

Driggs passes non-discrimination ordinance

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Driggs is the 10th Idaho city to pass a non-discrimination ordinance to protect the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals.

Members of the Driggs City Council unanimously approved the ordinance Tuesday night.

Councilman Ralph Mossman said he started working on the measure two-and-a-half years ago, when the idea wasn't popular.

"The City Council at the time would not even support a resolution to study the issue," Mossman said. "The culture has changed so much."

When councilmen did agree to take up the issue, they asked for public comment. After a month and a half went by without any comment, councilmen realized the issue was not as controversial as it once was and decided to take a vote.

Mossman said that because gay rights have been such a scrutinized topic, the public has had time to think about the issue and where they stand.

"I think people really understand the issues better than they did even two years ago," Mossman said. "I think they really see how the discrimination is not good for communities. I think it's just really changed."

After a similar ordinance was passed in Coeur d'Alene in 2013, a wedding chapel refused to marry same-sex couples. When city officials told the chapel to comply with the law, the ministers filed a lawsuit that received national news media attention.

Mossman doesn't expect a similar controversy in Driggs. For one thing, he said, the public seems to be in favor of the ordinance. In addition, he said violating the ordinance would be viewed as distasteful in Driggs, and likely would be bad for business.