all worked out. Interstate Engineering was in the process of getting the permits from the Corp of Engineers as rip rap needs to be done. The clerk questioned if this was for the temporary fix. Dean responded yes, this should hopefully get the Town through the winter and then next spring the permanent project could be done. Dean reported that the bore rig was on the Meeteetse Trail working, they had pulled the pipe back in and they had broken the tracer wire, but it was surveyed by Interstate Engineering who is on the jobsite so there will be a back up where it is located. Friday they will hook up the line, chlorinate and then fill the line with water and let it sit over the weekend, flush it out and do chlorine samples, then it should be done. Dean commented that sewer and streets were fine. Loni had issued one zoning permit to Jay Johnson who is building a garage. Rob was absent. The clerk advised that Kim Bader will be in charge of animal control while Rob is away.


There were no council concerns.

Under unfinished business (1) Paul moved to accept Interstate Engineering's assessment that an EIS is not necessary. Harold seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0. (2) The clerk presented the short term agreement between Interstate Engineering and the Town, which outlines their services for council approval. The motion to accept the agreement made by Danell, seconded by Paul, passed unanimously. (3) The Meeteetse Trail project and water springs erosion update had been covered by Dean in his department head report. (4) A Resolution of Intent to increase water rates to reach the target rate so the Town may qualify for funding for the repairs and upgrades to the Bearcreek Water System was read by the clerk. Betty moved to accept the Resolution of Intent as read. Paul seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0. A public hearing will be held on Nov. 2 on this subject with publication in the Carbon County News. A letter advising the consumers and notice of the public hearing will be sent.

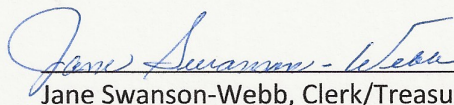
There was no new business.

The clerk advised that the monitor, speakers, etc. had been donated to the Town by the Town's attorney so that Zoom meetings would be available.

With no further business, Betty moved to adjourn the meeting. Said motion was seconded by Paull and passed unanimously.



Debbie Surwill, Mayor



Jane Swanson-Webb, Clerk/Treasurer