

By **LEANNE KAVANAGH**
Pioneer Press Editor

The City of Cut Bank wants you to know and understand some facts and figures about its proposed wastewater rate increase before the upcoming public hearing on Monday, Oct. 3, at 6:30 p.m. at the Cut Bank Voting Center, located at 913 East Railroad.

Since 2012, the City of Cut Bank has been out of compliance with EPA on its wastewater discharge, said Mayor Dan Raemaeker. Beginning in 2013 city officials began looking for possible alternatives for its treatment of wastewater, which currently utilizes a lagoon system. The city contracted with Great West Engineering to determine the best and most affordable option to meet the requirements set by the Environment Protection Agency (EPA). They studied several options, including total retention, spray irrigation, poogoo, and different types and styles of wastewater treatment plants, explained City Superintendent Jim Suta.

"Another option that was reviewed was the 'Do Nothing Approach,' which would result in fines from the DEQ up to \$10,000 per day and when the fines reach \$100,000, the mayor is arrested," informed Suta. "At that point it is turned over to the Federal EPA where they can fine the City up to \$100,000 per day with no maximum and when those fines reach \$1 million they again will arrest the mayor and/or the council President. At that point they have the option of taking over the sewage treatment system and will build the new plant and operate it until it is paid for."

After careful and meticulous study, it was determined the best fit and most affordable

option for the City of Cut Bank would be the Modified Ludzack-Ettinger Process (MLE). This system will ensure the city is compliant with levels of phosphorous, the nutrient rule, ammonia and total nitrates, stated Raemaeker.

To implement the MLE, the City must build a new wastewater treatment plant to comply with federal guidelines. The projected cost is "up to \$16 million." According to Raemaeker, "This project will be funded by grants and loans."

To date, the City of Cut Bank has received \$2.2 million in grants and commitments for nearly \$13 million in low interest loans for the project. Additionally, it has a commitment for another \$400,000 loan, which may be forgiven under certain circumstances. City officials have also committed \$450,000 from available funds to the construction of the project.

Before city officials can advertise for bids on a new wastewater treatment plant, they must first adopt the proposed rate increase in order to comply with requirements set by its lending agencies and grant sponsors, pointed out Raemaeker.

"The proposed new rates are to provide funds for the City once the construction is underway. The money generated will be needed to pay current and new wastewater debt, establish reserves and meet coverage ratios, plus pay the existing and new operation and maintenance costs of the new wastewater system," pointed out Raemaeker.

What will this cost local residents?

"The proposed new wastewater rates, which will be implemented over two years, are about an 89 percent increase over the current month-

ly rate," stated Raemaeker, reminding citizens that this option is the least expensive of those proposed to the council.

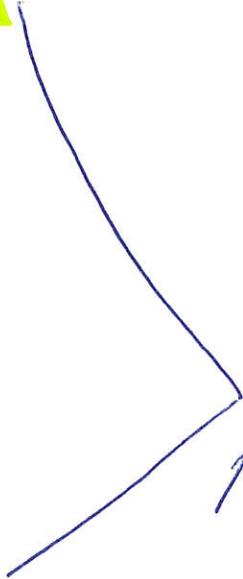
Currently, city water users pay \$33.89 per equivalent dwelling unit (EDU) per month, based on a five winter months' average, with 300 cubic feet per month of water usage included. They also pay a \$1 administrative fee and the monthly use rate of \$2.49 per 100 cubic feet of water per month used in excess of the 300 cubic feet per month.

Once fully implemented, that base rate will go to \$66 per month. The monthly use rate will remain the same. The \$1 per month administrative fee, however, will not be charged after June 1, 2017.

The proposed minimum monthly base rate costs will increase is \$32.11 per month per EDU. The first rate increase of \$25 per month will go into effect on June 1, 2017. The second rate increase will be \$7.11 per month and will appear on monthly city utility bills after June 1, 2018.

The contract rate for users outside the City, such as the North Cut Bank Water and Sewer District, will also increase \$32.11 per EDU. The North Cut Bank Water and Sewer District's rates will increase to \$2,579 per month. That amount is based on 52 EDUs, which are now paying \$17.48 per EDU/month, and like city users, will be charged an additional \$32.11 per month, or \$59.59 per month, after June 1, 2018.

Raemaeker realizes the new rates will have an impact on residents. "We know this increase means our citizens will have to adjust their monthly budgets to absorb this increase and we hope by giving nearly a year's notice it will ease the burden when the first rate in-



\$66.00 per edu
1" service \$99/mo.

crease is implemented next June.”

A copy of Resolution No. 16-23, which was adopted by the City Council on Sept. 6 and details the council’s intent to increase rates and charges for the wastewater system, is available at City Hall. The resolution also specifically outlines the grants and loans the City of Cut Bank will be utilizing to fund the construction of the treatment plant.

City officials encourage community members to attend the public hearing to learn more about the need for the new wastewater system and the background behind the city’s three-year study to find the most affordable option for its citizens. Comments will be taken at the public hearing or may be submitted in writing to City Hall by 5 p.m. on Oct. 3.

Cut Bank Pioneer Press

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"Thanks for giving me eight months to adjust my income," Cut Bank resident Don Topp told the City Council at last week's public hearing on the upcoming rate increase for the city's new wastewater treatment plant. "It's going to cost me another \$32 a month for a Faj Mahal turd factory."

A small crowd of concerned citizens like Topp turned out for the public hearing on Monday, Oct. 3, to listen to city officials explain the need for the new wastewater treatment plant and how they are funding the project with grants, loans, reserves and an 89 percent rate increase to residents' monthly base sewer rate—not useage—that will kick in over two years. The first increase of \$25 per month will appear on residents' city utility bill on July 1, 2017. A second, smaller increase of \$7.11 per month will kick in the following year on July 1, 2018.

The council listened to residents' concerns and together with the city's engineer, Dave Aune of Great West Engineering, answered questions about the need for the project and other alternatives that had been looked at during the past three years.

Aune said city officials "did a thorough job of looking at all alternatives" and determined this was the "most flexible and most cost-effective."

Eric Nelson questioned if city officials considered the economic impact the rate increase may have on the community, especially if businesses close or residents move away.

City Superintendent Jim Suta explained the costs of the project would "be paid by whoever is left."

Aune pointed out Cut Bank is not the only community facing this issue since the implementation of new wastewater discharge regulations.

The council later approved Resolution 16-18, formally approving the rate increase and a related resolution extending the maturity of wastewater system bonds by one year due to the project construction start date being delayed by one year.

During last week's meeting, the council also approved resolutions setting the annual mill levies for the city's street lighting districts and street maintenance districts (SMD). The rates for both were held at the 2015-16 level, stated city officials. The assessments for the two districts will appear on taxpayers' first installment of their upcoming tax bills.

City officials voted to again levy \$.0036 per square foot to raise \$69,291.76 to defray the cost of electricity and maintenance of lights within the city limits. Residents questioned if the installation of new LED lights would eventually lower the rate assessed. City officials said they review the costs each year and "could over time" see a reduction.

Rates for the four street maintenance districts in town are \$.025 per square foot in SMD 1 and 2, \$.0275 in SMD 3 and \$.00365 per square foot in SMD 4. Funds collected will be used to offset the cost for maintenance of the streets and alleys in each district. City officials have determined the costs in each district to be:

- SMD 1-\$165,217.14
- SMD 2-\$7,943.18
- SMD 3-\$13,811.13
- SMD 4-\$25,251.03

The council also approved the operating and maintenance agreement of the Shelby to Cut Bank "components" of the North Central Montana Re-

gional Water System. City officials expect the water line is on schedule for completion and will be operational by next summer. The water system will provide the City of Cut Bank up to 750,000 gallons of water per day to address the risk of water shortages associated with drought conditions.

The first reading of Ordinance 16-3, the Floodplain Ordinance, was tabled to allow City Attorney Robert Smith time to review it.



CROSSROADS CORRECTIONAL CENTER
50 Crossroads Drive
Shelby, Mt. 59474

September 6, 2017

Mayor Larry Bonderud
Shelby Mayor
112 1st St. South
Shelby, Mt 59474

Dear Mayor Bonderud,

Crossroads Correctional Center will be hosting the next Community Advisory Committee Meeting and luncheon at 12:00, noon on Wednesday, September 13, 2017.

The Community Advisory Committee is made up of key representatives of the local community and representatives from the institution. We meet quarterly to exchange important information and to share concerns and common challenges. Our hope is to establish and build long lasting relationships for the benefit of all involved.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about the Community Advisory Committee or our planned meeting. Thank you for your service to the Community Advisory Committee. I look forward to seeing you on the 13th.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Doug Fender".

Douglas Fender
Warden

Please RSVP to Mrs. Warburton at 434-7405 or by email to patti.warburton@corecivic.com

TEMPORARY PARKING PERMIT

<i>Trailer Type</i>	2014 Coachman Motorhome
<i>Name</i>	Kevin Jacobsen
<i>Address</i>	902 2nd St S
<i>Phone #</i>	(406) 424-8035
<i>Date(s) Valid</i>	09/05/17—09/12/17
<i>Permit Number</i>	2017-026

 **MAYOR**

CONDITIONS OF THIS PERMIT:

1. *Valid ONLY for date(s) indicated (1 week maximum).*
2. *Must be displayed while parked at all times.*
3. *The acceptance of this permit relieves the City of Shelby of any responsibility for damages to or loss of vehicle, its contents or accessories from any cause whatsoever.*

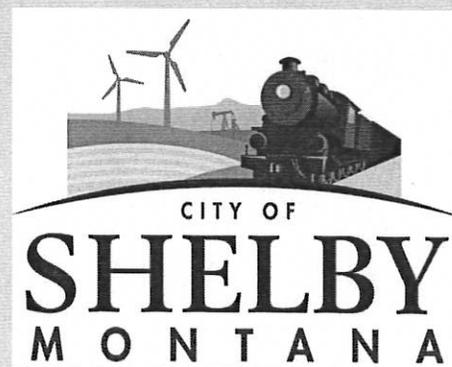
CITY OF SHELBY

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Shelby, MT 59474

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www.shelbymt.com



CITY OF SHELBY
MONTHLY ANIMAL CONTROL REPORT

August 2017
(Month) (Year)

Animal Control Calls and/or Complaints

City Hall or Public Works.....	7	Dog-Cat
Sheriff's Office.....	<u>14</u>	5-2
On Patrol.....	<u>16</u>	13-1
		10-6

Fees Collected by Animal Control Officer

Destroyed- Animals brought in.....	0
License.....	<u>\$20.00</u>
Pound	<u>\$60.00</u>
Rabies Shot.....	<u>0</u>

Pound Activity

Animals in pound at end of last month.....	3	Dog-Cat
Impounded..... +	<u>2</u>	0-3
Destroyed - Animals from pound..... -		
Destroyed - Animals brought in..... +		
Released/Returned to owner..... -	<u>2</u>	
Total in Pound Month End - - - - - >	<u>3</u>	3-0

Dead Animals

Marias Vet Clinic.....	0
Other (list where picked up):	
<u>2-rabbits, 2 Pigeons</u>	<u>4</u>

Vehicle Log

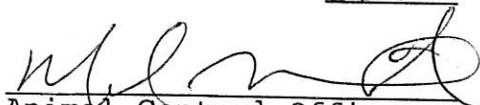
Gallons of Gas.....	33
Mileage - current month reading.....	<u>89585</u>
Mileage - previous month reading.....	<u>89360</u>
Total Mileage.....	<u>225</u>

Warnings and/or Citations

Verbal Warnings.....	8
Written Warnings.....	<u>5</u>
Citations Issued.....	<u>3</u>

Licenses Issued

Month.....	7
Year to Date.....	<u>362</u>


Animal Control Officer.

cc: City Superintendent
City Council (deliver to City Hall 1st of month)
Animal Control file