

MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF EAST HELENA
CITY HALL – 306 EAST MAIN - ROOM 110
COUNCIL MEETING: 6:30 PM
DATE: TUESDAY, MAY 17, 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 6:30 PM. Councilmember Ferguson 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, Public Works Director Kevin Ore, Fire Chief Troy Maness (via Zoom), Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren, and City Attorney Pete Elverum

PUBLIC PRESENT: Sally Nyland and Dave Jensen

ABSENT/EXCUSED: City Judge Dennis Loveless and Police Chief Mike Sanders

PUBLIC HEARING:

1. **Resolution 568 – Resolution of Intent to Create East Helena Cemetery District No. 1** – The public notice and draft resolution were in the council packet. City Attorney Elverum summarized the process for creating the proposed cemetery district: If the resolution of intent is approved, a public hearing will be held on August 2nd. If a resolution is passed to hold a referendum, it will be sent to the county elections office for the November 8th election ballot. This was an information-only item.
2. **Resolution 568 – Resolution of Intent to Create East Helena Cemetery District No. 1** – No written public comment had been received. Mayor Harris called for public comment on the proposed creation of the cemetery district. Dave Jensen commented that the proposed cemetery district provided no benefit to the average resident; that it added the risks of future SID cost increases and liability for incidents not covered by insurance; that it was wrong that people who benefit from the cemetery but don't own property within city limits would not be paying for it; and that the startup costs were excessive. Sally Nyland commented that the figures were too high, that other options should be explored, and that she was opposed to the proposed assessment on property owners.
3. **Resolution 568 – Resolution of Intent to Create East Helena Cemetery District No. 1** – Council and City Attorney Elverum discussed how the assessment could be adjusted annually after startup costs were covered. Councilmember Dahl made a motion to approve Resolution 568. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Sally Nyland asked why there was no American flag at Kennedy Park and commented that if there are flags at the Main Street Park, there should be a flag at Kennedy Park. She made suggestions and offered her assistance to get a flag for Kennedy Park.

Dave Jensen commented that he hadn't been aware that the amount assessed for the proposed cemetery district could be adjusted by Council; that the pool was operating at a loss because swimming lesson fees had not been raised enough to cover lifeguard wage increases or the new pool heater; and that pool staffing and operating hours should be cut back in the evenings.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The draft minutes of the May 3, 2022 meeting were in the council packet. Councilmember Leland made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

CITY COURT REPORT: A written report from City Judge Dennis Loveless for the month of April 2022 was in the council packet.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

Administration – Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren reported the following:

- Swimming lesson registrations began the first business day in May and classes were filling up quickly.
- Kennedy Park and Main Street Park pavilions have been booked for many summer events.
- Fiscal Year 2022-2023 entitlement share for East Helena will be \$655,822.20 which is a \$15,929.21 increase.

Police Department – A written report from Police Chief Mike Sanders was in the council packet:

- The East Helena Police Department has made a few more felony arrests in the past few weeks and they involved drug possession.
- Chief Sanders and Deputy Chief Cox attended the monthly High Risk Offenders meeting and East Helena Police Department will be providing a name for consideration next month.
- On May 11, 2022, the East Helena Police Department met with the Child Advocacy/Child Protective Services leadership and discussed protocols and expectations of both agencies.
- Officer Ken Harris is scheduled to attend a 40-hour Interview and Interrogation class in Great Falls during the week of May 23rd.
- Officers are ready for the start of their two 10-hour shifts, seven days a week, on May 30th and all are excited for the new challenges.

Public Works - Public Works Director Kevin Ore reported the following:

- Pacific Street infrastructure and water tank reconstruction was going well.
- Work on the reaction basin at the wastewater treatment plant was completed.
- He met with city engineers about the nitrogen study and growth of the wastewater treatment plant.
- The compactor on the rear-loading garbage truck suffered a catastrophic failure and an estimate for repair was awaited.

- More wood chips have been added under the playground equipment at the parks and two more ADA accessible picnic tables had been received.
- Lifeguard interviews have been scheduled.

Volunteer Fire Department - Fire Chief Troy Maness reported the following:

- A new department member application was received.
- He will meet with Clerk/Treasurer Thorngren about having the clerk's office issue the retiree checks for the Firemen's Relief Association.
- Work continues on the departmental by-laws.
- The department will attend Flood Days at East Valley Middle School.
- An East Helena fire truck will be in the 100-year celebration parade at Fort Harrison.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Request to Use Main Street Park on Friday, July 22, from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.** – Public Works Director Ore presented William Anzik's request on behalf of the Montana District group of the Gold Wing Road Riders Association (GWRRA) to use Main Street Park on Friday, July 22, from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. for an all-inclusive event. They asked to block off the parking area in front of the park to line up their motorcycles for a light show/contest where their motorcycles would be judged on their custom lighting. At around 9:00 p.m. a short parade loop would be driven around Main Street and Highway 12 ending back at the park. There was no public comment. Councilmember Dahl made a motion to approve the request. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
2. **Councilmember Appointment to the City of East Helena Safety Committee** – There was no public comment. Councilmember Ferguson made a motion to nominate Councilmember Feist for the Safety Committee. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. Councilmembers Ferguson, Leland, and Dahl voted aye. Councilmember Feist abstained. The motion passed.
3. **Prickly Pear Community Fireworks Donation** – Mayor Harris noted that this was the annual budgeted donation of \$1,000.00. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve the donation. Councilmember Dahl seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

MAYOR'S REPORT: Mayor Harris reported the following:

- He met with Cindy Brooks of the Montana Environmental Trust Group about potential development of the trust group's land.
- The Montana Department of Transportation approved the Sullivan Street approach for which Council had sent a letter of support.
- He met with representatives from the rodeo association and the school district about moving the rodeo grounds.

COUNCILMEMBERS' REPORTS:

Don Dahl reported that he had attended the Planning Board meeting and had been contacted by the 8th Grade Graduation Committee who would appreciate contributions.

Judy Leland had nothing to report.

Wesley Feist reported that he had attended the MBAC meeting, would be attending the MEDA meeting, had been an impromptu speaker at the Hometown Helena meeting, and hoped to host a Hometown East Helena meeting during the summer.

Suzanne Ferguson had nothing to report.

LEGAL REPORTS: City Attorney Elverum reported that he'd been looking into impact fees and system development fees to mitigate the city's expenses for accommodating new development.

PAYMENT OF BILLS: Claims 295029 through 295105 were presented for Council's review. Councilmember Leland made a motion to pay the bills. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

MEETING SCHEDULE:

1. East Helena Council Meeting, Tuesday, June 7, 2022, 6:30 PM, City Hall Room 110
2. East Helena Council Meeting, Tuesday, June 21, 2022, 6:30 PM, City Hall Room 110
3. East Helena Planning Board Meeting, Thursday, June 23, 2022, 6:00 PM, City Hall Room 110

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Harris adjourned the meeting at 7:15 PM.

ATTEST:

Clerk/Treasurer

Mayor