

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING REPORT FOR PHASE 2 OF THE WATER IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE TOWN OF BEARCREEK; ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF THE PER; AND THE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING OF MARCH 5, 2026.

The Mayor called the public hearing for the PER to order at 7:00 p.m., March 5, 2026, at the Town Hall. Those present were Mary Kittler, Betty Cristan, Barbara Petersen, Paul Hogan, Danell Boos, Debbie Surwill, Mayor; Jane Swanson-Webb, Clerk; Loni Hanson, Zoning Administrator; Rob Surwill, Animal control officer; Dean Webb, Public Works Director; and Tyler Lindbloom, PE, Interstate Engineering; and LaNette Diaz, Senior Funding Specialist (per phone) of Interstate Engineering.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The Mayor turned the hearing over to Tyler for his presentation. He explained the purpose of the PER starting with the comprehensive evaluation of the entire water system. He identified deficiencies in the system touching on the water system history, population and water demands; evaluated alternative solutions; recommended the appropriate solution; and continued with a funding plan and schedule of the project. Concluding his presentation on the PER he opened the floor to comments from the audience. Mary Kittler questioned if there was another way to raise money for the payment of loans instead of always raising the water rates. No one came up with a solution, but council member Hogan requested that all available grants be applied for. Tyler assured they would be and that LaNette was top in her field for securing grants, so the Town was in good hands concerning that. There had been no written comments received. With no further comments the public hearing was closed.

The Mayor opened the public hearing on the Environmental Review on the PER. Tyler explained that all funding grants and construction projects are subject to the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA); the effects on the environment and on the people from the proposed improvements must be considered; and the public must be informed and comments/questions accepted. Interstate has sent letters to applicable agencies for comments on environmental impacts from proposed project. Tyler showed the audience the different types of environmental categories the proposed project may be influenced by. Tyler explained the environmental review and the finds of the review. Upon his conclusion he asked for questions and/or comments from the audience. No written comments had been received. Receiving no oral comments, the Mayor closed the public hearing.

The Mayor called the regular council meeting to order with all the above people present, except Mary Kittler.

Danell moved to approve the minutes, financial report, and budget vs. actual report. Paul seconded the motion which carried 4-0.

Danell moved to approve the claims as presented. The motion, seconded by Betty, passed unanimously.

There was no correspondence or public comment.


Dept. head reports started with Dean advising all was going well with the water, sewer, and streets. Loni had nothing to report for zoning. Rob reported that there were still animal applications not sent in so he would pursue that.

There were no council concerns.

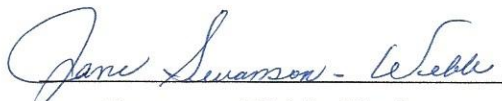
Under unfinished business Dean reported that all was on schedule for Phase 1 of the water project. Going out for bids would be coming up soon. (2) Paul moved to accept the PER for Phase 2 of the water improvement, allowing the Town to enter into a short-term contract with Interstate Engineering for professional services. Betty seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. (3) Paul moved to accept the Environmental Review Record for the PER as presented. Danell seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

Under clerk's items the clerk advised that she would be gone from March 16th through the 23rd.

With no further business, Betty moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion seconded by Paul passed unanimously.



Debbie Surwill, Mayor



Jane Swanson-Webb, Clerk