

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**CITY OF EAST HELENA**  
**CITY HALL – 306 EAST MAIN - ROOM 110**  
**COUNCIL MEETING: 7:00 PM**  
**DATE: TUESDAY, APRIL 5, 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 7:00 PM. Councilmember Dahl led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**CITY OFFICIALS & STAFF PRESENT:** Mayor Kelly Harris, Council President Don Dahl, Councilmember Judy Leland, Councilmember Wesley Feist, Councilmember Suzanne Ferguson, Police Chief Mike Sanders, Fire Chief Troy Maness (via Zoom), Public Works Director Kevin Ore, Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren, and City Attorney Pete Elverum

**PUBLIC PRESENT:** Annette Squires, Diana Squires, Jerry Gray, Fred Dalbec, and Dave Jensen

**ABSENT/EXCUSED:** City Judge Dennis Loveless

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Fred Dalbec of the Helena Street Rodders thanked Council for supporting the car show in the past and reported that the car show would not be held this year, but that he looked forward to holding the event in Kennedy Park next year.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The draft minutes of the March 15, 2022 meeting were in the council packet. Written public comment from Dave Jensen was on the council room table. He requested a revision to the minutes of his public comments at the meeting. Councilmember Dahl made a motion to approve the March 15, 2022 minutes as amended. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. Councilmembers Dahl, Leland, and Ferguson voted aye. Councilmember Feist 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 she had attended a meeting with TextMyGov about the possibility of making text alerts available to residents and that East Helena had received AARP's permission to promote the fitness classes to be held this summer at the Kennedy Park FitLot equipment in the newspaper rather than social media.

**Police Department** – Police Chief Mike Sanders thanked everyone who attended the ceremony for the officers who had recently saved a local resident's life and reported that all members of the police department were CPR certified; that multiple vehicles in the area had been stolen recently; that department members had been introducing themselves to local

businesses and had done a presentation at Eastgate Elementary; that the department's two remaining AR-15s had passed inspection and that the officers would be certified to use the new Glock firearms within the month; that he would be meeting with Lexipol about department policies; that a second certified RADAR unit had been received; and that the Deputy Chief position had been announced internally.

**Public Works** – A written report was in the council packet. Public Works Director Kevin Ore reported that the Montana Department of Labor & Industry had inspected the public works facilities and that it had gone well; that department members had taken water and wastewater certification tests in Great Falls; that the crew would be changing the aerator diffuser tubes and replacing the sand filter valve at the wastewater treatment plant; and that the county had awarded the chip seal bid at \$1.79/square foot. A map of streets to be chip sealed was in the council packet.

**Volunteer Fire Department** - Fire Chief Troy Maness reported that department members had raised money for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society by competing in the StairClimb; that the department had responded to the fire at 801 East Riggs Street; and that new members continued to be trained and recruited.

\*\*\*Mayor Harris moved the meeting to New Business #6 at this time.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

1. **Montana Environmental Trust Group New Public Water Supply Well Agreement** – There was no update. There was no public comment. Councilmember Leland made a motion to table. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. All councilmembers voted aye.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

1. **Boy Scouts of America – Pack 212- Requested Gym Use Saturday, April 30, 2022** – Ryan Madsen requested free use of the gym to prepare for a fundraiser for the scouts. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve Pack 212's use of the gym at no charge on Saturday, April 30, 2022. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. All councilmembers voted aye.
2. **Utility Billing 801 E Riggs St** – Public Works Director Ore requested suspension of utility billing for the 4-plex which had been lost to fire on March 17<sup>th</sup>. A payment history report in good standing was in the council packet. There was no public comment. Councilmember Ferguson made a motion to approve. Councilmember Dahl seconded the motion. All councilmembers voted aye.
3. **MOU: Records Management and Storage Working Group** – A copy of the MOU was in the council packet. Mayor Harris proposed designating Clerk/Treasurer Thorngren as East Helena's representative for the working group. There was no public comment. Councilmember Dahl made a motion to approve. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. All councilmembers voted aye.
4. **CARES Funding Allocations** – Public Works Director Ore and Police Chief Mike Sanders requested Council's approval to spend unbudgeted CARES Act funding on a dedicated printer for the police department and air conditioning for the new upstairs offices. Estimates for both were in the council packet. Dave Jensen commented that it was a heavy-duty printer. Police Chief Sanders answered questions about the printing

and scanning capabilities needed by law enforcement. Councilmember Dahl made a motion to approve both purchases. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. All councilmembers voted aye.

5. **MOUs: The Friendship Center** – Copies of memorandums of understanding between the City of East Helena Police Department and the Friendship Center to collaborate and make application to the OVW FY22 Rural Sex Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence and Stalking Assistance Program were in the council packet. Police Chief Sanders explained the importance of the East Helena Police Department reestablishing its relationship with the Friendship Center to better serve victims of sexual and domestic violence. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. All councilmembers voted aye.
6. **Valley Drive Scope of Services** – Public Works Director Ore requested approval of Stahly Engineering’s proposal for the design and reconstruction of Valley Drive from Lewis Street to Morello Road. The \$254,700.00 cost would be shared proportionately by the City of East Helena and Lewis & Clark County. The proposal and the agreement with the county were in the council packet. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve. Councilmember Dahl seconded the motion. All councilmembers voted aye.

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

7. **DNRC Water Rights Attorney-Client Retainer** – A copy of Bloomquist Law Firm’s agreement was in the council packet. Mayor Harris discussed the importance of protecting the city’s water rights. City Attorney Elverum explained the fee schedule. Council asked to be updated throughout the process. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. All councilmembers voted aye.
8. **Swimming Pool Fee Review** – The 2021 swimming pool report, the FY22 swimming pool budget, East Helena’s current fee schedule, and Helena’s current fee schedule were in the council packet. Council discussed whether to raise the fees for swimming lessons and the possibility of charging residents within city limits lower rates. Public Works Director Ore reported that the number of lessons that can be offered depends on how many lifeguards the city can hire. He noted that the pool in Helena pays lifeguards a significantly higher wage. Dave Jensen commented in favor of charging customers living outside of city limits higher fees for swimming lessons and reducing labor expenses by decreasing the number of hours the pool operates. An updated rate proposal will be presented at the next meeting. Councilmember Feist made a motion to table. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. All councilmembers voted aye.
9. **Resolution 567 Authorizing Issuance of \$1,713,000 in Water System Revenue Bonds** – A copy of the Certificate as to Resolution and Adopting vote for DNRC water system revenue bonds was in the council packet. There was no public comment. Councilmember Dahl made a motion to approve. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. All councilmembers voted aye.

**MAYOR’S REPORT:** Mayor Harris reported that he had attended the building codes conference and would like the admin clerks to attend in the future; that he had a productive

meeting with the city's building inspector regarding the permitting process; and that he had met with Town Pump regarding their project in Lamping Field.

**COUNCILMEMBERS' REPORTS:**

**Don Dahl** reported that he had attended the sewer meetings and the police department lifesaving ceremony. He said that the lifesaving ceremony was good publicity for East Helena.

**Judy Leland** reported that she had attended the sewer meetings and the police department lifesaving ceremony and that the Water Quality Protection District meeting had been cancelled. She said she'd heard positive comments about the police officers visiting local businesses.

**Wesley Feist** reported that he had attended the sewer meetings, the police department lifesaving ceremony, and the Chamber of Commerce local elected officials meeting and that he would be attending the MBAC meeting the next day. He said he was proud of the things happening in East Helena.

**Suzanne Ferguson** reported that she had attended the sewer meetings and the police department lifesaving ceremony.

**LEGAL REPORTS:** City Attorney Elverum reported that he had attended the sewer meetings and the police department lifesaving ceremony; that work on the cemetery was increasing; that he attended the meeting with Town Pump; that criminal work was increasing; that he'd gone to a district court hearing; and that things were going well with the police department.

**PAYMENT OF BILLS:** Claims 294907 through 294962 were presented for Council's review. Councilmember Leland made a motion to pay the bills. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. All councilmembers voted aye.

**MEETING SCHEDULE:**

1. East Helena Council Meeting, Tuesday, April 19, 2022, 7PM, City Hall Room 110
2. East Helena Council Meeting, Tuesday, May 3, 2022, 7PM, City Hall Room 110

**ADJOURNMENT:** Mayor Harris adjourned the meeting at 8:04 PM.

ATTEST:

---

Clerk/Treasurer

---

Mayor