

PUBLIC SERVICES

Introduction

The type and quality of public services are important to the overall well-being of the community. Public services are typically provided by government and include law enforcement, fire protection, parks, schools, and public library. For purposes of this discussion, public services also include health care, senior and youth services, and culture—services that typically are run with some sort of public support. The following describes the existing status of these services in Basin.

Government

Basin Town Government

Town offices are located at 209 South Fourth Street. Basin has a Mayor-Council form of government. There are four council members. The mayor also serves as Chief Executive Officer (Town Administrator). The Town maintains an active website with general information, town ordinance, contacts, budget, and links to other relevant sites.

Departments and Services

- Utilities – Electric, Purified Water, Raw Water, Sewer, Garbage, Mosquito Control, Public Works (including streets, alleys, parks, recreation), and Cemetery
- Clerk/Treasurer
- Police
- Legal (Town Attorney/Municipal Court)
- Planning and Zoning Commission

The town employs approximately 15 persons.
(Town of Basin, 2011)

Big Horn County

Big Horn County offices are located at 420 West C Street in Basin. The county is governed with a Commissioner form of government comprised of three Commissioners. The county has a website with general information, contacts, planning documents, interactive GIS mapping, and links to other sites.

Departments and Services

- Assessor
- County Attorney
- Clerk
- Commissioners
- District Court
- Emergency Management
- Land Planning
- Engineer
- Sheriff
- Treasurer
- County Detention Center
- Coroner
- Public Health (WIC, TANF)
- North and South County Airports
- County Extension

The County also has the following boards: Big Horn County Solid Waste, Byron Solid Waste Disposal District, Fair Board, Health Officer, Land Planning Board, Library, and Weed and Pest.

State

The State of Wyoming's presence in Basin consists primarily of the District Office for the Wyoming Department of Transportation and the Wyoming Retirement Center.

Federal

The U.S. Post Office is the only federal facility in Basin.

Law Enforcement

Basin has a municipal police department with four full-time officers.

Fire Protection

Basin receives fire protection from Big Horn County Fire District #2, a taxing district. The District's five-bay fire station is located on 3rd Street in the town of Basin. The station was originally constructed in the 1970s and a two-bay addition was completed in 2009. The station houses the District's seven response vehicles, which include two Class A pumper trucks, one tanker, and quick response vehicles.

The District has about 17 active volunteer fire fighters that protect Basin and nearby rural areas with a combined population of about 2,100 people. The District is authorized to have up to 25 fire fighters. In 2010, the Fire District has 28 total reported incidents, 10 of which were fires. (Wyoming Fire Report, 2010). However, in recent years the District responds to 30 to 40 calls per year.

The District does not provide ambulance service. That service is provided by a private service through the health district. The District does have personnel trained for Hazardous Materials incidents response and cooperates with an interagency team to provide this service in the Big Horn Basin.

The District has achieved an Insurance Service Rating (or ISO rating) of 5 which has resulted in lower insurance costs for residents and businesses compared to communities with higher ratings (a lower rating is better). (All information from Hillman, 2011, unless otherwise noted.)

Health Care

The South Big Horn County Hospital is located approximately three to four miles north of Basin. The hospital has six beds, a clinic, and an emergency room. The building complex also includes the Bonnie Bluejacket Memorial Nursing Home.

The Big Horn Clinic is located in the town of Basin. It is staffed five days per week and provides general family health, pre-natal care, immunizations, and walk-in clinic.

Big Horn Basin Counseling provides mental health and substance abuse counseling. There are two locations in Big Horn County, one in Lovell and one in Basin. Staff serving the two locations include two psychologists, five licensed clinical social workers, three licensed counselors, psychiatric nurse practitioner, and a psychiatrist.

(Note: the information above was obtained from phone calls made to each facility unless otherwise noted)

Senior Services and Youth Services

Basin is part of taxing district to provide senior services. The district provides senior activities at the senior center in Greybull, including a daily meal program. The Meals on Wheels program delivers meals to Basin seniors who are unable to travel to Greybull. (Kania, 2011)

The Wyoming Retirement Center, a state facility, is located south of Basin, and is open to all Wyoming residents. It provides services to its residents only.

The Bonnie Bluejacket Memorial Nursing home is located on the same grounds as the South Big Horn County Hospital. The Nursing Home has 37 bed capacity.

There are no assisted living facilities in Basin.

There is no youth facility or teen center in Basin. The town of Basin offers summer youth programs through the recreation district.

Recreation/Culture

Basin has several parks. The largest is the 58-acre Maloney Park, much of which is in a natural state with 1.1-mile long, non-motorized trail system that connects to the Big Horn Canal service road. The park also has athletic fields (e.g., baseball, football) and an outdoor ice-skating rink with hockey boards.

Other parks include the 2-acre Henderson Field park, which has two tennis courts; Washington Park, at 1.6 acres, is owned by Big Horn County and operated by the Town; Lark Park, Russell Park, and the Town's outdoor swimming pool next to Riverside High School.

Basin is bisected by the Big Horn River and surrounded by large areas of federal lands, much of which are available for recreational purposes. The Town maintains a boat launch on the Big Horn River at the east end of B Street.

The Basin City Art Center was recently remodeled and includes theater-style seating for movies and performances as well as separate meeting space.

The Big Horn County Fair Grounds are located on the south side of Basin. The 20-acre site includes the rodeo arena, grandstand, various exhibit buildings, and offices.

Education

Big Horn County School District #4 operates Laura Irwin Elementary (K-4) and Riverside High School (9-12) in Basin. In Manderson, the district operates Manderson Elementary and Cloud Peak Middle School. Basin middle school students attend Cloud Peak Middle School in Manderson (approximately 11 miles south of Basin). Manderson high school students attend Riverside High School in Basin. Total student population in the district was 304 in 2011, with 111 students at Laura Irwin Elementary, 96 at Manderson elementary and middle school, and 97 students at Riverside High School. (Big Horn County School District #4, 2011)

Post-secondary education opportunities are available through state institutions, the closest of which is Northwest College in Powell, a two-year institution. Other avenues of continued education include telecommuting, such as with sites and coordination through University of Wyoming Extension.

Library

The Big Horn County main library is located in Basin, with branches in Lovell, Greybull, Deaver, Frannie, and Hyattville.

Conclusions

Basin has a considerable breadth of public services for a community its size. Of particular note are the recreation opportunities and health services, both of which are becoming increasingly more important in decisions affecting resident and business relocation.

Sources:

Big Horn County School District #4. (2011). Report Card and Strategic Initiative 2010-2011.

Hillman, Mark. (2011). Fire District #2 Budget Officer. Interviewed by Ken Markert.

Technical Forestry Services, LLC. (2010). Big Horn County Community Wildfire Protection Plan Addendum 2010. Retrieved August 2011, from <http://technicalforestry.com/>

Town of Basin. (2011). Proposed Fiscal Operating and Capital Budget, Fiscal Year ending June 2012. Retrieved from <http://www.basinwyo.net/>

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Wyoming Fire Report, 2010, Wyoming State Fire Marshal, Accessed 10/4/2011 from <http://wyofire.state.wy.us/currentevents/index.html>

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