

MEETING MINUTES

CITY OF EAST HELENA

CITY HALL – 306 EAST MAIN STREET – ROOM 110

COUNCIL WORK SESSION & SPECIAL MEETING: 5:30 PM

DATE: THURSDAY, MAY 13, 2021

INTERNET ZOOM MEETING: <https://zoom.us/j/8976327748>

CONFERENCE CALL-IN: 1-301-715-8592 MEETING ID: 897 632 7748

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: Mayor Schell called the meeting to order at 5:31 PM. Councilmember Feist led the Pledge of Allegiance. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic masks were recommended for those in attendance at City Hall.

CITY OFFICIALS & STAFF PRESENT: Mayor James Schell, Councilmember Don Dahl, Councilmember Wesley Feist, Councilmember Judy Leland, Councilmember Kelly Harris, Public Works Director Kevin Ore, Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren, City Attorney Pete Elverum, and City Engineer Brad Koenig

PUBLIC PRESENT: Dave Jensen

ABSENT/EXCUSED: City Judge Dennis Loveless and Fire Chief Troy Maness

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Referencing the Schedule of Estimated Engineering Costs that was part of Public Works Director Ore’s departmental report at the May 4, 2021 meeting, Dave Jensen called the engineering costs associated with the one-block Pacific Street infrastructure project excessive. Mr. Jensen provided a written copy of his comments for the record.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. **Water System Infrastructure Improvement Projects Status Update** – A written report was included in the council packet and handed out by City Engineer Brad Koenig. He reported that the projects would go out to bid after final approval by Montana DEQ, that water crossings under Prickly Pear and Highway 12 will be constructed this summer, and that construction of the new McClellan Creek water tank would not be completed until summer of 2022 because of contractor availability. There was no public comment. This was an information-only item.
2. **Water System Infrastructure Improvements Rate Increase Scenarios & Timeline** – A written report was included in the council packet and handed out. City Engineer Brad Koenig reported that the final proposed rate increase will be set after construction bids are opened. Council discussed the need to ensure that rates and bond reserves are reviewed regularly. There was no public comment. This was an information-only item.
3. **Wastewater System Infrastructure Improvement Projects Status & Funding Options** – A written report was included in the council packet and handed out. City Engineer Brad Koenig explained the recommended projects in the 2020 Wastewater Master Plan. He discussed with Council the need to improve existing infrastructure and increase wastewater system capacity to meet the demands of the city’s rapid growth. Dave Jensen asked if there would be an increase in sewer rates and commented that residents had already been absorbing the cost of the wastewater system at 50% capacity. He suggested paying off some of the sewer loans early and building up a capital improvements fund to maintain the wastewater infrastructure. This was an information-only item.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Red Fox Meadows Wastewater Agreement Connection Increase Request** – Relevant portions of the Interlocal Agreement, usage data, and a plat of the subdivision additions were in the council packet. Council requested a comparison of full-buildout usage according to the engineering standards and the wastewater capacity allotted to the subdivision in the agreement for the next meeting. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to table until the regular council meeting on Tuesday, May 18,2021. Councilmember Harris seconded the motion. All councilmembers voted aye.

MEETING SCHEDULE:

1. East Helena Council Meeting & Public Hearing, Tuesday, June 1, 2021, 7PM, City Hall Room 110
{Building Code Ordinance Update Public Hearing}
2. East Helena Council Meeting, Tuesday, June 15, 2021, 7PM, City Hall Room 110

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Schell adjourned the meeting at 7:02 PM.

ATTEST:

Clerk/Treasurer

Mayor