ANACONDA-DEER LODGE COUNTY
COMMISSION WORK SESSION MEETING
6:00 P.M. TUESDAY, MAY 24, 2022
COURTHOUSE COURTROOM

Present: District 1 Commissioner Terry Vermeire, District 2 Commissioner Steve Gates, District 3 Commissioner Kevin Hart (Vice-Chair), District 4 Commissioner Paul Smith, District 5 Commissioner Mike Huotte, CEO Bill Everett, and County Attorney Krakowka and Clerk of Commission Lori Sturm

Members of the Press: James Rosien, Anaconda Leader

A-DLC Ordinance No. 268, An Ordinance Repealing A-DLC Ordinance No. 128, Dissolving Tree Board, and Establishing Planting and Maintenance Requirements for Trees on County Right-Of-Way. (First Reading/Introduction and Setting a Public Hearing Date)[Suggested date of June 21, 2022] 

Commissioner Huotte – This Ordinance repeals the former 128 ordinance that governed the trees in Deer Lodge County through a tree board. This new Ordinance would put the governance and maintenance of the trees under the Parks and Recreation Board and the Parks Director.

Joe Ungaretti, Park Director – In the past, in my old position as code enforcement, any time we looked at making changes to an ordinance we sat down as a team and discussed the change. No one has approached me or the board members on the Park Board about this possible change and what it would entail. Looking at the Ordinance changes. . . we do not have the people to police trees. I don’t think this is in the best interest of the Parks and Park and Recreation Board. The Park and Recreation Board has trouble meeting and having a quorum. To make the decisions on types of trees, there is no knowledge or expertise there. The tree board has foresters, people with knowledge and a passion for trees. The Tree Board has grant writers and facilitate money for this community for the street trees, they do the maintenance without cost or minimal cost to the county. They secure grants and are the liaison with the Job Corps and the prison crew to remove hazardous trees, and plant new ones. I think you are making a big mistake and I am not in favor of this. I have also talked to a couple of the Park and Recreation Board members and they are not in favor of this.

- July Little, Tree Board Member – I second everything Mr. Ungaretti has stated. We have a remarkable group; we have some knowledgeable members on the Tree Board who know what to do with trees. Before action is taken . . . wouldn’t it make sense to talk with the Tree Board and find out what the problems and concerns are? The Tree Board should have the opportunity to speak and respond to the concerns or any questions. We want to do the right thing. I think you would make a big mistake by not getting some input from the Tree Board. I know we do a lot with the trees in the county, adding that list to anyone would not be fair . . . including our community. I believe about 2000 trees
have been planted and would hate to see trees that have been placed in the ground be neglected. There needs to be a group that looks after that.

- **Rose Nyman** – The focus on this seems to be on public trees and most of those public trees are in the park system. We are all aware of the danger of the Cotton Woods in Washoe Park. There is a Commissioner on the Park and Recreation Board so that is a control in itself. It would also involve more people in the decisions. I agree there were 2 good foresters on the Board, but it doesn’t help our community when they don’t attend the meetings. Brought up the past when there were discussions about the trees downtown, one of the foresters agreed to permanently maintain those trees and that has slowly dissolved. I would like to see a solution and I do respect Mr. Ungaretti’s point about staff. I feel more people need to be involved in the decision making. The trees alongside the sidewalk as you enter the courthouse are going to grow and you won’t be able to see our beautiful courthouse. The removal of the diseased trees in 2017 opened the view of the courthouse. It is a beautiful building, and we should focus on it. Pointed out the trees in the downtown area producing berries, brushing on façade, plus the berries make a mess. Using this as an example of a poor choice. Mr. Ungaretti does have a few points.

- **Commissioner Hart** – Regarding Judy’s comment about input from the Tree Board… that is what this would be with the Public Hearing. That would be an opportunity for the Tree Board members to come before the Commission in a public setting. There have been several issues that have come to the attention of the Commission, if the tree board is interested in presenting a reorganization or something to show that when it comes to the public meetings, having a quorum and addressing issues we would be willing to listen.

Place on Agenda for a Public Hearing Date for June 21, 2022

**Request for Development Proposal – Lease with Option to Purchase - Two lots in the Arbiter Major Subdivision – referenced as Lots 1A and Lot 1B.**

**Carl Hamming, Planning Director** – This is about the land leases in the Arbiter Plant Major Subdivision. We are checking on the timelines for the outstanding leases that had been previously signed. Rich Salle was the lessee for lot #1 and with West Hill Auto. Due to extreme costs of building he has decided that it would be easier acquire an existing building. Believes he has finalized a contract to acquire the Anaconda Motors building. He has relinquished his land lease for Lot 1. We have checked with the other lessee’s… Lot #2 is Nick Kriskovich with Copper City Sheet Metal and Cody Neubauer with the cabinetry business in lot #7. Once they learned Rich was terminating his lease, they both expressed interest in acquiring Rich’s lot. We have been looking at different ideas to increase the number of lots in the Arbiter Subdivision. We would like to split Lot #1 into two lots (which would be Lot 1A and Lot 1B) Seeking your approval to advertise a development proposal to see what proposals we will receive. I expect to hear from 2 of the outstanding lessee’s who have assured me that if they were able to acquire the land lease for one of these lots, they would terminate their existing lot lease, allowing us to
go out for future development proposals. We would also like to see what other businesses are interested in acquiring land, start or expand a business, or relocate to Anaconda-Deer Lodge County.

- **CEO Everett** – Making the lots smaller and moving some people around makes sense. There are businesses that would make more sense to have highway frontage. Nick Kriskovich is the first to say you don’t need me on the highway frontage.

**Place on Agenda**

**Request for Reappointment to the Planning Board by Rose Nyman (letter attached)**

**Place on Agenda**

**Request for Reappointment to the Historic Resources Board by Bob Wren (letter attached)**

Rose Nyman – Spoke in support of Mr. Wren’s reappointment. He is quick to help, and he is there unless he is traveling.

**Place on Agenda**

**Special Event Permit – Copper ‘Village Museum/Art center - Art in Washoe Park – July 15, 16, 17, 2022 (Pending Certificate of Insurance)**

Shannon Warner, Director of Copper Village – Thanked the Commission for their Support. This is a huge part that keeps Copper Village open.

- **CEO Everett** – We try to do a little such as electrical hookups, lights, asphalt. If you have any thoughts, we don’t mind making the facility better.

- **Joe Ungaretti** – I have met with the Art in the Park crew, and we have discussed fire lanes. We are trying to be consistent with all the events to be held in Washoe Park.

**Place on Agenda**

**Special Event Permit – Nxt. Gen Entertainment – 4th of July Concert A’s Stadium Washoe Park (Pending Certificate of Insurance)**

Monty Klistoff – Last year we did a concert in the baseball park and charged admission for the show. We helped the Anaconda Fire Works raise some money for the firework show. This year we have decided to make it a free event and are bringing in a country concert. Last year we had a bad weather storm, and the storm caused a 2-hour delay. It usually runs until the firework show is over.

- **CEO Everett** – Last year I was apprehensive to this. Felt maybe there was too much stuff going on in one area, but it seemed smooth last year. There were no problems. You did a good job with security.
Monty Klistoff – As far as public safety there were no arrests or DUI’s related to the event.

Joe Ungaretti – I will get with Monty in the next week to go over what the Fire Chief and I have discussed. Everyone in the Parks said it was cleaned up, they took care of everything, they policed themselves. The A stadium was left as it was turned over to them. I did understand that the sprinklers went off. . . we will get the sprinklers shut off. It was a positive for the community.

Place on Agenda

Miscellaneous -

Commissioner Kevin Hart: No Miscellaneous.
Commissioner Steve Gates: No Miscellaneous.
Commissioner Paul Smith: No Miscellaneous.
Commissioner Terry Vermeire: No Miscellaneous.
Commissioner Mike Huotte: No Miscellaneous.

CEO Everett – Everything is going forward with the Murdoch store. They are ahead of schedule and we’re probably going to have a “groundbreaking event”. All the supplies are ordered, Murdoch has done a fantastic job of preordering everything they need to complete the building. The goal is to have this open before the holiday season. Keep in mind that the holiday season in a store operation is October 1. The fear is that they will bring in a new store and not have employees trained and adequately ready. They do not want to have a bad first experience for Anaconda. If not open and ready by October 1 they will wait until after the New Year.

Count Attorney Krakowka: - I just got word from the MT Supreme court that a case I took to trial, the defendant appealed the case to the MT Supreme Court. The Supreme Court rejected the defendant’s appeal, and the conviction was affirmed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dan Goddard – Would like to see placed on the agenda for discussion 412 Cherry Street for its historical value. It falls within the Commissions range to look at that, according to the Growth Policy. Historical homes are needed for future residences and are a value. Housing in East Anaconda and Opportunity are areas of housing stock in disrepair. It is important it is to restore some of these old homes.

Rose Nyman – Took a moment to talk about the Economic Development Board. I have no problem with that board. They are dedicated to improving our community. I would like to talk about the guidelines. The URA board had had 2 projects come before it. They stated that they would like to go from the URA board to the Economic Development Board. I explained about the guidelines and that their projects were not eligible because they would not produce
property taxes. Both projects were good for this community. Is there any way to reconsider that it absolutely must be tied to property taxes? Is there way to open a special section? Both projects would be an asset to the community. It was the newspaper going digital and the Open Theatre at Copper Village.

- **CEO Everett** – It was set up that way for a reason. We were given this money and it was mandated by EPA to be this way because when Atlantic Richfield left . . . we lost our tax base. They have a legal responsibility to help replenish the tax base. That is why the guidelines are what they are.

- **Rose Nyman** – I think ARCO would be willing to listen to the county.

- **Commissioner Hart** - Talked about the 5% for non-profits. With that being part of the settlement agreement doesn’t that preclude going back.

- **CEO Everett** – Keep in mind the parties involved . . . EPA, DEQ, US attorney’s and a lot of entities were part of that negotiation. It is not a simple scratch out or change. That is why it is set up as a legal process. The assets added because of the Economic Development are greater than we have ever anticipated. The Hotel and Murdoch’s are all possible because of this. This money and the parameters are very specific. Provided example of receiving Tobacco money and using it for planting trees. There is a reason the Parmenter’s are very strict, it is to prevent this Commission from making their own decisions.

- **CEO Everett** – Answered Rose’s question about the money being rolled over. Money was given out loans that will come back two-fold in a few years. We will receive more but there is a year that will be skipped. Could not remember the definite year of 2023 or 2024.

**Meeting Dates**

**Commissioner Huotte** - Read the meeting date and times.

**Adjournment**

Meeting Adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

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Lori Sturm  
Clerk of Commission

Mike Huotte  
Commission Chair