

**CITY OF HAMILTON  
COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**DATE:** October 13, 2020

**NAME OF COMMITTEE:** Committee of the Whole

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Council President Claire Kemp,  
Councilors Pogachar, Mitchell,  
Pruitt, West and Bielski

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None.

**NOTE TAKER:** Cynthia Fleming, Deputy Clerk

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:** Donny Ramer, Public Works Director, Dominic  
Farrenkopf, Mayor

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**Public Comment**

None.

**Approval of Minutes from September 22, 2020**

Councilor Mitchell made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Councilor West. The minutes were approved as written.

**Revegetation Plan for Skalkaho Bend Park**

Public Works Director, Donny Ramer, introduced presenters Bitter Root Water Forum (BRWF), Executive Director, Heather Barber, Restoration Coordinator, Andrea Price and GEUM Environmental Consulting, Maris Sowles. The Bitter Root Water Forum and the City of Hamilton are partnering on a revegetation project at Skalkaho Bend Park in an effort to slow down river bank erosion and improve wildlife habitat.

Ms. Barber introduced herself thanking the members of the Committee and the Mayor for facilitating the creation of Skalkaho Bend Park through the City's partnership with the Bitter Root Land Trust. She outlined some of the stream restoration work that BRWF has been involved in throughout the valley. Andrea Price the restoration coordinator filled in the details of the Skalkaho Bend revegetation project.

At the north end of the park woody debris will be incorporated throughout the planted area to improve water filtration, moisture retention, and resistance to erosion.

The planted area will be an excavated depression that will receive waters from the upstream diversion point. This area will be planted with native riparian trees and shrubs such as cottonwoods and willows.

At the downstream end of the planted area waters will daylight intermittently disperse some water onto the floodplain and infiltrate into the soils. This will create an environment that will support woody vegetation. To prevent erosion at this daylight locations, logs and brush will be placed and embedded into the ground to distribute flows across the ground surface.

From the existing diversion ditch along the C&C ditch there will a settling pond with water from the C&C ditch and the diversion ditch that will be used to support the riparian restoration and revegetation.

The project is being funded by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality. Over 10,000 native plants will be planted to prevent erosion. The work will be a combined effort of staff and volunteers.

At the end of the presentation, Councilors were asked if they had any questions. Councilor West expressed her approval and excitement of the plan, but had some concerns about a spot where the river makes a big bend. She has observed that this spot has been badly eroding for years. The river really wants to go straight here and over time the river may divert and follow the low spot. She suggested that the revegetation plan may want to include this area in the plan. Ms. Price responded saying that she agreed that the river could eventually erode enough that it would create a new channel there. She provided additional details of the plan that would provide for establishing a barrier of logs and brush to help prevent the river from creating a new channel.

Due to a power outage some of the end of this discussion was not recorded.

Committee members were supportive of the revegetation plan.

### **Recommendation**

Mr. Ramer will work with City Attorney Karen Mahar to draft a Memorandum of Understanding, (MOU), with the Bitter Root Water Forum. When the draft is ready it will go to Council for approval.

#### **• Halloween Discussion – Main Street and Residential Street Closures**

Council President Kemp began the discussion by saying that as the Director for the Hamilton Downtown Association, she made a decision not to apply for a Special Event permit to close Main Street with the Montana Department of Transportation. The association's original plan was to block off part of Main primarily as a safety precaution and invite community children to Trick or Treat. In order to prevent congestion, because of the pandemic, it would spread children out over a longer period of time. Their revised plan is having business owners put candy outside their business with a Halloween decoration and spread it out over a week's time.

Councilor Pruitt who lives in the area of the City that is traditionally blocked off for Halloween trick or treaters, has been talking to and gathering information from neighbors and property owners in her neighborhood. At this time she doesn't believe they will be seeking a City permit to close the streets. She said that they are exploring what things they can do to discourage the community at large from coming to the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> street neighborhood.

The members discussed numerous options without coming to a consensus on any one idea. All were in agreement that they weren't comfortable with the idea of trick or treating this year.

**Recommendations:**

For Councilors to work with non-government community organizations they belong to and within their neighborhoods to come up with alternatives to trick or treating.

• **Covid 19 Issues**

Councilor West is surprised at the number of businesses that don't have "masks required" signs up. She suggested that members of the Council and the Mayor canvas downtown businesses, bringing along mask signs and ask businesses to put them up. She said that many people are going to Missoula to shop simply because they feel it is safer because businesses are requiring masks and people are complying.

**Recommendations:**

None.

**Non-Agenda Items**

None.

**Adjourn**

Councilor West moved to adjourn. Councilor Bielski seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:05pm.