

**CITY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES  
CITY HALL – CITY COMMISSION CHAMBERS  
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2009, 6:30 P.M.**

**ATTENDANCE:** City Commissioners Bruce Agrella, Jim Sohm, Mike Lies, Elsa Duford, Fred Funke. Jules Clavadetscher absent. Mayor Lou Marchello presiding. City Manager

**Mayor Marchello called the meeting to order and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.**

**APPROVAL OF PROPOSED AGENDA:** Motion made by Commissioner Sohm, seconded by Commissioner Funke, to approve the proposed agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

**PRESENTATION OF PRELIMINARY DRAFT ENGINEER REPORT ON TECHNICAL STORM WATER TREATMENT ALTERNATIVES FOR THE CITY OF POLSON BY SHARI JOHNSON AND COLLETTE ANDERSON OF THOMAS DEAN & HOSKINS FOLLOWED BY PUBLIC COMMENT:** City Manager Todd Crossett introduced Shari Johnson, P.E. of TD&H, who gave the presentation of the Draft 2009 Preliminary Engineering Report for Stormwater Facilities Management for the City of Polson that they prepared. The City will receive funds upon completion of the PER from a DNRC Renewable Resource Project Planning grant. The preliminary draft provides a rough description of the existing stormwater system throughout the City of Polson and provides a number of options to add catch basins and provide treatment for all stormwater that is collected which currently flows into the river untreated. The grant requires that there be public engagement and another public meeting will be held in December 2009 to provide additional public comments. Shari Johnson will make a power point presentation on the PER. He noted that the discussion tonight is about a stormwater system design and discussion on the stormwater rate is not relevant at this time. Shari Johnson proceeded with her presentation noting that the City of Polson's planning service area is unique being on the Salish Kootenai Flathead Indian Reservation and having the Flathead Lake and Flathead River touching its boundaries. With the slope of the land the stormwater runoff impacts the lake water, which flows into the lake and river, untreated, except for a few locations. They surveyed to find the existing stormwater catch basins and lines, which includes a 48" pipe, sometimes referred to as the old government drain that was placed through the middle of the city when the Pablo Reservoir was built. From that information they prepared an updated map of the existing storm drain system. Over the last few years a mechanical separator was installed at Riverside Park that could be converted to a vegetation filter in the future. All the water runoff ends up in the Lake and standards are being upgraded so the new map includes all existing stormwater drains, which are not working efficiently. It is currently an ongoing project for the Water and Sewer Department to get them all functioning. The state of Montana has determined that Flathead Lake is an impaired water body under the Clean Water Act. To implement the Total Maximum Daily Loading (TMDL) goal for Flathead Lake, as part of the watershed basin, the pollutants from the City of Polson must be reduced. The general design requirements for improvements will address collection, detention, storage, treatment, regulatory requirements and permits. Collette Anderson of TD&H spoke on compliance issues and the next step, which is to consider ways to deal with the stormwater runoff. It is necessary to maintain the existing stormwater drains which clog up with leaves and debris and the street department doesn't have

equipment to pick up leaves. Pipes are undersized in all existing stormwater lines and frequently overflow as a result. It is possible to divert some of the stormwater drainage into the 48" interceptor line and use it for irrigation at the Sports Complex. She explained in more detail the alternative screening process options for stormwater quality management, stormwater quantity management and stormwater conveyance management. Commissioner Clavadetscher expressed his concern that since it is the developers responsibility to install a stormwater system, it is of utmost importance that a collection system is available for the developers to hook into. Shari Johnson explained that the PER report will act as a master plan of what stormwater system is existing and provide a concept of where to expand the system as part of the watershed basin. Water and Sewer Superintendent Tony explained that the stormwater system is important because of the stormwater runoff from the City's hillside. City Manager Todd Crossett felt the City is in an advantageous position in that it can copy other communities' systems that have worked well over the years. It was clarified that the 48" old government drain has a year round flow. Shari Johnson explained that there will be another public hearing in December and the final draft of the PER for Stormwater Facilities Management will be completed by the deadline of December 31, 2009. This will provide an operational plan and policy for developers' utility infrastructure which has a mechanism to go forward on how and if they go thru the steps outlined in the PER. Water and Sewer Superintendent Tony Porrazzo explained that he budgeted funds to complete stormwater projects in the Sewer Fund and over that last few years there were expenditures in the General Fund for some projects. Recently a new utility account was established and the monthly collections for the stormwater projects that are being paid by the water and sewer customers, are deposited into the Stormwater Fund #5390. One goal that he has for the current system is to reduce the number of outflow pipes that empty into the Flathead River. Shari Johnson explained that having a completed PER will provide opportunities to apply for funding from TSEP and DNRC in the 2010 grant cycle. She feels that the most critical health and safety projects in Montana have been completed, and will allow more opportunity for grants to be awarded for stormwater projects. Tony Porrazzo noted that EPA is sending information on upcoming regulations, which they usually back up with available funds to follow their demands. Shari Johnson asked that anyone having personal examples of situations dealing with stormwater issues would provide a written account because it is very helpful to include when applying for grants. Christy Buffington, Flathead Lakers, said she has personal experience working with various stormwater treatment options, while working in another state. She asked why other areas of the city are not included in the map. Shari Johnson explained that improving the existing storm drains and pipes that are undersized lines is more manageable and a good place to start on the improvements to the stormwater system. Tony Porrazzo explained that they are trying to be more proactive in their approach to stormwater issues. Christy Buffington gave examples of pollution prevention alternatives such as impervious surface reduction, planting deep root systems with no lawns, rain barrels, bio retention swales, instead of using shallow grass varieties, treating stormwater from parking lots, leaf collection and composting. Shari Johnson suggested that it would be a good idea to include those types of preventive measures with the current update of the Polson Development Code, it is certainly interrelated and part of the big picture. Tony Porrazzo noted that revisions to the existing system are needed in areas like Grandview Subdivision that has the stormwater lines connected to the sewer lines. Todd Crossett noted that native grasses with deeper root systems are beneficial because they absorb excess moisture and also require less irrigation. Shari Johnson noted that along that line rain gardens are an option. Commissioner Agrella related that each spring he has four to five inches of water in his basement

because that area of town has clay from five inches down and there is no place for the water runoff to go. Tony Porrazzo mentioned that there are also a number of springs throughout the city that cause flooding in basements during certain times of the year. Susan Brueggeman, Lake County Environmental Health, noted that the Flathead Basin Commission established water quality standards for Flathead Lake. She commended the City of Polson for taking action to protect the water quality through multiple efforts and improvement projects. Christy Buffington suggested consideration of what some states allow; mixing treated sewer effluent and stormwater for irrigation use and provide retention ponds with a clay base which is perfect for holding treated irrigation water. Shari Johnson clarified that regulations for using treated human effluent require that it be treated through a membrane bioreactor process. Christy Buffington suggested they could separately collect gray water from the human effluent for irrigation use. Tony Porrazzo noted that it is allowed in homes and in a controlled environment if it doesn't affect the public. Susan Brueggeman explained that there are new laws that became effective in 2009 allowing commercial use of gray water under certain circumstances. Christy Buffington suggested using the first flush method for treating stormwater runoff, which could be useful for some purposes. City Manager Todd Crossett clarified that it would be helpful to understand the ground water, soils, slopes and vegetation before deciding on a treatment option in any given location. Commissioner Duford asked what safety requirements there are for retention ponds. Water and Sewer Superintendent Tony Porrazzo replied that depending on their size and depth they should be fenced off. Shari Johnson replied that by law thirty inches or more of standing water requires fencing. The first step in the process is to clean up the existing stormwater drains and make them operational.

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON MATTERS OF SIGNIFICANT INTEREST TO THE PUBLIC NOT ON THE AGENDA: No further comments were made.**

**Mayor Marchello adjourned the meeting at 8:10 p.m.**

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**Lou Marchello, Mayor**

**ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Aggi G. Loeser, City Clerk**