

**MEETING MINUTES**

**CITY OF EAST HELENA**

**CITY HALL – 306 EAST MAIN - ROOM 110**

**COUNCIL MEETING: 7:00 PM**

**DATE: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2022**

**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 Harris called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Councilmember Leland led the Pledge of Allegiance. Masks and physical distancing were recommended for those in attendance at City Hall.

**CITY OFFICIALS & STAFF PRESENT:** Mayor Kelly Harris, Councilmember Judy Leland, Councilmember Wesley Feist, Councilmember Suzanne Ferguson, Public Works Director Kevin Ore, Acting Police Chief Kirk Johnston, Fire Chief Troy Maness, City Attorney Pete Elverum, and Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Wendy Brown (via Zoom), Dave Jensen, Rob Creel, Sandy Hughes, Elroy Golemon, Lynda O'Donnell, Nick Smith, JW McClintic, Terrie Casey, Sally Nyland (via Zoom), Odell Cantrell, Antonio Gonzalez, Roy Fair, and Shannon Fair

**ABSENT/EXCUSED:** City Judge Dennis Loveless and Council President Don Dahl

**OATH OF OFFICE:** Newly appointed Ward 2 Councilmember Suzanne Ferguson took her oath of office.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** There was no public comment on non-agenda items.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The draft minutes of the January 18, 2022 council meeting were in the council packet. There was no public comment. Councilmember Leland made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. Councilmembers Leland and Feist voted aye. Councilmember Ferguson abstained. The motion passed.

**CITY COURT REPORT:** A written report from City Judge Dennis Loveless is expected at the next meeting.

**DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:**

**Administration** – A written report was in the council packet. Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren reported that the admin office had received many police department applications and that dog and business licenses were being renewed.

**Police Department** – Acting Police Chief Kirk Johnston reported that the evidence room was being audited by a third party and that the department had taken several dozen calls-for-service and provided backup for the sheriff's department and highway patrol.

**Public Works** – A written report and letters from DEQ were in the council packet. Public Works Director Kevin Ore reported that NorthWestern Energy was trenching gas lines to the wastewater

treatment plant, that the DEQ had approved Wylie well #4, that trail cameras had been placed in Kennedy Park to catch vandals, and that city crews had been filling potholes.

**Volunteer Fire Department** - Fire Chief Troy Maness reported that the department had received an applicant to provide EMS services and that the department was still working to recruit more firefighters and EMTs.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

\*\*\*Mayor Harris moved to New Business #2 at this time.

1. **Montana Environmental Trust Group New Public Water Supply Well Agreement** – A draft agreement from METG was on the council room table. Public Works Director Ore reported that it had just arrived and was awaiting City Attorney Elverum’s review. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to table. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. All councilmembers voted aye.
2. **Volunteer Fire Department By-Laws** – The old by-laws, the new by-laws, and the Fireman’s Relief Association by-laws were in the council packet. Fire Chief Troy Maness went over the changes from the old fire department by-laws to the new by-laws. Council discussed with Chief Maness how department membership and eligibility for department retirement benefits were determined and how both applied to support staff. A future work-session was suggested for this item. Former Fire Chief Elroy Golemon commented on his understanding of how city code, fire department by-laws, and relief association by-laws should function together. Dave Jensen suggested that the city clerk’s office could maintain fire department records. Councilmember Feist made a motion to table. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. All councilmembers voted aye.
3. **Capital Transit Memorandum of Understanding** – A copy of the agreement was in the council packet. City Attorney Elverum explained that the agreement remained unchanged from previous agreements. Transportation Superintendent Elroy Golemon updated Council on how the pandemic had affected driver staffing and reported that East Helena bus service is scheduled to resume on February 15<sup>th</sup>. Dave Jensen verified with Mr. Golemon that funding for the bus service could not be extended due to the pandemic. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve the MOU. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. All councilmembers voted aye.
4. **Water Quality Protection District Board Representative** – WQPD board information and by-laws were in the council packet. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to appoint Councilmember Leland as East Helena’s WQPD board representative. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. All councilmembers voted aye.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

1. **Volunteer Fire Department Administrative Assistant Pay** – Fire Chief Troy Maness requested that Council table the item. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to table. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. All councilmembers voted aye.
2. **Bike Blessing 2022 at Main Street Park April 30, 2022** – Roy Fair, Antonio Gonzalez, and Odell Cantrell presented their annual request to use Main Street Park for the event. They also requested 2 additional garbage cans and access to the power outlet. There was no public comment. Councilmember Leland made a motion to approve the request. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. All councilmembers voted aye.

\*\*\*Mayor Harris returned to Unfinished Business #1 at this time.

**MAYOR’S REPORT:** Mayor Harris reported that he had been busy with the police department hiring process and that he had attended the Lewis and Clark County Board of Health meeting.

**COUNCILMEMBERS’ REPORTS:**

**Don Dahl** was excused.

**Wesley Feist** reported that he had attended the Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority meeting and the Montana Economic Development Association meeting.

**Judy Leland** had nothing to report.

**Suzanne Ferguson** thanked Council for choosing her to fill the Ward 2 councilmember position.

**LEGAL REPORTS:** City Attorney Elverum reported that he was working through the police department hiring process and was pleased with the incoming group of law enforcement personnel. He said the referendum for the cemetery district would be on the agenda at the next meeting.

**PAYMENT OF BILLS:** Claims 294704 through 294755 were presented for Council’s review. There was no public comment. Councilmember Leland made a motion to pay the bills. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. All councilmembers voted aye.

**MEETING SCHEDULE:**

1. East Helena Zoning Commission Meeting, Thursday, February 3, 2022, 6:30PM, City Hall Room 110
2. East Helena Council Meeting, Tuesday, February 15, 2022, 7PM, City Hall Room 110

**ADJOURNMENT:** Mayor Harris adjourned the meeting at 8:47 PM.

ATTEST:

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Clerk/Treasurer

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Mayor