

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**CITY OF EAST HELENA**  
**CITY HALL – 306 EAST MAIN - ROOM 110**  
**COUNCIL MEETING: 6:30 PM**  
**DATE: TUESDAY, MARCH 21, 2023**  
**JOIN ZOOM MEETING: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/3787705872>**  
**CONFERENCE CALL-IN: 1-253-205-0468 MEETING ID: 378 770 5872**

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:** Mayor Harris called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. Councilmember Feist 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, City Attorney Pete Elverum, Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren, Police Chief Mike Sanders, and Deputy Clerk Scott Ferguson

**PUBLIC PRESENT:** Eric Seidensticker, Charlie Hull, Stephanie Chambers, and Dave Jensen

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

**(0:00:35) PRESENTATION:**

1. **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)** — Community and Economic Development Coordinator Eric Seidensticker handed out copies of the updated Montana Business Assistance Connection (MBAC) Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). He discussed MBAC's 5-year plan for the tri-county region. This was an information-only item.

**(0:09:40) PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Dave Jensen provided clarification on his previous public comments regarding staffing allocations. Mr. Jensen hand-delivered a written version of his comments for the record.

**(0:13:05) APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The draft minutes of the March 7, 2023 meeting were included in the council packet. Dave Jensen requested an amendment to his public comment on Resolution 581. Mr. Jensen hand-delivered a written version of his comments for the record. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Councilmember Dahl seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

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

**DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:**

**(0:14:30) Administration** – A copy of the FY24 city/town entitlement share payments was included in the council packet. Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren reported that MDT had asked all communities not to request their 2023 BaRSAA allocations until a bill that proposes

to distribute the funds directly moves through the legislature; that the city will start receiving revenue from marijuana tax soon; and that the office was receiving many requests for information about swimming lesson registration.

**(0:16:50) Police Department** – Police Chief Mike Sanders reported that there had been 138 calls-for-service so far in March; he participated in the Patrol Officer interviews and three candidates were moving forward in the process; the new patrol vehicle has arrived; and Officer Johnston and Police Administrative Support Specialist Jones will attend the upcoming Crisis Intervention Training (CIT).

**(0:20:05) Public Works** – A written report was included in the council packet. A copy of the February 2023 Montana Environmental Trust Group (METG) Status Report was on the council room table. Public Works Director Kevin Ore reported that the new public works pickup had arrived; he met with City Engineer Brad Koenig, American Chemet, Habitat for Humanity, Power Townsend, and METG regarding the Manlove Avenue area lift station; a reject pump at the wastewater treatment plant had failed, but was under warranty; the garbage truck was in need of repair and future replacement; there had been flooding events near the water tank construction site and the 100 block of Riggs Street; MBAC will share some space in the Lead Abatement office in City Hall; and that there was a potential purchaser for the METG land near Highway 282.

**Volunteer Fire Department** - Fire Chief Troy Maness was excused.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** There was no unfinished business.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- (0:27:40) FY23 COPS Hiring Grant** – A copy of the grant information sheet was included in the council packet. Police Chief Sanders discussed the need for another officer, reported that the grant would assist with their hiring, and requested Council’s approval to apply.  
(0:33:40) Dave Jensen commented in favor of implementing an SID on all property owners outside city limits, but within the 5-mile police department response radius. Mr. Jensen provided a written version of his comments for the record.  
(0:35:05) Scott Ferguson commented in favor of applying for the grant.  
Councilmember Dahl made a motion to approve application for the COPS Hiring Grant. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- (0:38:00) Montana Main Street Program - Affiliate Member Community Application** – A copy of the application was included in the council packet. Councilmember Feist requested Council’s permission to apply for affiliate membership in the Montana Main Street Program which would allow the city to apply for various grants.  
(0:40:55) Eric Seidensticker commented in support of application for membership. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve application. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- (0:42:05) Fee Waiver, School District #9, JFK Park and Pavilion** – Mayor Harris presented Prickly Pear Elementary School Principal Brandon Crusat’s request for School District 9 to use Kennedy Park and its pavilion at no charge during the remainder of the school year as they have in prior years. There was no public

comment. Councilmember Leland made a motion to approve the request.  
Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**(0:43:00) MAYOR'S REPORT:** Mayor Harris reported that he had attended the Patrol Officer interviews; talked about the East Helena St. Patrick's Day event on the radio; had attended the state building codes conference the previous week; and will be attending Lunch with the Chamber.

**COUNCILMEMBERS' REPORTS:**

**(0:45:20) Don Dahl** reported that he had attended the meeting about Valley Drive at East Helena High School.

**(0:45:55) Judy Leland** reported that she had attended the Patrol Officer interviews.

**(0:46:05) Wesley Feist** reported that he continues to attend Vision Helena meetings; attended Rotary with Mayor Harris; attended the MBAC board meeting; attended the Chamber of Commerce board meeting; and will be attending the Chamber of Commerce's Lunch with Local Government.

**Suzanne Ferguson** had nothing to report.

**(0:49:00) LEGAL REPORT:** City Attorney Elverum reported that he had been staying busy with the police officers working on something with the county.

**(0:50:00) PAYMENT OF BILLS:** Claims 296073 through 296121 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, April 4, 2023, 6:30 PM, City Hall Room 110
2. East Helena Council Meeting, Tuesday, April 18, 2023, 6:30 PM, City Hall Room 110

**ADJOURNMENT:** Mayor Harris adjourned the meeting at 7:20 PM.

ATTEST:

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Clerk/Treasurer

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Mayor