

Social Media & Enterprise Funds  
by  
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We have probably all heard of social media and most of us have used it. Some of us love it and others hate it! Although it can be educational, it can also spread inaccurate information. Social media can be kind and complimentary and it can be rude and obnoxious.

When I was growing up, we were taught to be courteous to older people and even to people our own age. Being rude to someone was a good way to get a spanking on your behind or a bar of soap in your mouth. Rudeness was not tolerated by most parents and not something they would often show in their own behavior. Sometimes a rude comment to someone's face would get you a fist in the nose!

But that was a long time ago. Things have changed....but we still get fists in the nose!

When we leave a message on Face book, Twitter or any number of other social media, we seem to think we can say anything we want because it doesn't seem personal. Many young people today are raised by parents that may also be rude on social media or in person. If they were not taught to be polite by their parents, they likely have not seen the need for teaching their children to be polite. In addition, we see commentators and other people on television daily being rude and insolent to each other. We are being shown by those all around us that it is okay to be rude and disrespectful to others.

Another important aspect of social media is the lack of a need to be honest or factual. We can say anything we want, whether it is true or false, kind or harmful. We can tell lies about people that hurt them with no apparent responsibility. It is done everyday and all we have to do is listen to some of our national politicians to hear examples.

What about integrity? My definition is: "Doing the right thing even when no one else will know." We do it because it is the right thing to do. It should have nothing to do about whether we get caught.

All of us should recognize that what is on social media should be taken with a "grain of salt". It may not be true, it may be totally false, it may be there just to stir up and incite others; it is likely there to serve someone's ego. It tells you how they feel, what they want you to believe and they hope it will control your thinking and behavior!

How does this tie in to the City's Enterprise Funds? The Enterprise Funds are real and must be honest, completely! Enterprise funds are funds that must operate as a business and make enough money to operate entirely on their own, with no money from the General Fund. The City is presently evaluating our Enterprise Fund accounts and adjusting the rates to keep up with the expenses of the accounts. We have four (4) Enterprise Funds; Water, Sewer, Sanitation Collection and Solid Waste Disposal (Landfill).

Our Water fund was last adjusted in June 2011. We are just now completing a new Springhouse structure over the spring that supplies a large portion of our municipal water. This has been paid for, and during the recent "boom" time we paid off the loan on the water treatment plant; we are in pretty good shape right now. We are facing replacment of the pipeline from the spring to Douglas which is about 18 miles of pipe. It is several years past the life expectancy of the old water line. Back in 2011, the estimate was over \$12 million for this project; I am sure it will cost more when we do it. We are also

considering some more work on the water treatment plant to increase its capacity and possibly another water well to increase our future water supply.

The Sewer, Sanitation Collection, and Solid Waste Disposal funds were last adjusted in August 2008. The Sewer fund is doing quite well; however we will need to make adjustments to prepare for repairs and/or expansion to serve our community in the future. Planning now will be a lot cheaper than waiting until we have a problem.

The Sanitation Collection fund also will be adjusted for future needs. A small adjustment now hopefully will avoid a large adjustment later!

The Solid Waste Disposal fund is the fund needing the most attention. We just started hauling our municipal waste to the Casper landfill and since this is a new operation, it may take more adjusting in the future. We are making adjustments now; the next year or two of operation should provide the information we need to operate wisely in the future. We will also be closing most of our landfill operation and that will be expensive. We are hoping to get some help at the State level to help with the landfill closure. Most of you probably remember that DEQ requirements have forced us to take the municipal waste to a different location or install leak-proof membranes at a cost of several million dollars per landfill cell. The more practical choice was transferring our municipal waste to the Casper Regional Landfill.

Now back to social media! If you want to know how others feel about rates being raised by the City go to social media! I'm sure there will be lots cussed and discussed there and I'm sure they will share their opinions! If you want honest and accurate information about the rates being raised, go to the City web site or better yet, contact our City Administrator, Tony Tolstedt, at the City Hall, on the telephone, or on the City of Douglas Face book page that Tony monitors regularly. He will get you the correct information and he will be courteous to you! He may refer you to someone else, but he will make sure you get the information you want. If you haven't visited our City web site please do; [www.cityofdouglas.org](http://www.cityofdouglas.org). You will be surprised at all the information found there. We do our best to give you up to date, accurate and honest information.

If you find misleading information please let us know so we can correct it. Thank you.