

November 12, 2013

The Red Lodge City Council met for a public hearing on November 12, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. This meeting was posted at the Post Office and City Hall and noticed in the legal ads of the Carbon County News. The meeting was called for the following agenda item, Resort Tax Administrative Ordinance No.901.

ROLL CALL OF OFFICERS Present: Mayor Roat, Aldermen Foisy, Mahan, Larson, Labrie, Schoenike and Williams. Absent: None

Mayor Roat opened the public hearing at 6:00 p.m. Labrie told the people in attendance that the Administration Committee has spoken to many people and have received good feedback on the Ordinance and that several changes have already been made to the Ordinance including a lot of the items and concerns they heard from the public.

Jeff Schmidt, 514 North Platt, stated that he was a member of the Resort Tax Review Committee and he stated that clothing was an item that the committee did not speak about. He also said that the format of the proposed ordinance did not make sense to him. Schmidt recommended that the whole ordinance be revisited with the Review Committee.

Gary Robson, Red Lodge Books and Tea, said that as a merchant he would like to see clarity, consistency and simplicity come out of the new proposed ordinance. He said that he finds having two lists, taxed and exempt, hard to work with. He commented that if things can be kept simple it will be easier on the merchants. Robson has put his comments in writing and they were submitted to the Administrative Committee.

Susan Foisy, volunteer cashier at Kids Corner, thanked the Review Committee for the work they did on the ordinance. She read their report and felt it was simple and concise with only a few good changes. She said she was disappointed with the proposed Ordinance No. 901 and she felt it did not incorporate the ideas of the Review Committee. Foisy does not feel that clothing should be taxed along with items needed for pets. She said that if items are going to be listed specifically as taxed and exempt she feels the content of the list in the Review Committee version is far superior to the proposed ordinance.

Amber Enos, Sagebrush Sirens, said one of her main concerns is the taxing of on-line sales. She questioned if this was even legal. She thanked the Council for listening to the concerned businesses regarding the proposed changes in the Resort Tax Ordinance.

Wayne Stevenson, resident of Red Lodge, said he was surprised with the proposed new ordinance. He gave some examples of the things that did not make sense to him. He said he hopes some of the concerns are addressed before the ordinance is officially adopted and put into place.

Rod Bastain, Beartooth Market, stated that he was on the 1997 committee before the Resort Tax was officially voted into existence. He stated that he is afraid if too many changes are made it may force the local population to go to Billings for their shopping and this does and will hurt the City of Red Lodge. He said we need to keep the viable local economy alive.

Mike Sczcutkowski said that he was a member of the Resort Review Committee and he said the committee did not recommend taxing clothing or pet food and supplies.

Sam Hoffman, 115 W. 6th St., said the proposed ordinance does not make sense to him. He stated some of the costs to live in Red Lodge as prices like taxes and water bills get higher. One of the examples he gave was taxing clothing as he does not feel this is a luxury item. He finds this to be very discouraging. He gave examples of cuts that could be made such as the number of police officers Red Lodge has or the number of planners.

Corey Thompson, 116 N. Broadway, is a member of the Resort Tax Review Committee and she said she has constructive criticism for the Council. She felt it would have been a good idea if the Administration Committee had met with the Resort Tax Review Committee before Ordinance No. 901 was drafted so both committees could have explained their rationale.

Polly Richter, 16 N. Platt, is a member of the Resort Tax Review Committee said she was confused with the new ordinance and where all the thoughts came from. She would like the Administration Committee to look closer at the recommendations from the Review Committee.

Janine Olson, 1124 S. White, said she has to do what is necessary to keep her business open and running. She said it is hard for her to explain the Resort Tax to customers and that locals are penalized for shopping in town.

Tamara Upton, 415 N. Broadway, said she feels the taxing of clothing to be insulting.

Mayor Roat said the input during this hearing was very good and the comments will be taken seriously. He also said he hopes everyone stays current on what is now and will be in the future happening in regard to this ordinance.

Beth Steen and Gary Robson both asked what the best way is to stay informed and current on the proposed Resort Tax Ordinance. Schoenike said the City is working on a website and that the City will redouble their efforts on the list serve to help keep people informed.

Rod Bastian asked if citizens outside the City limits were ever able to sit on committees of the City and he was told that some regular boards of the City and committees were made up of both citizens in the limits and outside the limits.

Mayor Roat closed the public hearing at 6:45 p.m.

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Clerk