City of Conrad Council Meeting Auto-generated Transcript – 10-07-2026

October 6, 2026, 11:30PM

JW

Speaker

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.
Thank you everyone for coming.
Alderman.
Amber is not here today, she's not feeling well. So everyone else is present either in person or on the computer.
Everyone had a chance to look at the.
Minutes, the last meeting. I first time, oh yeah, I personally. You second on that? Oh, I second it. You second it. OK, very good. Any discussion on the minutes?
All those in favor?
Rogers.
Moving on to claims, everyone have a chance to move to claims. I move to approve claims in zero.
Sorry.
Any discussion on that?
All those in favor? Aye.

Carrie 30:54

Hi.

Speaker 30:59

Okay. We don't have any work on the ceiling. No correspondence.
Saying to be public comments, if anyone wishes to speak on anything.
I would prefer other than on the with items on the agenda, but if you've got something to say, we have time to do so.
Okay.
Then you want to be.
Individual final reports.

No, numbers were down a little bit this month.
Yeah, that's a long month. I'm not sure why, but it is what it is. We had 242 calls for service, 860 security checks, 1102 total calls.
We had 13 traffic warnings, 2 citations, and we had 13 traffic stops.
Other agency assist.
Think we have like 5.
Animal control dogs, cats, goats. Now we took a rattlesnake out to the city limits or beyond the city limits. That's about it. Where was that? I don't really know. It wasn't rattlesnake. Wasn't rattlesnake? No, we just had gopher snake and we took it out of town.
So, what else think on that? Why do you always find these unique things to have your way? Because it's interesting. This is pretty boring material. I still think the best one.

Carrie 32:49
And Carrie loves it.

Speaker 32:52
I still think the best one was the Buffalo.
Yeah.
Any questions?
Okay, everything is winterized for the season. Street cleaner is in heavy use picking up leaves and debris. Met with the state on their upcoming Main Street project. We went over location of utilities with them. There is a one thing I did learn from that meeting is
Seems to be there is going to be some match share on some of the.
utilities that they're going to have to kind of fix once they get done milling and everything or during the milling process. It's supposed to be.
From what we was discussed, it shouldn't be too much, but it's usually like a 75, 25, but. Us being 25. Correct. Yes. Yeah. And it's even probably less than 25, counting how many different. They add a lot more. They were thinking a few of our.
manholes in Main Street, they thought some of those were sanitary sewer, but they're storm sewer. So that helped us out quite a bit too, because then they don't have to do as much with those when they're.
The only thing that does kind of, I mean, they do say they're going to start 2027, but

I know we've already approved the budget. So hopefully it's not too much because, yeah, we kind of, we kind of wish knew that before, before the budget was approved. So we don't know the number anyway. We don't. So it could be.
So just one of those things. But yeah, they're going to be putting ADA. They can do it with the lights there. I did ask them about that. But there is a few curb stops in that area, especially one being for the Marias building that they're going to have to redo just because they have to take so many panels out to get the grade.
for the ADA is there on the corner. So let's see, October 19th will be alley cleanup. We got crosswalks in the school districts painted, as well as the cowboy hats. We've replaced a couple of lights in our downtown area on our lights here.
We have a meeting set up with DEQ about any upcoming recording limits or future testing that's needed for wastewater before submitting plans. So the thinking there is just to have some forethought because we're in the midst of trying to do a sewer plant rehab, but we also want to be conscious of what might be coming down.
a pipe as far as nutrient removal and things of that. So we just said, let's just get a meeting with DEQ and then they can kind of tell us. So hopefully.
That won't be too bad, but uh...
We have sent off our second PFAS sample to the lab. Just A refresher, our first one came back with no detect, so.
That's good.
And then we plan on cleaning storm drains with the jet truck if the weather allows us. I know it's supposed to kind of turn. Big thing is we got everything went right, so that's a big load off.
That's all I do.
Questions for David. Yeah, I got a question on the city parking lot out here.
Back just right out back here, yes, city parking lot. Yeah, OK. I know that picture of the other data park, and there's a little...
Whole, yeah, is there anything that could be done since this time of year? You know, we have looked at that before. I've talked, yeah, I've talked to a few asphalt people. And I'm assuming you're talking about the one kind of kitty corner from us. Right behind the first row of cars. Yeah. Yeah. I mean, we can try to put something in there, but I can guarantee you it's not going to last. It's going to squeeze out because it's just so cracked and just in disrepair.
went over some numbers with the last mayor. She was looking to want to redo that whole time because that's ultimately because you have to dig all that out. You have

to get all that broke up stuff out of there and redo the whole thing, which isn't impossible. But to do it right, we could put some cold mix in there and stuff, but I mean, it might help her a little bit and we could.
I can try and put some in for a while, but it's going to squeeze out. So, but I can put some in there just to see how long it will hold. But yeah. Ultimately, I've been told by two different asphalt people, the right way to do it is that you got to dig it all out.
And then a positive for your crew. Oh, good. Well, they're taking our chimneys and windows.
Yeah. On the back of the library. They took the one screen out and they had all that dirt and everything else, you know, crank compacted in there. Yeah, yeah. For years.
Yeah. You know, most guys would just take the broom and just throw it out of the street. Yeah. They clipped up all that spy, water, vacuumed it up. Yeah.
What's that? That's so nice of them. You didn't even know. I wasn't here. Oh, thanks.
I didn't know either, so it's okay. Well, thanks, Darryl. That's good. Yeah, no, we try to keep it clean, try to keep our work areas clean. So thank you. And I thought we got talked to Janice Farkel because I thought about that power panel or maybe putting it in the museum. Yep. But then when I watched your two guys pick that thing up,
Mhm.
Yeah. You know, it was heavy. Yeah, it's a solid piece of iron. So, we're good. That'll make up for getting me on the walking path. Rolling out the spring. It wasn't me.
That was my guys. And they probably did it on purpose. I'll write.
Yeah.
Questions a day.
Good thing.
All right, well, I have some August numbers for you guys as well as September. I know I missed you last month. I was at a conference in Reno with the Institute of Museum and Library Sciences. We had a good conference. And so I do know Lida was here and gave kind of our annual overall review. You guys hear a lot from me every month.
But if you have any questions about what she might have gone over, I'm happy to look into those for you as well. As far as statistics, our programming numbers are still up, mostly due to the adult programming that we have, including the two yoga programs that we are running, the two yoga programs in the library. But overall, usage and circulation is slightly down.
We're expecting that to continue that way, mostly because our, one of our colony

classes that visits, they have two classes that visit, they don't have transportation this year. So we're looking at different ways that we can get those students library materials.
Our solar panel project was completed. I was trying to get, Nancy has a photo of it that they sent her from the roof and I wasn't able to get it before I got here. It is not turned on yet. I'm waiting for Bozeman Greenbuild to come back and kind of just show me where all the equipment is.
and turn it on and then hopefully by that point we will be generating our own power to operate the library.
Cutbate job services still coming the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays. She is here from 9 to 3 about almost all day just for walk-in appointments. So if you know of somebody looking for resume help or job hunting, send them on over.
As of the beginning of this month, our children's fall programming schedule has begun. We start up our book delivery program, which is our daycare and preschool outreach. The Head Start class starts visiting every other week. Lego Club after school, pokémon Club switches to the fall schedule. And then Liz did receive a grant for a Dungeons and Dragons team starter pack. She's just waiting on those supplies to be delivered, and then we're going to try to.
open up that team program. And then finally, we are working on our next strategic plan. And so we do have a community survey out there. It is available on our website, ConradLibrary.com. We are encouraging everybody to fill out that survey, let us know what.
programs and services they appreciate from the library, what they would like to keep, what we could add to help better serve the community. I will also be sending more specific interview questions to the city council and the mayor. I would appreciate it if you guys could take a look at those.
We are trying to set up some focus groups for kind of different information gathering. So if you have any thoughts on those, look out for my e-mail and we would appreciate your feedback.
Questions are done.
Put your window project coming.
Are they going to do both windows or just the one? Both windows. We are looking at both windows. I did speak with John and we are, they offered to go ahead and cover up those openings right now with plywood just to make sure none of that glass gets broken. But

Yeah, it these, some of these things are a lot, take a lot more time than we would like, but we are excited to, yeah, get another means of egress and ventilation in that room for all the kiddos.
Well, I got to lose a bar because I go.
Yeah. We should explain why it's a completely fine. Yes. Yeah. I mean, as you know, it was a jail cell and now we have our kids in there. So we'd like to get them out if we need to.
Really want to keep them in there, but it would be nice to have some natural light and air flow as well.
Also, a lot of kids, it's that's true, helpful.
Does that have to be? I'm sure it's like big enough for Iron to get in. Yes, it will be it will be the code, yeah, for for egress.
Questions?
So I enjoy the discussion of action on North Central Montana Regional Water Association.
Which?
Darryl on the...
Am I not there? Jodi Elgard is on. Yes. Yeah, she is. Okay. And she hears.

Ross Hanson 44:04
Yep, yep.

Speaker 44:06
On Ross.

Ross Hanson 44:07
Jodi, Jodi, and I, this is Ross Hansen, are on the are on the call.

Speaker 44:14
Okay. I'd like to introduce myself. I'm Cheryl Curry in the audience here as one of your representatives on the Regional Water Board. I was appointed probably a dozen years ago when I was leading the economic development, the Fundary Regional Port Authority, and I've been on the executive committee since. So
I feel like we're all here to just answer any questions you guys might have, hopefully help you be able to understand what the project's about and feel comfortable with

where you may fit in it.
A lot of the concerns that have been expressed to me are cost, not going to happen. How are they gonna handle?
And things like, are we going to be metered or what's the size of the line coming down?
I heard another storm today that doesn't be too long.
Is that correct or just one? And there's also the issue of at one point they were talking about running a transmission line from Tiber along Highway 2 and then coming down. And the last meeting we had, there is another thought that they're going to drop it down below the Marius and come down and then back up to Shelby.
I think the biggest concern that most people have is...
How much is it going to cost and when possibly is it going to get done? I mean, we've heard 2028, 2030 products.
You know, the reality is, there's no water flowing in out of the finally.
I were down in any of this system at this point. I haven't seen it, but I.
And told the next pictures of a lot of a lot of piping going here and there, and no pumps, no nothing, no electronics.
So, the concern is, when and how much is it going to cost? So, Ross would probably be the one to answer most of the technical questions, and I really understand it, the when and how and why, because it changed a lot over the many years, and for many years we did not have funding.
to build. And then of course, it's such a large project, it has taken some time, but really the, it looks like we have a date, you know, and that it is. And so I guess I feel like Ross can answer almost every question between Ross and Jodi. And Ross is,
Not even though he's new in that position, he's been associated with the project for several years. And then of course, so has Jodi. So for, I feel like those two can answer most of your technical questions. Just as a point of reference, you know when this all started? I thought I saw a document back in 96.
Is that correct?
Thereabouts, I don't know.

Ross Hanson 47:27
It's right around there was the original, the original authorization of the water

compact was around 1996. But the authorization of the regional water system and as a project was 2002.

Speaker 47:28
That's smart.
Okay.

Ross Hanson 47:49
So, we've been we've been working on it since then. I guess I probably won't follow it in the exact order that you asked the questions, but I can, I can, I can, I guess I can start from as far as the size of pipe that will come to Conrad, that would...
be completely dependent on how much water you want to take. So if you look at all the water, if you were to take all of your water, that's likely going to be around a 16 to 20 inch pipe that'll head, that'll come into the town.
And it will be metered at the.
likely at the Conrad, at the pump station that exists right now that pumps water currently from Conrad down to Brady, that pump station will be reconfigured and actually used to pump
West over to your tanks up by your existing water treatment plant.
And it would be metered at that location.
Um...
Let's see. Yes, the original design, or the original thought was to run a West transmission main along Highway 2. We are in the middle of a preliminary design of a pipeline instead going on the south side of the Marias, as you stated.
And the reason for that is, is it's our way of looking at is this more, is it more viable? Is it more cost effective? And, you know, does it, does it provide some operational benefits? At this point in time, it sure seems like it's going to.
So, we're constantly looking at different ways to make this system more cost-effective and more beneficial to a greater number of people. So,
As far as time frame.
Totally understand why everybody, I mean, everybody's asking that same question.
As of right now, we are told that the water treatment plant will be firing up in March of 2028. So that's the best information that we have.
I know that there's a lot of contracts that are going out as far as pumps in the intake.
Final.

Final work that needs to be completed at the water plant as far as the media for the filtration process. They have about 5 miles of pipe left to get over to the Rocky Boy Reservation, which is a that's a that's a huge milestone.
That they're that they're pushing for.
So...
I don't have a crystal ball to tell you that this is, is that, is that going to happen? Could it be pushed? Those kinds of things. Our plan is to have water being flowing down that pipeline in March of 2028. Now, as far as the West
transmission main and getting water to the west over to Conrad and Shelby and the member entities on the west side. That will likely that will likely be 2030 just because there's a lot of stuff to do. There's a lot of miles of pipe that have to be put in the ground.
in order to get that work done. So it won't be on day one, but it will be as soon as possible after that fact. But it's just going to take some time to get that done.
I don't know if I missed anything. Costs, I suppose. I can let Jodi talk a little bit more about cost. There's a...
a lot of kind of things involved with that. So Jodi, you want to take that one?

Jody Hellegaard 52:02
Sure. I coordinated with Brad Kuhn with Triple Tree on cost. And there's, I guess, two pieces to the cost. There's the match obligation, which is your share. So 10% of the project federal funding we have to match and you will have a pro rata share of that. The number that I gave Brad was estimated at 4.3 million. He used that number in his analysis. And then the other number I gave Brad was a cost per thousand gallon of the 285. So when Brad did that analysis,
that he handed out in March and then again in September, where he comes down to the present value of the 20 years, he was using the numbers we provided so that 20 year cost with a full connection to the authority was the 11.
4 million. And then he compared that to what if we don't connect to the authority and we just have to maintain our own plant and the upgrades there and that came hit the present value of that cost was the 19 million. And then we looked, he also looked at because of that resolution has the 35% clause.
What if you use, you know, just a portion of the authority and that came in at the 29 million?
So Brad had numbers from us to do this analysis.

Speaker 53:38
So we have those numbers and that's been part of the equation in our logic to try and figure out exactly what we want to do.

Jody Hellegaard 53:40
Yeah.

Speaker 53:51
So then, so that for me to understand that, so that 11.
That's our cost to hook up. It's not the cost of when it's running, we're buying water.

Jody Hellegaard 54:06
No, no, that was just a, I'm sorry, go ahead, Ross.

Ross Hanson 54:07
No, so.
No, the 11 million, so the 4.3 is the, that's the pro-rata portion to connect to the system. So that would be the cost to connect to get water coming into Conrad. And then the other 11 million is
that would, that's kind of the cost of water coming in over that 20-year time frame. That's that would be the whole cost connecting and all the water for 20 years would be 11 million. That's that's what kind of what that represents.

Speaker 54:38
Ohh.
So then we'd have to take that number by our number of users, what we would charge our water users per gallon, more or less, right?

Jody Hellegaard 54:48
So, you would...
in a sense. So for the 4.3, you don't have to write a check on day one.
We could do what we've done with other members is we do like SRF bond funding. So part of your payment would be over 20 or 30 years.
at the whatever the current SRF rates, I think they're 2.75. So that's a monthly

amount. The connection vault that I think is a cost of Conrad, I'm not sure, remember Triple Tree put in for
a grant to get some help with the connection cost. So I don't know if that vault's covered in that because on Brad's sheet, yeah, it's gone on there at the bottom, install the vaults. I think he's got the vault covered and the cost of that, they're estimating is the $2.50
per household, like on the base.
So I think that the first item he's covered with the grant to the state, assuming that gets awarded, that cost is the 250. Yes, we'd have to take the 4 million match and then the increase from
We know that it costs more for you to buy the water than produce the water currently, and so that would be worked into your rate. And I don't have for you today what that increase would look like. We could work with you folks on how that could come together.

Speaker 56:38
So then, so then these three options are, they're all increases to our water users over the next those 20 years.

Ross Hanson 56:49
Yes.

Jody Hellegaard 56:49
Yes.

Speaker 56:49
That what, but so, okay, okay, so it does include the cost of the water.

Ross Hanson 56:57
Yes.

Speaker 56:59
OK, that OK.
So basically, what he's saying is if we chose to do both, it would be almost...
Not quite three times, but three times more expensive to the users of Conrad to go

with both options.
and double, almost double.
to totally not go with North Central.

Ross Hanson 57:27
That's correct.

Speaker 57:27
is what his numbers are predicting with what improvements we would have to make to our current infrastructure. I disagree with some of the numbers.
What's that?
Because our biggest cost, if we needed to do anything, would be our two transmission lines coming from the layer and some filter.
Filter stuff.
I hate to say it, but I don't see how it comes to that number over 20 years.
The hard part that I'm having a problem with is the anxiety and the comfort level is my problem. See, there's, we're not like the regular people that are getting onto this system. We have a stable, we have a stable water. Don't fail our water test. We haven't had a failed water test.
So, what is hard is taking a system that's proven and just dumping it to go with. That's hard. There's a lot of history behind that. I'm not saying either way or the other, but that's kind of...
Because we're not like all these, well, we're not like all these other places that are hard up for water. We're not, we're not them.
Ever since we put our intake into the deepest part of Lake Francis, we haven't had a problem. Now I know there might have been a knee-jerk reaction when we're in the lowest part.
And I get that, we did go in water restrictions. But now, especially this last year, I mean, no, I don't have a crystal ball, but that same water feeds all of that. I mean, so comes out of the mountains.
That's, I mean, I'm not saying, I'm not saying one way or the other. I just, I have a problem with a proven system and giving up on it.
And I don't agree with the cost of how much it costs. I think, in my opinion, it's been a little inflated in how bad our water system is. That's just my opinion. So I think that I want to, but.

That's, that's my, that's my comfort, that's what I'm, you know, now got a lot of equipment there sitting at.
you know, fiber, the warranty is already out on all the equipment, already up.
That, that rubs me in the wrong way a little bit, you know, I mean, I guess.
And every time it seems like we take it, because I've been on these meetings now for a long time, and it seems like every time we take a few steps forward, we have to take five steps back because everyone's not getting along. So I just wanted to put that out there from what I'm seeing. I'm not saying it's good water. It is. It is good water.
I just, we're not that hard up like other towns that have dire situations.
Now I don't want to miss the boat either, you know, I don't want to miss the boat. I get that too, but...
I don't know how much it's going to cost for peace of mind if you had two systems or if you took a percentage. I don't know. That's just coming from me, so there.

Carrie 1:00:45
Can I ask a question?

Speaker 1:00:45
I think there was another.
Well, actually, Wendy has a question. Yeah, go ahead. I just have a question for Dave.
Yep. When you said you disagree, just so I can understand what you were saying, when you said you were disagreeing with the cost, are you thinking that over the next 20 years that this is predicted, that you're saying their anticipated cost of improvements are inflated?
Yes.
I think so. Okay. I just wanted to make sure that's... Yeah. Well, if you remember, Wendy, when we thought we had a transmission line that we're going to have to replace it, granted a lot of stuff's happened since then, and it had $1,000,000, and I get a lot of stuff happened then. But what does that say? I mean, for 13, $14 million?
The transmission. Yeah. Is that for two names? I guess I don't. Yeah, that would be for two transmission, I'm assuming. Yeah. But once again, that would be the critical part of the infrastructure that would need to be replaced sooner rather than later. I'm not disputing that fact.
that 13 million that they're estimating. Well, but going forward too, you know, and I

know inflation and everything, but I don't know. Have you asked Brad? Have you asked him to?
Tuck into that more so? Well, these are his, these are their numbers. I know, but with your thoughts, just have you just...
That's the question. My expertise? Yeah, I mean, sometimes some people don't want to hear it. No, but...
I think it's a fair question.
One other questions I ask from him, but you know, so...

Carrie 1:02:27
I want to know, can you refresh my memory or just give me a quick synopsis as to if there, if David is saying there isn't anything, you know, that we have good water, what is the, what's the purpose behind this?

Speaker 1:02:43
We joined when we ran into water restrictions when our intake at the lake was at its pretty much its lowest point. So we were essentially running out of water and then they put a new intake into the deepest part of Lake Francis.
And there's.

Carrie 1:03:02
So we're fine now, right? I mean, Dave, you're saying there aren't any issues.

Speaker 1:03:05
I, I think so, but...
I don't think so, but I mean, here, I don't have a crystal ball though, Carrie. That's the other thing. I can't, you know, but as far as, yeah, our waters, here's, there's a lot of questions. What happens to our water sheriffs then? What happens to that? What happens to the people that are on our transmission line that have easements with us? I mean,
Probably could be, well, sorry, tough luck, but there's a lot of ins and outs, and that's why I think it's that's why there's a lot of things to think about. I don't think it could be a knee-jerk reaction.
That's just what I'm, that's, and I know we've been talking about it for a long time, but it's now it's come down to the brass tacks and there's a lot of questions that are

still not answered.
My memory serves me correctly. There was a...
back in 2004, 5 or 6, whenever that was. Well, prior to that intake going in, that's when all the compact was going on as well. I bet that, well, it's basin 41. So that's when all the compact was going on and the concern at that time,
which is still a legitimate concern, is what we were looking at for water availability down the road. I do believe that that's still, like in my mind, that's still a part of the concern, is we don't know what's going to happen with the canal company and where they get their water and how much they're going to.
you to get. And it's never at first everyone said it's a scare track thing, but it's really not if you look at the compact, the direction that that has authorized the.
The tribe to take control of so much of the water that feeds Lake Francis.
And that's part of the reason, or a lot of the reason that, you know, when the City of Conrad did this in, what, 2006 or whenever, 2006, I think. It started 6 and everything.
Yeah, and that was a lot of the reason for the 35% is because of the uncertainty.

Jody Hellegaard 1:05:00
Yeah.

Speaker 1:05:13
That the team was continuing to have.
all of our water coming from Lake Francis via the Canal Company.
And the intake was already going at that time because we couldn't get water when the lake would drop too low. We couldn't get water out of where we were used to getting it, below the lake, or that little whatever it is, that little hut is, underneath the road, that's where we used to get our water. And when the lake would drop,
Low, they'd have to dredge it, etcetera, to get water.
to Conrad's pumps to get it to our system. So the intake went in so that Lake Francis, when it dropped low, the city of Conrad could still get water.
And that was, you know, 25 years ago when that was put in. I'm assuming it's still working good. It was a pretty expensive system. Like I'm saying, I'm not disputing the fact that we need to make sure we have enough water, but now it's made it seem like, well, that's the most expensive, so we can't do that because the citizens will hate us.
How much, what bigger price do you put on?

just peace of mind. I mean, you know, that I guess that's kind of what I, you know. The safest route would have supplemental from North Central Ridge Water, and we keep running our system, but according to those numbers, that cost us the longest, you know. And that could be, I guess, but as far as I know, in the very near future, transmission lines, those are the only thing that
They're having another engineer look at the class of...
Dating our system.
No, I am.
Let's see if the numbers are somewhere in the ballpark of what Triple Tree came up with.
We can do that, we can have two engineers. That is something that.
If I'm not mistaken, we have currently loans and grants we're working on paying on our current bar system. Is that not correct?
Wait, I'm sorry, which product? What do we which product? No, we we're currently paying on loans that we have acquired for.
Right, yes, yeah. Is it if we were to take on the additional cost of...
or central region of water.
How would that affect our? We have an obvious debate. The loan isn't yet that we're considering taking on additional costs from our Central Regional Water.
I'm not going to sit here. I'm not an accountant. I'm not. I really not, but I'm just out there as part of my thought process and how do we repay those loans? And of course, anything we do to do is going to amount to a rating increase for all of our customers.
And we would have to go through much the same process that we went through on the raise water and sewer rates last year.
Cumbersome.
If we fence.
decided to go 100% with the North Central Region of Water, we would have to go through that process. And where I'm going with this is this is not a decision, and we've talked about it, that we can make overnight. It's going to take time.
And I know I talked to Jodi the other day on the phone and told her that originally we had hoped to maybe have a decision by the first part of November. Well, we can't we can't even.
no way we can do that. We just don't have time to send out the notices and publication. Now, if we were to actually go with this thing, we would have to...

Probably go through the same process we managed with the rate increases, where we notified everybody to have a formal public hearing. So this is going to take much trouble, I would imagine, probably well after the first year before we really come to any kind of conclusion on it. I think there
First.
More research we have to do to make an intelligent decision, let alone get the public input.
Just 2 questions. How much are the loans and when are they paid off? And then when you talk about notices and publications to join the system, what are the notices and publications? Well, the notices have, we have to mail rate increase, we have to mail to every citizen or every.
user, they notice that the rate is going up and telling what the rate is going to be.
Right, but that's not going to happen by joining the system. No, it's not. That's what I'm saying. It's like 2 years down the road, is that, right? Like when you said notices and publications have to go out, that you're going to increase rates. I'm just trying to figure out how that ties back to joining regional water.
Well, when there's not, that's not coming with the rate increase. No, but we would.
So I'm just, I was confused by that. I'm sorry, it's just a question. Okay. Yeah, no, I just want to clarify.
Form public hearing, just say we're going to go with you. The public is at this point.
Well, I mean, usually not required, but maybe it's something we need to do because we don't have very much public. I mean,
Yeah, and this decision is bigger than anyone in this, I mean, any of us. I mean, that's the reason for if you don't want them to have their input, then OK, but it.
Sorry, it's just.
OK, let's.
All this.
We have to have no matter what we do. I guess my question is, what the current system we have does cost us annually for water as opposed to going to Rocky Boy? What's your cost going to be to the city annually getting it to the pump? Are we getting it to the tank?
I can't tell. You know, when I tell you that, though, we've got the hard to say, we the city buy has water shares.
Well, that's the cost to get the water.
Plus electricity there, it helps get the water to the storage tank. Well, if you want to

see how much it costs us to run, we can run an expenditure report, a year-end report. We can see exactly out of water. How does that price factor? How is that price compared to? No one can, well, no one can tell you that because it's not running yet. I mean, I know you can plan it, but it's almost like, well, you can always locate. stuff, but until you start digging, then, oh, yeah, of course, you know, we got that and that and that.
And I'm not going to stay here because I am on the board for the maintenance of it and everything. And I'm going to do my damnedest to make sure that that's fine and everything. But.
We're only one vote, well, two, three, three votes, yeah.
Now, we can't control any rate changes, and you know. Right. And I'm not sure about the rate change. I just forget, what's the cost that we incur now to get water to the tanks or to your pumps, whatever, the same place that their water is going to be good? What's the price comparison between the two?

Jody Hellegaard 1:13:06
I think that's what Brad is trying to calculate on that increased O&M filter maintenance line, and then you compare the, but he tried to simplify it for folks. I think for Brad to have calculated the 377,000 increase, from what I recall of the city's books, you guys
do track like your distribution costs separate from your source costs. So I suspect those numbers are somewhere they just need to get tracked down.
that Brad used to do this, and he did this in March, so I don't know if he used the previous fiscal year. I'm assuming not a lot would have changed between the two fiscal years.

Speaker 1:13:53
So, couldn't he, I mean, if we asked him, we would think he could take that.
Well, it does, but tell us, OK.

Jody Hellegaard 1:14:02
I think he can ask. I can, we can work with him to answer.
He's tried to answer that question on the handout, but it just, you guys want some, you need it a different way also, is what I'm hearing.

Speaker 1:14:07
What's my water bottle?
I think what we need to say is tell me how much my water bill is going to go up.

Carrie 1:14:21
Yes.

Jody Hellegaard 1:14:22
In there, yeah, and then to look on the, I guess, just listening from afar, if there's...

Carrie 1:14:24
That, that's all that matters.

Jody Hellegaard 1:14:32
I would encourage you to get comfortable with what or what you do or don't need to do on your own plant and then how soon you need to do it and what does that do to your water rates and then your apple to apple comparison.

Speaker 1:14:48
Either way, it looks like either way, our water rates will have to increase to maintain either maintain our current facility or go with something different. Karla, what is your, what's your current rate per thousand?
Up.
Depends on when the 32 summer versus, yeah, but I think it's 325,000, I think.
Done.
I'll go get back to you. One more question for Ross and Jodi. Can you guarantee, Conrad, that we will get Tiger Water and we will not get Shelby Water or somebody else's water?

Ross Hanson 1:15:33
I will be.

Jody Hellegaard 1:15:34
Yeah.

Ross Hanson 1:15:35
I will guarantee you that, yes.
Shelby's water, if the concept we use Shelby water for blending, it will serve the northwest corridor only. So it'll be Shelby, Cut Bank and the people north of Shelby itself. That water will never come south.

Speaker 1:16:06
Maybe we can get kind of a list of questions that Conrad still needs to have answered and get those to Brad and to Jodi and let them knock out a few more numbers for you so that you're more clear on the specific questions.
Well, and it still might be a good idea. Maybe it's a November meeting or maybe it's a December meeting that we have. We send out notices with all our water bills saying on November X, we're at Norley Hall.
We're going to have North Central there. We're going to have answers to questions. Um...
Well, you want to have your public as educated as possible, that's for sure. And for you still have donating doubts, I know from talking to Jodi that when we provided the information to Brad for him to use, they were like our best estimates, but we bump them up so that it was going to be a worst case scenario instead of best case scenario. We wanted Conrad to have a...
We don't. I mean, I'm part of it too. I probably shouldn't. I'll just say it right now, though, but I'm 7 generations of my family in Fonduray County. So my heart and soul are here. I'm a climate high school graduate, and we want this to prosper. And so with that,
You know, we don't want a shock in three years when the thing turns on and we're like, oh my gosh, we are so far in the hole or gone bad. That's why, I mean, all the engineers have that in mind. They want this to be as accurate as possible.
And so we just need to get her specific questions answered so that you as council can take them to the public so that they can understand. And when you make your decision, you are confident that it is the best decision. You know, looking at the sheet, it looks like that sounds 100% sounds like the best decision.
but financially, but maybe there's other things in there. You know, we just, we need to make sure that you're confident with it. One other question, comment that's kind of been melon or I've heard that if Connor chooses not to go with North Central

down the road when we need grants,
loans forgiven or whatever. Is the state going to say, shame on you, you didn't. We're going with big guys, you figure it out. I mean.

Jody Hellegaard 1:18:56
I can speak to what I've seen. I know for sure that Sunburst and Chester put applications in to improve their source. In the case of Chester, it was for the items at their water treatment plan and maybe the transmission from the lake. And then in the case of Sunburst, it was their wells.
And you were correct. The state said no, you have a regional water option. We spent a lot of money on that. We'll entertain grants that will help your distribution system, but we won't, we don't want to fund something we felt like we've already paid for a solution for you.
I've sat in on long-range planning committee hearings at the state, and Paul Tuss, who's from Havre, is well aware of the project and has made the comment that he wants to make sure that the state is wise in its resources. And so
I can't say what they'll do if Conrad were to apply to get their grants for their transmission line and choose not to participate in North Central. I can only share, I mean, those two scenarios and what I've heard at testimony.

Speaker 1:20:19
You had a question. Yes, I have a quite naive question, I think. Is the wastewater issue going into Hunter County?
like being factored into this at all. I know.
Waste water being inserted in aquifers near Lake Francis.
Is there anything around that calling and putting in right injection levels, right? I mean, I know when I did not stay very up to date on that, but the last time I was in on it, people are like, well, how do you know it's not going to leak into Lake Francis? We don't have any guarantees on that. And so is.
that being taken into consideration at all.
A lot of things to think about. A lot of good things to think about. I mean, as far as public opinion, people don't like that. And that could be a good impetus to move to the other side.
Um...
was brought up and maybe we should produce a list of questions that we could give

to North Central Regional Water to further clarify this. And I think maybe that would be the best way to go at this point.
Bye.
Hagen Scholar, our former FO, brought in a list of questions 3 pages long. He has some of them are valid, some of them are not, but that is an example of some of the issues that people are seeing, and some of it has to do too with our internally.
We pay a portion of our salaries to individuals based on our water rates, and 20% of those there, and so forth. And that's the way cities do business. They charge the people who are doing the work.
the benefit of having the system pay for it.
And that's something else we need to address internally. How are we going to do that if we're not receiving?
Wonderful.
I am giving.
the income that we would normally have gotten.
Well, if I remember right, so the way we as Conrad determine our rates is our costs involved, and so your costs would be changing, but there was still costs. You know, I mean, I'm sure that Brad in his in his figuring figured out the cost for your
your water shares with the canal company and that, that's part of your base rate plus the crew and all that. So, you know, I mean, there would maybe would be different pieces to the formula, but you know what rates, yeah, I know, there's lots of moving parts. See the line here.
Yeah. So for our billing, just to let you know, so in the summer months, we get an allotment up to 10,000 gallons. So, and that for a base rate of $38.04, basically. Then anything over that in the summer, it's $1.30 per thousand over. Then in the winter, you get an allotment of 6,000, I believe.
Four 1000, yeah, or thank you, 4000, and then anything after that is $3.15, so it varies kind of, you know, by how, what season it is and kind of, and would regional water be doing that sort of thing, where we potentially change the rate winter summer, like we currently do, so it would be one rate.
As I understand it, yes. Is that correct, Jodi? The rate is the rate, correct, year round?

Jody Hellegaard 1:24:29
Right. Yeah, we weren't doing, we weren't, well, there will be a base rate and then a rate for above that base, but not a seasonal rate type scenario.

Ross Hanson 1:24:31
Yeah.

Speaker 1:24:43
So, the city of Conrad gets charged for anything over our allotment then, basically?

Jody Hellegaard 1:24:51
Your allotment is planned. Go ahead, Ross. You've done more work on that allotment thinking than I have.

Ross Hanson 1:24:58
So, the way that'll work is you'll have a you'll have a minimum.
minimum allotment, daily allotment that you basically pay for in your base rate.
Throw you, I'm just gonna throw numbers out. Don't take these, take these with a grain of salt. So say your base rate is...
Bum.
Thirty-five dollars a month.
and you pay that $35 a month, and that $35 a month has a certain volume of water daily use that's allocated to that. Until you go over that daily minimum allocation, that
you don't pay any more. Once you go over that daily, then you that then the volumetric rate kicks in and you pay for the the the amount over that daily minimum.

Speaker 1:25:47
Mm.

Ross Hanson 1:26:00
Does that, does that make sense?

Speaker 1:26:02
So we'd have to factor that in. If we chose to give a break in the summer, we'd have to factor all of that in all of our rates. We just, yeah, we just work backwards. That's how that came up with those rates to start with. You had X amount. So you're saying that.

We have to purchase X amount of gallons, whether we use it or not, to keep the system flowing. But we don't get charged for more then? Yeah. You do. So if they charge us for the overage, how do we how do we combat that with the people?

Carrie 1:26:35
Yeah.

Speaker 1:26:40
with our citizens, I guess. I guess we have to go on history and say on an average July, this is how many gallons go through the system. So basically keep our same system and then, okay, yeah, you'd have to keep that. Okay, yeah, yeah, yeah. I gotcha. I mean, you would still use our meeting gallon, our metering system.

Ross Hanson 1:27:00
Yes.

Carrie 1:27:00
I just think there's too many questions that need to be asked and get answered before anything can proceed with this.

Speaker 1:27:10
So, but as long as we've got you, can you explain, Ross, the chlorine versus chlorine or chlorine you use versus chlorine we use?

Ross Hanson 1:27:22
So, yeah, so you guys operate on a free chlorine system?

Speaker 1:27:22
That makes fence.

Ross Hanson 1:27:27
So, the regional water system is going to operate on a chloramine system.
So, basically, how you create chloramines is you take a free chlorine.
solution and you add liquid ammonium sulfate.
Ammonia.

Speaker 1:27:44
Yeah.

Ross Hanson 1:27:45
And by virtue of adding ammonia, it converts it to chloramine. And the reason why regional water systems or large systems use it is because it's a longer lasting secondary disinfectant.

Speaker 1:27:46
Good.

Ross Hanson 1:28:00
So that's why the regional water system is going in that direction. So say you guys were going to continue to use your water plant and we were going to supplement water from the authority.
We would have to then, there's only two things we can do. We would either have to go to your water plant and add liquid ammonium sulfate before it goes out the door to your free chlorine system and convert all of your water to chloramines so they can blend in the distribution system or blend in the tank.
And go down and feed the community, or we would have to take all the water that you're getting from the authority.
and you would have to push it past break point again with free chlorine and convert it back to a free chlorine system prior to blending with your water. So there's a chemical conversion that needs to occur if you're going to blend these two sources.

Speaker 1:29:04
So is there any difference of opinion, the chlorine versus the chlorine, what's better health wise? Or is that a fair question?

Ross Hanson 1:29:13
Well, yeah, that is a very fair question. So a free chlorine system.
All disinfectants create a disinfectant byproduct.
Only some disinfection byproducts are regulated. So you have haliacetic acids and trihalomethanes. So those two are the regulated disinfection byproducts and they're

directly associated with free chlorine systems.
If you convert to chloramines, one of the another really good reason why regional systems do this, when you convert to chloramines, there is no regulated disinfection byproducts in a chloramine system.
So a lot of places will use for their primary disinfectant up at the water plant, you'll use free chlorine because it's a highly effective primary disinfectant.
They'll get through that.
treatment process, and then they'll quench it with liquid ammonium sulfate, which converts it to chloramines and stops the disinfection byproduct of trihalomethanes and helioacetic acids from being formed.
So you remove that regulatory concern of disinfection byproducts.
which I'm sure Dave is very familiar with.

Speaker 1:30:54
Back here.
I mean, I guess what action were you looking for on this? Well, we need to do some more research, I think.
Like, we have to do a motion or we don't.

Carrie 1:31:10
It needs to be tabled.

Speaker 1:31:11
Yeah.
It's just discussion, yeah.
We know.
Excuse me, my question would be, how do we or do you think that we will come up with a list of questions to get to those people? Should there be a committee or just everybody that's in the room write down every question they have and submit them?
Maybe or? That's part of it, yeah. Yeah.
And actually, I also referred this to our city touring, Daniel, back there.
And he is currently going through all of the original documents to see where we stand and what we.
really to give us more direction on the direction in which we need to move.
No one.

So, if I make a motion to simply, I'll get there.
I move to move forward with this discussion by.
presenting a list of questions to North Central and
Also, to possibly...
Council meeting to Norway Hall and have a public hearing during that meeting.
Motion and a second. Any further discussion?
All those in favor? Aye.

Carrie 1:33:05
Hi.

Speaker 1:33:07
We will get you a list of questions.

Ross Hanson 1:33:11
Alright.

Carrie 1:33:12
By when?

Speaker 1:33:12
Alright, yeah.
Doty.

Carrie 1:33:16
By when? What's a date that this? I think we need a date.

Speaker 1:33:24
I know that wasn't included in the motion, but... Soon, soon, as soon as possible. I mean, I get that you guys want an answer, but I hope you understand too that we're...
Big decision, yeah, yeah, and most of us were not involved in this at the inception, so there's a lot of catching up to.
You to make an intelligent decision.
We will get you an answer of a set of questions and things we thought we can.

Ross Hanson 1:34:01
Okay, well, thank you very much for the council, mayor, everybody's time. This has been good conversation. Certainly look forward to getting those questions and we'll get those.

Speaker 1:34:11
Yeah.

Ross Hanson 1:34:15
We'll work with Brad at Triple Tree and we'll get all answered to the best of our ability and get the information back to you folks to get out to the public.

Speaker 1:34:28
Thank you. We appreciate your time. Thank you.

Carrie 1:34:31
Thank you, Ross.

Ross Hanson 1:34:31
Yep, thanks a lot.

Speaker 1:34:32
Yeah.

Jody Hellegaard 1:34:35
Bye.

Speaker 1:34:37
I'm going to be a bigger part of those conversations with Brad and them too. So just want to let you guys know.
Alright, when we are two.
There's some action on the swimming pool report and revenue.
Anyway, in your packets, I believe you have some information on what we're...
What we're taking in and what we're spending, we all know that the swimming pool

here is a black hole that we limit every year. It is a public service and it's something we want to keep going.
The question we have is, do we want to try and increase our rates for
Mission, swimming lessons, and so on, and while we're at it, we might want to look at some of the other.
and so on that's.
We incur as a as a spur shot, excuse me, in the city.
Anyway, thoughts on that?
Could you give us the numbers on what the report came out with, just so that we can?
Just like the revenue. Yeah, how it felt. Routing this much, you paid this much.
Everyone knows it's a money loser. Like the 38,990 13.
Oh, that was 15.
Warren.
Thanks.
And then revenue was just over 15,000. So that puts the net cost 30. That does not include, I think Kim's notes on there say that somewhere, that does not include the loan payment that we just started making for the splash park.
for $13,000 a year. So that's not on there. It also won't include some of the other costs that we've incurred.
having to do with the slack part. The porta pie that is necessary when the pool is closed if the slack part is known.
and that was around $205 a month for three months. Then there's also the electricity that will incur for the new light that was put in for the splash park.
And then also looking forward to the next spreadsheet will be a $60,000 expense.
for the $8,000 loss this year will be closer to 100,000 for 2027-28. And the next little spreadsheet has to do with what our full costs are right now, what other towns similar to our size.
that have a pool, what their costs are, what they're charging people. I know it's not going to offset $100,000 loss, but it can help take a bite out of some of it. If we were looking to increase the fees, the pool fees have not been increased for
18 years, 19 years, 19 years. And 19 years ago, it went from $2 to $3.
And I think, or maybe that was 19 years ago is when it went from $60 for an individual pass to $65 for an individual pass.
Just don't seem to be.

looking at anything to try to offset the expense portion of the pool. I know that the pool notoriously, historically, is a money loser. By how much exactly is there a cap or we're just going to continue to bleed money at the expense of
what exactly, other people's budgets within the city, within the general fund to cover that. So in that same realm, do we need to look at business license increase or job license increase? Those things also have been neglected for a really long time. Although it's saving the city of Conrad, the citizens of Conrad money, with they don't only pay $4 to get their dog licensed, or they only pay $3 to get into the pool, the city of Conrad's expenses keep increasing with no realistic
attempt to offset that by the revenue that's brought in.
As much below.
But just selective, I was thinking the pool, the revenue could be down too, which may be costing down because it's not open like it used to be. I mean, it's not open as long, it's not open as many days, it's not open on the weekends. And I understand that's a staffing issue. And then also, what revenue do we make on the ball fields? And I have that exact same question, so that is a that is a major loss for us as well, so, so I...
I just think it's a thing that we can give to the community. I mean, I get that maybe there's expenses and maybe we make sure we cover the lifeguard salaries and all of that, but to raise the rates so that maybe some people don't go swimming or don't go do that activity.
I don't want to deter someone because we increase the rates to go to the pool. But if we have to, if we have to make up $100,000 loss for the swimming pool and the resurfacing and all of that, whose budget then out of the general fund does that come out of? Do we have to raise the taxes? Do we need more tax money revenue to come in? How are we going to offset that? Because
The salaries, if we wanted to increase the hours that the pool is open, if we could hire 10 more people or six more people or whatever, you know, not have swim team, be lifeguards so that we have weekends, it's...
Where?
My question is for all the towns and cities that have closer pools permanently, what was their breaking point? I'm not saying close the pool, by the way. I'm not saying that. I'm just, what, what, what finally was like, geez, Louise, who can't just, I mean, which for the community, but geez, Louise, I, that's just a question. What made them all of a sudden finally be like? I don't think to be sure, but I would expect it was

probably some catastrophic throw here in the pool.
Cost too much money, and they just, yeah, like very well, yeah, yeah, we don't have that, unfortunately, no, no.
Yeah, bye.
one situation where they had a catastrophic failure and they even got a significant grant from the state, but the additional cost beyond the grant was so excessive that They haven't up the grant. They couldn't come up. So, Carrie. I'm curious. I know a lot of free passes are given to needy families to get into the pool. And if that is the case, then you wouldn't hinder those children from the opportunity to spend time at the pool.
A lot of the families that are using the pool.
I still could afford to pay more.
If their parents are stopping at the coffee shop and picking up three drinks on the way to the pool, then certainly they can pay a dollar or two more per child to get into the pool for an afternoon. That's just my opinion.
While looking at in the whole scheme of things, say you raised it to $5 a day, that's going to bring you in 700 more dollars.
If you raise, if you raise the family pass from ninety-five to even 200.
that's going to bring you in 1000 more dollars. I mean, it's, I know every penny counts, but in the whole schema thing, it's not.
it's not going to bring you in a whole lot of revenue. So I think, yeah, what Julie's wondering, I'm not trying to speak for is just, yeah, if that's the direction are we going, should we just not care then how much we lose? If I mean, you know what I mean, if that's the, well, no, I'm not trying to mean it, but it's kind of, you know.
But I would argue you're putting all the money in a lot of field. Yeah. What do you get out? I know. Yeah, no, I know. And then, I mean, you're right, $5, that doesn't do much. Yeah. But then, yeah, can you just...
Yeah, this is how we're going then, and that's fine. It's just it's a big loss, I guess, is whatever. Do you still require all of the members of the swim team to have a full pass? Yeah, yeah, yeah.
If we do. Which is appropriate. Yeah, absolutely. Which is probably half of the asset, sir. I think it's probably at least half. Well, but then the funniest, so then come the weekend though, that's all of our staff too. So then we lose revenue on the back end. And that's why we can't have a pool open because all of our lifeguards are.
Yeah. I just have one small comment kind of going off of what Karla was saying. I

think the swimming pool, especially for a small rural community, is a community service. Very much like the library. The library doesn't lose money. The library costs money to provide services to the community.
I think that's the same with our public pool. And it is a trend nationwide. I actually just read an article about how pools, I think it was specifically talking about Texas, but how there are no more public pools anymore. They're all privatized. And so you can make people pay whatever you want, but then most of the people aren't swimming.
And I think that would be a really tough thing to do for our little calendar in the summer. I like that. I like what you just said. Yeah, that was pretty good. I'm going to give you that. So as a small community, we want to bring in young families, right? Who have kids, ballpark, library, swimming pool.
If you don't have those things, you're not going to be encouraged to move through this. I mean, there's nothing here to break people.
So, we want example of the families, but I have kids and they have enjoyed their too, so, and of all fields, like if you have swimming meets here, brings in revenue for the community, maybe it's not the city, but the city gets taxes from the people who live here.
I mean, that's so you can't look at it just a complete loss because we live here. If you're losing people out of the community, you're losing the revenue too.
And on any given night at the ball field during the season, there are always three to five teams from out of town. And yeah, they might not stop at the city of Conrad and pay their buck to get into the city, but I'm telling you, they are buying gas, they're in the grocery, they're at the restaurants. So the city of Conrad is benefiting from all these out of town people.
I think way more than the swimming pool.

Carrie 1:47:05
I think it would just be a smart move.
I mean, raising it to $5 is nominal, and it might only bring in so much, but that money could be used to help pay for a lifeguard here or there. I mean, that money isn't just going to go to waste. So I think, I definitely think if we haven't raised the rates in 19 years,
It's time. It doesn't have to go up to 10, 15, $20, but it's time to raise the rates a little bit to help offset some of the expense.

Speaker 1:47:46
So what like Shelby, I don't see like Shelby, I see like Red Lodge on here, which I don't consider that even comparable to Con Road.
Just was curious what, like, Shelby needed that thing, and I know that they have businesses who pay for three per day, but that too. The 3 that I have listed are towns that are close to our size that are city-run pools. You mentioned Shelby, they get big donations from businesses to sponsor things.
We don't have sponsors.
the city carries 100% of the burden. Same with the baseball field. You go to Shoto to the baseball games and they have a big plaques on the outline in the sign with people in businesses, either the team or field or the concession stand or something along outside. So they are getting outside money.
The Lions Club, the Lions Club. Yeah, the Lions Club runs the pool. So they do fundraisers at specific to for them to cover the cost of the pool. So it's not run by the city.
These are examples of it being run by the city.
And honestly, I didn't talk to the admins in any of those cities to see what their bottom lines are compared to ours, what their costs are versus their income for those types of things that I have listed, the dog licenses, the business licenses, and then the swimming pool fees.
We're the only one that has a chicken thing, by the way. We do, we have like 20, I think, or 26 people that buy chicken licenses, so that's a whole different thing. That's new. So that's the newest of the fee schedule on that list, I believe, is the chicken fee. that was lended at $25. The other things, I'm just looking at revenue avenues for the city to offset the major expenses that are incurred and just we did a big raise for the swimming pool staff so that we could maybe attract more kids and
you know, get in line with other entities that are paying in this agricultural community. You go work for a farmer and he's going to pay a kid 18 bucks an hour. Well, who's going to come work for the city for 11? If they're going to go work for the ag guy instead, and all bails are very dropped. So
To be competitive, we raise the rates, and that's great, but...
We didn't offset it by increasing the pool fees a dollar or a dollar and a half or whatever. I mean, I'm not trying to gouge the community, but how realistic is it to think, well, we'll just pay the same rate we paid in 2007 just because it's nice for the

community. There's nothing else in the city that costs us.
Things that did in 2007. Everything has increased in price, so electricity, chemicals, wages, insurance, gas. Well, gas right now. It's not like gas, like natural fruit. Oh, the natural gas will heated. Sure, sure. So I mean that the increase is the wages.
Overall, there's been maybe some blinders. Yes, as a community service, yes, we are. We're not, I'm not suggesting we raise the rates so that we can offset $100,000 loss. I'm just saying we need to maybe raise the rates in accordance with how much our have increased just in the few years that I've been here. I think the first year I was here, the loss was in the $21,000 range. And now we're in the 38, but that doesn't include the 15,000 that we have to pay out for the splash park. So we're back up to the 52,000 again.
I wouldn't really call that a loss. I mean, I think that was a commitment that we made. It's an expense. It's an expense. So if that expense keeps growing and there's no income to try to offset it, then eventually the tax base will have to be hit and then everybody pays it, not just swimming pool people.
Is that fair? I don't know. Well, we're all paying for the ball fields. We're all paying for the parks. We're all paying for our streets, for our lights. It's part of being in a city and paying for those services, even if my kids never played ball, but I don't, I'm not opposed to my money going to the ball fields.
It's just part of being in a community in a city.
I say kudos to your finance department for bringing the question to council, but there can still be some offset without making the services go away and truly two dollars is
I mean, there's three, whatever it is. Yeah, I mean, I think that's totally, I think that's reasonable and certainly something to look at. If it helps for the lifeguard increase, then wait, at least you won't lose more next year, you'll lose the same amount. Right, right. And that's my thinking behind all of this. It's not.
Not to, oh, let's offset every expense, but just to maybe keep up with the rate that the expenses are going up with some of the fees that we do charge without gouging the community. My kids were swimmers. My grandkids are swimmers here. So I love going to the pool. I think it's a great
community thing. The Public Works has done a great job keeping it as nice as it is.
I just don't know how much laid out before we have to try to stop it a little bit. Do we have to have a for any rate? We would have to have a hearing on this, yes. By the way, Cut Bank and Shelby both have higher rates than us.

Okay, well, cut back and shopping, those are what city-run pools? Yeah.
OK, all those tools paid for that through tax base, through taxes, or any what?
Just, I know it's not really very popular with a lot of people, but it's just an option we can look at is.
A cents a dollar.
Or taxes.
Or, you know, for cool operation, we'll review that, and then keep them.
and then keep the rates where they're at. So you're, you know, you have, let's say a dollar per dollar resident coming in, or dollar residents are coming in. I think we just, you know. Yeah, I don't know. That'd be something maybe to ask Jodi to look into about the whole process of adding.
You know, and I'm pretty sure it's a public hearing and we have to jump through all the same hoops, but maybe more because if we're assessing some sort of tax burden to the whole county or just to the residents of Conran, there would have to be maybe more.
Paperwork.
I'm sure there's things that we can additionally love it for and things we can't, and you know, through the budget. Yeah.
And I get it. I mean, I guess I didn't know what you were proposing. I'm just looking to maybe bring, increase the fee a little bit so that we can offset some of the rising costs that we are incurring at the pool. And part of it is adding the splash park.
And part of it is the wages for the lifeguards and the upkeep that has gotten so expensive. Just the resurfacing, adding, you know, $60,000 to the to the budget to do that.
And...
Yeah, there hasn't been a fee increase in almost 20 years.

Carrie 1:56:13
What does it take to increase the fees?

Speaker 1:56:18
What was that, Carrie?

Carrie 1:56:19
What does it take to increase the fees? Does it have to be...

Speaker 1:56:25
Over here.

Carrie 1:56:26
a public hearing to increase the fees at the pool.

Speaker 1:56:27
Publicer.
Yes, ma'am.
It can be during a council meeting though. Yeah. Yeah, just a regular resolution.
Like they can't say tonight, let's ever up everything by $5 and we vote for it and that happens.
Posted as such.
And if we're going to do it and we need to increase licensing fees or something, maybe we need to look at it as a whole.
That's part of the logic of putting it. But that's not what I'm saying. The swimming, the swimming pool piece is what is the discussion tonight. I just wanted them to be tied in. These are the few things that the city takes in besides.
the tax base and the water and sewer rates. These are the few things that we have to offset some of the other expenses that the city incurs in the budget. And I just think it's maybe neglectful to not look at the fees.
than every 15 to 20 years. And I think every few years, everything's changed. I think it's in the code book. You guys have to look at them every two or three years. And it's been discussed. They've been discussed before and council had, yes, for the pool. I know they've been discussed when I've been on council and it was decided not to increase those fees. So they have been discussed.
If it may be through the budget process or what?
But it might have been over 10 years ago, but they have. I mean, that's where I'm at. And I don't want to gouge the community. I mean, I know that it's hard for some people to come up with the 65 bucks to do an individual pass or whatever it is. And that's why we have such a lovely charity that Tiffany and her mom are
You know, and so there are options. It's not like we're trying to keep people away from the pool. We certainly want to get as many people there as we can.

Just cost them more and more every year, but yeah, the community likes it, so we'll go forward, but yeah, I just...

Carrie 1:58:57
Well, I think raising it just even to $5 isn't going to be a deterrent. I think people can swing that.

Speaker 1:59:07
Well, some of the cost, what, $4 to council?
It's $5, 3 bucks for the day pass, which is in all day, so you can swim from 1:00 to 5:00 and come back and swim again from 7 to 9.
So, that's...
Six hours of swimming for four dollars. If you raise it $1.00, right now it's $3.00. That's pretty good. That's a lot of entertainment for 4 bucks, I mean. If we were to go ahead with this, shouldn't we consider for three and six?
If we were to go ahead with this, shouldn't we consider increasing the individual day pass and absolutely, and so on? I mean, if we're gonna open this can of worms, we probably ought to bump all of them off some.
And my listing for that and showing what some of the other, and I know some of the other towns, like you're right, Red Lodge, that's not comparing apples to orange, apples to apples here because we're not in the same financial, yeah, that Red Lodge is. We're in a pretty low-key farming community. But
We don't have to go that high, but we need to think about where are we charging for swim lessons? Well, we just raise everybody's pay. So we're not, we don't seem to be charging enough to take into consideration how many people are doing swim lessons and how much time they put into it. The lesson itself is 1/2 an hour, but it takes
Probably an hour for each group.
Um, and you know, it's just...
Taking into consideration what the expenses are beyond, you know.
We want to go with it, guys.
We can, Kim and I can put our heads together and do the math and work up a proposal to what maybe they could be without, you know, we don't want to gouge the community. We won't want to discourage anybody from coming, but I think we also need to try to

make up for some of the things expenditure wise that we are incurring.
Splash park is free, but we're still paying in $15,000 a year for it. So, but that's been added to the budget without any.
Well, I just like that, once the golf, the frisbee golf course is in, there'll probably be some upkeep that the city will have to do. Anytime we get added things, that's just. proposal. And if we put it to another meeting, we can take a look at some of the other fees as well. I mean, some of those haven't been increased for almost as long or some of them longer.
I think it makes sense to do incremental increases more regularly. I think it would feel more like gouging if you were to.
Double it every 20 years or whatever, whatever it takes to help it. Um, if it's a dollar every year, you know, how 50%, whatever it's.
Easier to sign it.
Well, can I get the motion to continue the inspection or actually let's reprise that.
Who?
but with Julie and him to do further research and help with an actual proposal so we can have a public hearing. Okay.

Carrie 2:03:06
So, move.

Speaker 2:03:10
To do that, though, they they would it would have to be a discretionary action, then we would move to move forward with the public. I mean, then we do it. Right, right.
We already go to the next step. Thank you.
Thank you.
I'm in touch with you guys, and we'll try and get others to question, yeah.
Thanks, guys. Bye.

Carrie 2:03:50
Hi.

Speaker 2:03:51
Are you leaving out?
Next statement is the qualification of that. We've known this has been coming down

the road for a while. We've agreed it on the budget. We need to initiate the process and the process requires us to pay $2100 and $4.24 cents.
Then the second installment will be NASA to start the process. And the second installment will be 60% or $6326.60. And then the final, it's delivered and the final code is approved will be another 2020 percent. So 5 minutes before this evening.
It is permission to proceed with the contract.
Stupid voice.
American Legal Publisher.
Questions guys, so will this require us to have?
We're going to get a new one of these green books. I know, but one of them, one of the last times we had to go through all of the, it took hours and hours. This company is a little more astute in doing that, from what I understand.
They don't require as much labor on our partners.
if I'm wrong here, you're the last, but you went down.
Yes, we find that in the past. Yeah, I think most of it is just going to be integrating the new ordinances and whatnot.
There's something we really need to do. Do we know others that have used them?
Well, actually, we were using American Legal previously. They recently partnered with ICC. Part of the reason why I found their services more appealing is because they have...
a module called Pub Docs, which is going to allow us to basically post all of our public documents online for everyone.
So, ordinances, resolutions, licenses, and whatnot will all be transparently available on the internet.
This is paper.
Should have asked for discussion, but I think we've got that. Gary, are you there?

Carrie 2:06:41
Yes.

Speaker 2:06:43
Did you catch the motion?

Carrie 2:06:48
No, I did not.

Speaker 2:06:52
The motion is we intend to move forward with the documentation process. Starting with the.
Personal stronger employment, 100 hours a year.
One $104.00 and twenty-four cents.
We all voted, yeah.

Carrie 2:07:15
Oh, how did I miss all of that? I was reading it. I'm so sorry. I...

Speaker 2:07:19
You, 'cause you're sometimes it's a little delayed, but I didn't then.
Okay.
This is the Chamber of Commerce's request.
Retreat.
Okay.
close on Main Street, of course, and do that on the 31st, actually, holiday.
Chamber requests for a trunk retreat.
Any discussion? All those in favor? Bye.

Carrie 2:08:12
I.

Speaker 2:08:23
Next on the agenda, discussion and action on the town hall date for CBD and PCSR. The thought was back in May that we would continue that matter until now. A lot of things have changed since that time, which department is essentially fully staffed. We have two co-certified officers, 3 actually, and one in the academy and two more academy slots slated for the last two officers and after the first of the year. So the question is, do we really need to go forward with any further discussion on
Yeah.
Watching.
Andy, I'd like you to comment. Sure, we want to know. Is there any reason? None. We have a good program. We have good people. We're all working together. It's a really,

really kind of a unique thing. It's been really, really good.
So I never could even imagine that it would have turned out this well in the short, shorter period of time. So we're hitting pretty good. A lot of credit goes to you because you pulled this thing together. You know, you were able to hire people when nobody felt we could hire people. You fired.
What would you give me, even though we've had to, you know, let some go, but we still stay the end of the game, so yeah, we're doing well.
I don't think, I don't think it's warranted at this point, but that's not really to me. We were never ever able to answer the question why we wanted it in the 1st place. So.
Well, I mean, I think it was Amber who really wanted it and she's not here tonight, which.
I didn't hear anything from her, but...
Seeing no further reason, I make the motion not to have a meeting. Second.
Any discussion on that, Carrie?

Carrie 2:10:48
Yeah, I wanna...
I think that somehow, and I don't even know if this is a viable option, but I feel like, and I hold myself accountable to this as well, but I feel like this all kind of came up out of a knee-jerk reaction and there was more emotion behind it than there was. thought. I know for me personally, sitting down with Andy and discussing and learning, and I really came away with different insight. What I would like to see happen is I feel there needs to be some sort of a...
a parameter checklist or something to indicate when the need is there. Why would we even consider this? Is this box checked? Is this box checked? Are we down to three officers? And it really comes down to also how does the chief of police feel things are going? If they're concerned,
Then, as council, I think we would owe it due diligence to investigate, but to...
I would like to figure out a way to prevent this from happening again without some sort of, again, checking the boxes and figuring out is it warranted? Did this happen? Did this happen? Did this happen? Then yes, we need to have a discussion or hold a town hall meeting. I don't know if that's possible, but that's my two cents on it.

Speaker 2:12:19
The only scenario that I could see that would warrant reconsideration is that, for

whatever reason, the entire police department resigned and we had no other choice. We were down to two people, first in the mirror, not police down. This is the cycling thing I've said.
Probably dozen times in conversations like that. The sheriff is currently hiring again. It's just the plight of a small town police department. We end up doing this. We end up training up officers and for whatever reason, sometimes they go for a lot more action. I want better equipment. I want
There are benefits. You know, we're on a par with the county, so there's really no likelihood that there's going to be a mass exodus just to go to the county for payer benefits. So it would only be for somebody going outside the agency. Right now, I think all of our guys are pretty much good. Well, most of them are local here.
First off, their vest is in the community, and they plan on staying here.
One too, I think at any point, any citizen can gather people together and have a town hall meeting and do their research and come up with reasons why we should, why we shouldn't, costs or whatever. But should the city be doing that right now at our time and expense when we don't really have a reason?
It was.

Carrie 2:13:52
Well, hats off to Andy and all of the officers. I can't see who all is there, but I'm very impressed and pleased and absolutely this thing was, the ship was righted and we're heading in a good direction and I see no need.
to have a meeting.

Speaker 2:14:16
We have a motion and a second. All those in favor? Aye.

Carrie 2:14:19
I.

Speaker 2:14:24
Hey, how are you wearing a long time?
bunch of papers here, so I'll have to come to the table. Thank you, Mayor, for putting me on the...
Agenda tonight. Thank you, Carrie, for visiting with me several times. I'm here

tonight. I'm Connie Sutherland, for those who don't know me. I'm here tonight. A couple of concerns. I got the one, I printed out the one ordinance on the weeds. And it clearly states in chapter
Chapter 5, 65-3.
If the vegetation is over 8 inches in height, it is to be brought into compliance. I was in to talk to Mayor Cates about this, and it strikes me big time. I'm playing the game because I live next to a resident. Well, I shouldn't say I live.
I own a residence over at 310 South Maryland, and next to that home.
I just have a few pictures. I have much more I sent to the property owner. But this is just to give you an idea what the house looks like at 312. This is less than a block away from the Conway Public School system. There has not been a renter in this house since August of 2025.
I looked up on the cadastral. I did my homework. I wrote a letter a year ago to the owner, stated she's Shelly Creeble in Blackfoot, Idaho. And I sent her a letter, and I have a copy of that if anyone's interested in reading that. And I made her aware with a dozen of pictures.
What the property look like?
And crickets from her, but her son called me a couple weeks later from Placerville, California.
And he was very indignant. He was very threatening, like my mother's elderly, and she cannot handle.
this problem.
So, don't bother her again.
So...
It was left in arrears, to put mildly, by the renters back in August. Then I had renters that moved in in September of 25. And he continued to mow our yard, or his rental yard, my rental yard, all summer, in addition to this place.
To keep it look.
Find the knives.
Well, I have a bunch of pictures on my phone, but you can't see them. I met with David Cates and he said, we can't do anything if it's fence in. Okay. But there's a lot in the backyard that's not fence in. The coach is about this high. And I can say right now, and I told David that,
I don't know why the city council has this particular ordinance on the books, because it is definitely not adhered to and nor is it in. I don't know whose responsibility. I just

had friends move here from the state of Iowa about three months ago.
They were absolutely appalled by the yards in Conrad, why people can abandon cars and pull them up into the weeds next to their house or in the alley. And I said, I don't know anything about the cars, but I can read here in black and white. I brought a letter
concerning the weeds and asking for some action on June 8th of 26th.
There's not been a soul up there to take any action regarding the weeds since I filed this complaint.
I also came in.
up with a police report a couple of weeks ago. And I brought that to Dave. He didn't even read it. He handed it back to me.
So, I'm asking the city council, am I barking up the wrong tree? Or do we enforce weeds around Conring? Or like David said, our police officers don't have the time. This is not.
I know. We have to go by. Which is the ordinance. We can, we can and have sent yet another letter to this person to try and get to comply. And when he does it.
Go in moment. And when is that going to happen? I'm not sure. I'm not sure exactly when the matter. It's in the process. I will tell you that. Now, beyond that, we can't really do much.
Say the house is abandoned. That's one of the nature way. When you say the house needs paint, that's nothing we can handle. And I understand that. You know, we can't and we can't go into a fence yard.
Even when the fence is tipped over, still not allowed yet. Would you like somebody to open in your backyard because there was something? Yeah, there was weeds 5 feet high and I was going against the ordinance of the city that we all have to abide by. Well, I agree, but the point I'm trying to make is you probably wouldn't appreciate that.
You know, it'd be like someone saying, "Hey, there's mold in your basement. That's a health hazard. The city needs to prepare. We can't do that. Right. And I have some, I've done due diligence. I've been up to the Clerk and recorder. I've been several over. I know you can't do anything about the house. Right now, my big thing is the weeds. Go get the weeds.
Okay. And I was told they were mowed several times during the summer and that is not the truth. They have never been mowed. And on that same note, I didn't print.
up to the city council, I'm here. It says that motorhomes, trailers, 5th wheels, goes

down, are not allowed to be on the streets for, I believe it says 48 hours. Now I could be wrong, a little bit. Less than that. Less than that. Okay, so I contacted or caught a police officer at a function and I'm saying,
told him, there's been a motorhome parked in the...
intersection of Illinois Street, I believe it, not Illinois, I guess, but it's Colorado. Colorado and Sunset Boulevard, not Sunset, Colorado and Mountain View. For 4 weeks, it sat there. And I watched 2 near misses of
employees come screeching out of the hospital and down Mountain View.
without having a head-on crash. And so I finally, knowing nothing had been taken care of for four weeks, I caught a police officer and they said they would address it. And they did address it. And I don't know if they gave him my name who complained, but that guy doesn't give me very good vibes anymore. He doesn't smile when I drive by.
And so I'm not sure how this all works, but I'm very frustrated with the weed problem in Conrad, and it's not just this property.
I was at the Brandon for lunch today and some people caught me and they said, "Connie, I see you're on the city."
Agenda.
posted somewhere. I said, oh, the heck. I said, where did you see that? On Facebook. OK, what are you going for? I said, the weeds. These people were from Bel Air, and they said, well, maybe Conrad should adopt our policy. If you don't mow your weeds in Bel Air, this is coming from them. I didn't verify it through a Clerk or anything. They said a sign is posted in the yard.
that you must mow your weeds within 10 days, and that's put right in the front yard for the community to see. And if they don't comply, they come in and mow it.
Some dollars.
What's that?

Carrie 2:22:46
I think what concerns me with this, and yes, Connie and I have, correct me if I'm wrong, but I believe Connie's now the 4th citizen to come to the city council meetings and complain about our lack of attention to the weeds.
And that's embarrassing.

Speaker 2:23:05

Bye.
How many times I know?

Carrie 2:23:06
when we do have an ordinance.

Speaker 2:23:09
That ordinance doesn't require letters. We changed that. I was on council when we changed that. And I asked that, mentioned that.
It's actually the new ordinance, so we don't have to give any notice at all, however. The whole purpose we do this is to get compliance. So rather than simply going in and going along and building the individual, we do give them the courtesy in most cases to send out a letter and say, hey, get the job done. Now, in this case, if it doesn't get done,
then we'll go ahead and mow it. But that's really all we can do.
But since Jodi.

Carrie 2:23:53
I would like to see the ordinance followed.

Speaker 2:23:57
Yes, amen, Carrie. Well, it's going to be followed. We will get most.

Carrie 2:24:02
But that means no letters, David.

Speaker 2:24:05
Well, it's a it's a name if you read reread Ordinance 407, I believe it is.
It's not mandatory. It is a name. We may send out a letter. So.
I still think that the approach of sending a letter or giving them a courtesy to do it. And 9 times out of 10, when we get these complaints, send a letter out and they comply. I know last year there was a place on
Anyway, the whole alley was a mess, basically. They sent a series of letters, filmed by high school, actually, in the alley. They sent a series of letters over there and within a week.

Well, can I ask who is responsible to enforce our ordinances in funding? Well, once we go through the process, then Dave is going to be the one, Dave's crew. For that particular. I'm sorry. For that particular. That particular one, yes.
We'll get to the weeds now if they don't comply.
Okay, and I'm here just because they have it has not been addressed for two years. I can state I am there weekly, and I've complained about this and nothing gets done. That's why I'm at the meeting tonight. And also I might add that when the cameras are on before your meeting, comments were said.
What does she care? She's going down to Arizona anyway. Now, I'm not going to point any fingers. I did not hear that. Okay. It was set.
This is a civil matter. What is she bringing it down to us? That was the discussion. Dave, when I go down to the city, I do, I go, I'm not going to lie, but I'm a big supporter of everything in Conrad, Montana, whether I'm down in Arizona or if I'm up here in Conrad. And that goes from the Orpheum Theater to the school board to Everything I can donate and support, I'm there. Were you last night there at the theater when they showed a movie to raise funds? I didn't see any of you there. But I was there with the seven or eight people that were there. So when you say, what if she cares? She's going to Arizona for the winter anyway. That
Say that, well, it was said right in these walls that guilty person knows.
The guilty person knows I saw it myself, and so that really, really...
Put a knife in my heart. Thank you very much for giving me the time to be here tonight.
Honey, will you stay after the meeting, because I know who Shelley is? She said.
Okay.
Which is on discussion and action, the letters are sent.
We'll see where he goes from.
So, there's no motion needed on this.
Other than to get, if it's if it's been that way since June.
The ordinance allows this. I say no. Since June, no. May I correct you? Since August of 2025.
Last time it's had any more touches. Well, I don't know. I took a picture of the weeds the other day and it'll. Up front, it's not too terribly bad. It's along the side that I'm old. Well, I was speaking specifically of the alley. The alley is the worst. I will give you that. But it didn't.
It didn't look like it hadn't been mowed for two years. No, because like I said early in

the conversation, Dave, my neighbor took care of it. My tenant, my tenant mowed all summer long and kept the yard up because he was living there.
Yeah. Okay.
OK.
So, there, you're going to correct.
I do have paperwork here to show all of my conversation if anybody's interested.
OK, I get a motion to direct.
I would make a motion to ask the public, have you asked the public director to have his to go know that it's out of compliance with the ordinance. Second.
Any further following discussion?
All those in favor? Aye.

Carrie 2:29:05
Hi.

Speaker 2:29:08
There.
Almost approach.
Same sign.
Did you put I on the first part? Oh, okay. So it was unanimous, three-oh, missed that one.
All right.
Things here.
We got a notice at the end of September from the...
Absolutely.
Right.
Play.
Enron Radio.
Support by labor and industry, I guess thing is, yes. And anyway, that will require public hearing and publication posting, which we will start the process.
I just went down like, is a resolution needs to be passed and not resolution, but an ordinance needs to be passed.
We will get that taken care of. That is going to be coming up.
Unless there is some other. I'll be gone.
Yeah, you know, originally I when I read it, it's thought it said all council members are

just a majority, so you're going to proceed without you. But just a reminder that I've gone. Yes, yeah. So that's fine. And both of you and the background. So that meeting, so we can actually have a quorum.
And then the November meeting was strange.
4th to the 5th, from Tuesday to Wednesday, because of Election Day.
Don't check that.
Yeah, it was originally it was scheduled, would have been normally on the 3rd, that's election day, so we moved it to the 4th.
Same time, same place.
You never prove the business?
Can I get a motion to adjourn? Move. Second. All those in favor? Aye. Thank you.

◉ **Speaker** stopped transcription