

MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF EAST HELENA
CITY HALL – 306 EAST MAIN - ROOM 110
COUNCIL MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING: 6:30 PM
DATE: TUESDAY, MAY 2, 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 Leland 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, Police Chief Mike Sanders, Patrol Officer Ed Royce, Fire Chief Troy Maness (via Zoom), and Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren (via Zoom)

PUBLIC PRESENT: Lynn Maness, Sally Nyland, and Dave Jensen

ABSENT/EXCUSED: City Judge Dennis Loveless and City Attorney Pete Elverum

(0:00:35) PUBLIC HEARING:

1. **Ordinance No. 285 - An Ordinance Granting a Franchise to TDS Metrocom, LLC, and Allowing the Construction, Operation, Regulation, and Control of a Cable Communication System Within the City of East Helena, Montana** – Copies of the public notice and the draft ordinance were included in the council packet. Mayor Harris explained that the ordinance would allow the city to negotiate for services from TDS Metrocom, LLC. This was an information-only item.
2. **Ordinance No. 285 - An Ordinance Granting a Franchise to TDS Metrocom, LLC, and Allowing the Construction, Operation, Regulation, and Control of a Cable Communication System Within the City of East Helena, Montana** – Mayor Harris called for public comment on the proposed ordinance and received none.
3. **(0:01:30) Ordinance No. 285 - An Ordinance Granting a Franchise to TDS Metrocom, LLC, and Allowing the Construction, Operation, Regulation, and Control of a Cable Communication System Within the City of East Helena, Montana** – Councilmember Dahl made a motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance 285. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

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

(0:02:10) APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The draft minutes of the April 18, 2023 meeting were included in the council packet. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

CITY COURT REPORT: A written report for the month of April 2023 from City Judge Dennis Loveless was on the council room table.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

Administration – Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren had not yet arrived via Zoom.

(0:03:10) Police Department – Police Chief Mike Sanders reported that the department had received 149 calls-for-service in April; the department had been following up on requests to address parking issues; he had attended the Missouri River Drug Task force executive board meeting; he had coordinated with the Helena Police Department, Lewis and Clark County Sheriff's Department, and dispatch on the new records management project; and that with the help of the Public Works Department, the spray paint vandals had been identified and charged. He thanked Councilmember Feist for his assistance applying for the COPS grant.

(0:08:00) Public Works – A written report was on the council room table. Public Works Director Kevin Ore reported that the Lane Avenue lift pump had failed and been replaced; he had been working on a utility easement with Robert Peccia & Associates (RPA), Montana Environmental Trust Group (METG), and NorthWestern Energy; new picnic tables are being installed at Kennedy Park; street repairs and weed spraying were progressing; sixteen weed and right-of-way violation letters had been mailed out; and there had been some mild flooding near Wylie Drive. He answered questions from Council regarding spring cleanup and swimming lesson registration.

(0:14:55) Volunteer Fire Department - Fire Chief Troy Maness reported that the department had received 13 calls-for-service in April and that coordination on calls, training, and a possible merger with East Valley Fire Department (EVFD) continues.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **(0:16:05) Appointment of Patrol Officers** – The East Helena Police Commission Certificate of Qualification of Applicants was included in the council packet. Police Chief Sanders introduced Ed Royce and discussed the qualifications of both new officers with Council. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to appoint Patrol Officer Ed Royce to the East Helena Police Department. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Officer Royce thanked Council for the opportunity to serve the community. Councilmember Ferguson made a motion to appoint Patrol Officer Chris Kirkegaard to the East Helena Police Department. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
2. **(0:25:25) Reappointment of Denise Feller to the Police Commission** – Relevant Montana Code was included in the council packet. Mayor Harris requested Council's approval to reappoint Denise Feller to the Police Commission. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to reappoint Denise Feller to the Police Commission for another three-year term. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
3. **(0:26:25) Installing Power to Train Depot (City Hall Parking Lot)** – Lynn Maness of the East Helena Historical Society requested Council's approval to connect to power from City Hall. She reported that the historical society would pay for the

installation. (0:31:20) Troy Maness commented in favor of the request. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve the request. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. **(0:31:45) East Helena Rodeo Parade Road Closure** – Mayor Harris presented Tabatha Reisbeck’s request to close the portion of Main Street from 1st Street to Grand Avenue for the Rodeo Parade on July 8, 2023 from noon to 3:00 p.m. There was no public comment. Councilmember Dahl made a motion to approve the request. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
5. **(0:32:40) Loyalty Day Proclamation** – The draft proclamation was included in the council packet. Mayor Harris presented VFW Auxilliary President Andrea Eckerson’s request. There was no public comment. Councilmember Ferguson made a motion to approve the proclamation. Councilmember Dahl seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
6. **(0:34:00) Teacher Day Proclamation** – The draft proclamation was included in the council packet. Mayor Harris presented VFW Auxilliary President Andrea Eckerson’s request. There was no public comment. Councilmember Ferguson made a motion to approve the proclamation. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
7. **(0:34:45) Open Container Variance Request for Wedding in Main Street Park on August 5, 2023** – A copy of the use agreement was included in the council packet. Mayor Harris presented Susan Patrick’s request to allow alcohol at a wedding in Main Street Park. There was no public comment. Councilmember Ferguson made a motion to approve the variance. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
8. **(0:35:40) Attorney Bloomquist (Parsons, Behle & Latimer) Agreement** – A copy of the agreement was included in the council packet. Mayor Harris explained that the city’s water rights attorney was now working under a new law firm name and needed to update the agreement. Council discussed the fee section. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve the agreement. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
9. **(0:37:25) MDT and City of East Helena Maintenance Agreement for ADA Ramps Highway 12** – A copy of the agreement was included in the council packet. Public Works Director Ore reported that the city’s insurance carrier MMIA had been consulted. Council discussed the maintenance of the ramps. There was no public comment. Councilmember Dahl made a motion to approve the agreement. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

(0:41:00) MAYOR’S REPORT: Mayor Harris reported that he had attended the Board of Health meeting; spoke with Mary Hallow of Prickly Pear Land Trust regarding flooding and trails; drove around with Public Works Director Ore to look at right-of-way issues; met with RPA regarding the pool website; met with representatives of the EVFD regarding a potential merger; and that House Bill 355 had been pared down.

COUNCILMEMBERS’ REPORTS:

Don Dahl had nothing to report.

(0:44:45) Judy Leland reported that she had attended the Water Quality Protection District meeting.

(0:45:00) Wesley Feist reported that his involvement with Vision Helena continues and that he had attended Coffee with the Chamber.

Suzanne Ferguson had nothing to report.

LEGAL REPORT: City Attorney Elverum was excused.

(0:46:30) PAYMENT OF BILLS: Claims 296233 through 296271 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, May 16, 2023, 6:30 PM, City Hall Room 110
2. East Helena Council Meeting, Tuesday, June 6, 2023, 6:30 PM, City Hall Room 110

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Harris adjourned the meeting at 7:17 PM.

ATTEST:

Clerk/Treasurer

Mayor