

**WHITEFISH CITY COUNCIL**  
**Saturday, February 25, 2023 @ 9:00 A.M**  
**Whitefish Lake Lodge**  
**RETREAT WORK SESSION**

1. 9:00 AM - Call to Order

Mayor Muhlfeld called the meeting to order. Councilors present were Qunell, Feury, Norton, Caltabiano and Sweeney. City Manager Smith and City Clerk Howke attended at 11:00 am. Public Works Director Workman, Planning and Building Director Taylor and City Attorney Jacobs attended at 12:00 noon.

Two members of the public were present.

2. 9:00 AM: Communications and discussion from Mayor and City Councilors

Mayor Muhlfeld reviewed the notes from the 2019 Council Retreat-

- Reviewed Goals
- Talked about WF trails and maintenance
- Quarry – how did we get there?
- Resort Tax reallocation
- TIF Funds – no longer in existence - \$900,000 left over to be used for general fund expenditure
- Crisis communication strategy
- Planning – protecting traditional neighborhoods, WR-4 and WR-3
- Vision Statement – walkability, livability, healthy businesses
- 93 South Steering Committee – MDT
- Housing – Melany Ruiz – Consider Cap on STR in any zoning district
  - -mandatory cap on hotels or franchises
- Extension of Services Plan – South of Hwy 93/40
- Highway 93 South Corridor
- Wisconsin Avenue Corridor
- Sign Code update

Discussion amongst Councilors:

- Councilor benefits:
  - paid a salary?
  - pension participation
  - health insurance participation
  - WAVE membership
- Property tax rebate based on the Resort Tax - non-resident vs. resident (western portion of the state has the highest property values) may be legislature issue.
- Can we legally differentiate between different classes of owners? Constitutionally you cannot discriminate fees, but you can differentiate privileges.
- SB382 Growth Policy Bill – could potentially change whole planning process – puts all decision on the Planning Director/Administrator. This bill is not addressing separation of powers. It's interest is profit driven.

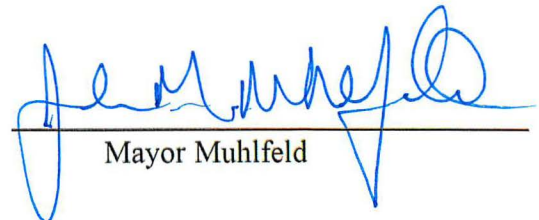
3. 11:00 AM: Discussion of City Council goals, legislative update, and other topics with City Manager

City Manager Smith brought forward a few issues for Council direction:

- Holidays:
    - A Columbus/Indigenous People's Day – Council support
    - B Juneteenth (June 19<sup>th</sup>) – Council support but negotiate swap for Good Friday
  - Director Benefits
    - Whitefish, Kalispell, Helena – no additional fringe benefits for Director
    - Bozeman – Directors are provided 15% housing allowance to base wage
    - Belgrade – All Directors eligible for up to 7% deferred comp match from City.
    - Billings – All directors receive a \$400 per month car allowance or a city vehicle and \$100,000 in life insurance paid 100% by City.
    - Anaconda – Longevity for Dept Heads \$28.18/month per year of service
    - Livingston – 7 days of administrative leave on top of regular accruals
    - Missoula – Directors receive employer provided 3.6% of wage contribution into a 401a plan-employer only contribution.
    - City Manager Smith proposed 5 days of Administrative Leave or Deferred Comp Contribution – Elected Annually on July 1<sup>st</sup> – Council did not support this at this time.
  - Conduct a Pay Study – Council supports this.
  - Fire Department – Council supports advertising additional staff to bring all shifts to 6 people/shift.
  - Resort Tax- Manager Smith presented to the Council proposed uses of Resort Tax monies that would need to be approved by the voters during the November Election.
    - *Provision for the repair, maintenance, and improvement of streets, storm sewers, all underground utilities, sidewalks, curbs and gutters, in an amount equal to **forty-eight percent (48%)** of the three percent (3%) resort tax revenues derived during the preceding fiscal year;*
    - *Provisions from community housing efforts including developments of deed restricted affordable housing and other community housing programs in amount equal to **ten percent (10%)** of the three percent (3%) resort tax revenues derived during the preceding fiscal year;*
  - The monies would be used to partner with private developers to buy # of units for deed restrictive housing. This will come to Council for discussion and for approval prior to August.
  - The City was approached by Gerard Corp who were looking at the City shop property to possibly develop senior housing, and affordable housing. The shop property at one time was the city landfill, which is concerning. Council directed staff to look into a master plan for the property and a site analysis.
  - Council would like a joint work session with WCHC, WHA and WF Housing for an overview of how all three will be working together. Feury – identify what can be fixed and define better an end goal.
  - Big Mountain Annexation – directed staff to start studying the annexation process.
4. 1:00 PM: Discussion with Public Works Director (infrastructure and long-term capital planning efforts)
- Council directed staff to continue working with MDT on the Downtown Urban

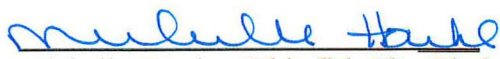
- Corridor Study
  - Council recommended to push recycling to next year.
5. 1:45 PM: Discussion with Planning Director/City Attorney
- Council discussed possibly revisiting WB-3 Hotel/Motel Conditional Uses and decided to wait until after the legislative session.
  - During the Growth Policy update to make sure all Corridor Plans are looked at thoroughly.
  - Possibly consider a parking garage at 2<sup>nd</sup> and Spokane – with the increase in number of Motel/Hotel in downtown area
  - Council recommended staff remove FY reference from the Council Goals
6. 3:00 PM: Other topics
- Revisit the Ethics Policy
  - 5<sup>th</sup> Monday Meetings
    - Robust valley wide transportation system
    - Look beyond city boundaries for housing
  - Merge STMP and the Climate Action Plan Committees
  - Medians on Hwy 93 S – MDT – get it done
  - Sign Code updates
7. 3:35 PM: Public comment
- Neil Lovering – 725 Icehouse Rd – has concerns with:
- Code enforcement – snow removal on sidewalks
  - Animal resistant containers – extra \$80/year – hard to open
  - CSF Tax – no accountability, where does it go?
  - Cost benefit analysis, example: viaduct/flower baskets
  - Suggested to reach out to Maryanne Moon – Economic Development
8. 3:50 PM: Direction for the City Manager
9. 4:00 PM: Adjourn.

Mayor Muhlfeld adjourned the meeting at 3:58pm.



Mayor Muhlfeld

Attest:



Michelle Howke, Whitefish City Clerk