



# The City of Billings, Missouri

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Jan – Mar 2020

New Year's Greetings to all as we move into another new year and new decade!

Thank you to all those who helped make the holiday season in the community of Billings an extra special one for 2019. Many individuals and local organizations contributed to that cause as well as contributed to all that goes on in this community all year long. That is what makes this community what it is. Again, many thanks to all!

The new year will bring several changes to the Billings community and specifically at City Hall. After 17 1/2 years as City Clerk, Ruth Haskins retired effective December 31. Ruth has contributed in many ways to our community over the years and we express our appreciation to Ruth for her years of service to the Billings community. We wish her the best as she enters retirement.

Ruth served as not only City Clerk but also as the Clerk of the Billings Municipal Court. Municipal courts in Missouri are undergoing significant changes and related new requirements. As the position of Municipal Court Clerk became open in Billings, the Board of Aldermen decided to exercise the option of transferring the functions and the administration of the municipal court to the circuit court of Christian County. Local municipal courts have long been a division of the circuit court. With this change our local law enforcement folk will continue to enforce city ordinances and related state laws. The difference will be that the few cases that typically go to hearing will be heard in the associate circuit court in Ozark. This change will help keep Billings in state judicial compliance and limit the City's costs in doing so. It is very likely that other local municipal courts of smaller communities will be doing the same in the future.

The transfer of municipal court services has enabled Billings to streamline city government by the merging of the City Clerk and City Treasurer positions into one. The Board of Aldermen in our December Board meeting named Chris Hopkins to the Clerk-Treasurer position. Chris has served as City Treasurer well for more than 14 years and has also served as Deputy City Clerk. Over the years Chris also has served the community as an unpaid volunteer in many capacities. The City Clerk is chosen by vote of the Board of Aldermen to serve a term of one year. Upon review and approval the City Clerk can be reappointed for further one year terms. We welcome Chris to this new position. Gail Steinert will continue in her position as Water Clerk and receptionist.

## **Water and Sewer rates for 2020**

Many of you are aware that the City of Billings has increased water and sewer rates annually over the past four years to cover the cost of voter approved bonds which have helped fund required improvements to our water and sewer systems. These rate increases also have helped the city set aside needed dollars to maintain these systems as needed repairs and upgrades are made. For the past four years sewers rates have increased annually by 10% and water rates by 5%. Though necessary to keep our local utility services viable, these rate increases have been challenging for local citizens, especially for those with lower incomes and fixed incomes.

The Board of Aldermen has concluded that for 2020 annual water and sewer rate increases can be limited to 3% each. Good management of the City's bond and other financial resources has helped limit these needed increases. The Board will revisit any future rate adjustments on an annual basis. It is hoped that any growth that the city experiences going forward will assist in keeping rate increases at a minimum. There are fixed costs involved in providing water and sewer services regardless of how large our customer base is. Therefore, any growth we have as a community will help spread those costs over an expanded customer base and that will hopefully keep per customer costs down.

### **City Trash Services for 2020**

The new year will also bring changes in our contracted trash collection services with Republic Services. Beginning January monthly trash fees will increase from \$12.00 to \$12.50 for the first trash cart. The cost of a second cart will go up from \$3.50 to \$3.75. This is the first increase passed on to local households in two years. There also will be a change in the semi-annual neighborhood clean up that Republic Services has provided in the past. Instead of two large pick-ups a year, one large item pickup will be allowed for each customer each month. This may have mixed results, and we will be observing how well this change works. Recycling bins will continue to be provided without charge. If you currently do not have a blue recycling bin, please call City Hall and order one and use it. You likely will be surprised how you're trash quantity destined for a landfill will be reduced each month. Recycling benefits us all.

There is more specific information about this on the last page of this newsletter.

### **Municipal Elections April 7, 2020**

The year 2020 will include municipal elections also. Three aldermanic positions and the Billings Mayor's position will be on the municipal election ballot on Tuesday, April 7th. Filing is now open for these positions and will close on January 21, 2020.

Let us all work together as a community for a prosperous and rewarding new year and new decade!

In your service, **David Rauch, Mayor.**

## **Billings Comprehensive Plan**

Over the past three months a cross section of local citizens have participated in reviewing and updating what we call a comprehensive city plan. The last time that Billings undertook this kind of an effort was back in 1994. Developing a community comprehensive plan seeks to help establish community goals for the future, including improvements to local services and quality of life goals, as well as land use and zoning standards. As the Billings community anticipates growth in the future it is very important that we maintain standards and priorities locally to manage that growth and community improvements. One of the positive comments often heard from both visitors and local residents is how Billings retains its small town and community centered character and spirit.

Local citizens have been assisted by professional city planners who are part of Missouri State University and the Southwest Missouri Council of Governments. Megan Clark and Adam Olinger have been very helpful in facilitating this review. Elements of the Comprehensive Plan review will be on display in the school lobby at the Homecoming basketball game on Friday, January 24<sup>th</sup> at 6pm. Megan and Adam along with others who have been part of this process will be available to answer questions and take comments regarding these suggestions and guidelines for our community's future. We hope that you will come and take a look and be a part of this effort. Come also, of course, to cheer on the Billings Wildcats and our local school, a special pride of our community.

## CALENDAR

### January

- 1 **New Years Day - Offices Closed**
- 3 **Trash Day (Friday)**
- 9 **Trash Day**
- 15 **Water Bill Due**
- 16 **Trash Day and Recycle Day**
- 16 **Board of Aldermen Meeting .....7pm**
- 20 **Martin Luther King Jr. Day**
- 23 **Trash Day**
- 24 **Comprehensive Plan Open House**
- 30 **Trash Day**

### February

- 6 **Trash**
- 13 **Trash and Recycle Day**
- 15 **Water Bill Due**
- 17 **Presidents Day - Offices Closed**
- 20 **Board of Aldermen Meeting .....7pm**
- 20 **Trash Day**
- 27 **Trash Day**

### March

- 5 **Trash Day**
- 8 **Daylight Savings Time Begins**
- 12 **Trash and Recycle Day**
- 15 **Water Bill Due**
- 17 **St Patrick's Day**
- 19 **Board of Aldermen Meeting .....7pm**
- 19 **Trash Day**
- 26 **Trash Day**

## Billings Water/Sewer Rates for 2020

### Residential:

Water -	
0 - 2,000 gallons	\$23.85
Over 2,000 gallons	\$ .5008 per 100 gallons
Sewer:	
0 - 2,000 gallons	\$26.54
Over 2,000 gallons	\$ 1.1610 per 100 gallons

### Commercial:

Water -	
0 - 1,000 gallons	\$23.85
Over 1,000 gallons	\$ .5633 per 100 gallons
Sewer:	
0 - 1,000 gallons	\$26.54
Over 1,000 gallons	\$ 1.4628 per 100 gallons

## **Billings Police Chief**

Though on vacation Saturday, December 14, Billings Police Chief David Taylor returned to work that day in order to lead the 2019 Billings Christmas Parade. Chief Taylor has been in the parade lead car many times over the past 34 years that he has headed up the Billings Police Department. The decision to come back and lead this Christmas Parade was a bit of a sentimental journey for the Chief. This likely would be his last assignment to drive the lead parade car as he has announced his intention to retire as Billings Chief of Police in the late summer of 2020.

David Taylor spent part of his growing up years in the Billings community and graduated from BHS in 1969. He came back home to join the Billings police force in 1985 and soon found himself elevated to the position of Chief. To head up the local police department in his teenage hometown and then to serve in that capacity for more than three decades is no small achievement. Very few local police chiefs can claim that milestone.

The Chief was scheduled on December 30, to undergo a second surgery to treat an injury he suffered last year in the line of duty. We wish him a speedy recovery and express our appreciation for his service to our community for these many years.

# City of Billings Large Item Pick Up

Please read through this information carefully to understand changes to the City Wide Clean up.

Beginning January 2020 in place of the **Annual City Wide Clean-up** program, we will be changing to a **Monthly One Large Item** pick up program. The new program allows residents to set (1) one large item out per month with their regular schedule trash pick-up. This allows residents the opportunity to dispose of items as needed in place of holding them for a special pick up day. City Residents' paying for trash services through City Utilities may place 1 large item by their trash cart per month with their normal pick up. Any non-acceptable items (listed below) will be left at the residence for disposal by the resident. Crews cannot access personal property to assist in moving items and items cannot be unloaded from a trailer.

## **ACCEPTED ITEMS**

- Furniture—Indoor/Outdoor  
(Couch, Table, Chair, Lawn Furniture)
- Hand and Power Tools
  - Microwaves
  - Beds/Mattresses
  - TV Stand
- Grills - NO Propane Tanks
- Televisions/Monitors
- Weed Eaters / Power tools (Must be drained of all fuel and oil)
  - Toilet / Vanity
  - Outdoor Toys
    - Bicycles

## **NOT ACCEPTED ITEMS**

- Tires
- No Home Remodeling Projects
  - Brush/Limbs/Yard Waste
  - Propane Tanks
  - Rocks, bricks, concrete
  - Bulk Liquids
  - Appliances
- No Large Wood/Fence or Carpet Projects. (Decks, house, storage bldg.)
  - Hazardous Waste (including paint, oil, aerosol cans, fertilizers, etc.)
- No Vehicle / Large Engine Parts, Tires or Batteries (Motors, Doors, Hoods, etc.)