

MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF EAST HELENA
CITY HALL – 306 EAST MAIN - ROOM 110
COUNCIL MEETING: 6:30 PM
DATE: TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 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 p.m. Councilmember Ferguson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

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

PUBLIC PRESENT: Renae Smith and Michele Voytoski

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

(0:00:35) APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The draft minutes of the September 5, 2023 meeting were included in the council packet. There was no public comment. Councilmember Dahl made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

CITY COURT REPORT: A written report from City Judge Dennis Loveless for the month of August 2023 was included in the council packet.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

(0:01:10) Administration – A written report was included in the council packet. Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren reported that she had met with representatives from Valley Bank regarding payment processing; attended the final FitLot class of the season; and attended the Transportation Advisory Committee meeting.

(0:08:10) Police Department – A written report was included in the council packet. Police Chief Mike Sanders was excused.

(0:08:25) Public Works – A written report was included in the council packet. Public Works Director Kevin Ore reported that the contractor had finished pulling water and sewer line casing under the highway and that the project should be completed in the next few weeks; there will be a phosphorus violation for the month of August which city staff is working to correct; the city crew will be replacing the seal for the rear hatch of the garbage truck; the

sheriff's office is hosting a state-wide honor guard training at the cemetery; he sent out about a dozen violation letters for overgrown foliage on Main Street in preparation for the Halloween Stroll; and that the snow plows were being prepared for winter.

(0:13:20) Volunteer Fire Department Fire Chief Troy Maness reported recruitment for membership has been intensified; he has been coordinating with East Helena High School art students to replace the plywood on the west side of fire station with a new mural; and that Hughes Fire had made repairs to the department vehicles.

Fire Department Merger Update - Chief Maness reported that, under current legislation, the city's fire department retirement system was not compatible with fire district retirement systems, but that an interagency agreement was a possibility. He noted that the current membership was not in favor of a merger at this time.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **(0:25:50) Cancellation of General Election** – MCA 13-1-403, notice of cancellation from the county elections supervisor, and draft Resolution 597 were included in the council packet. Mayor Harris reported that Councilmembers Feist and Ferguson had been reelected by acclamation to four-year terms on the council as no other candidates had filed to run for election in their respective wards. There was no public comment. Councilmember Dahl made a motion to approve Resolution 597. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
2. **(0:26:50) Request to Allow Temporary Occupancy of Recreational Vehicle** – City Code 3-4-2 and pictures of the RV parked in front of 310 East Groschell Street were included in the council packet. Michele Voytoski requested Council's approval to reside temporarily in the RV while their home at 110 North Harrison Avenue was under construction. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to allow occupancy of the vehicle until Friday, October 6, 2023. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

(0:34:35) MAYOR'S REPORT: Mayor Harris reported that he met with the rodeo association regarding the new rodeo grounds; attended State Farm's grand opening community event on Main Street; and that he would be attending the Homecoming parade.

COUNCILMEMBERS' REPORTS:

(0:43:15) Don Dahl reported that he had attended the Planning Board meeting.

(0:44:00) Judy Leland had nothing to report.

(0:44:05) Wesley Feist reported that he had attended State Farm's grand opening community event on Main Street; attended the MBAC meeting; and attended the East Helena Block Party.

(0:45:30) Suzanne Ferguson had nothing to report.

(0:45:35) LEGAL REPORT: City Attorney Elverum reported that he attended the meeting with the rodeo association regarding the new rodeo grounds and had participated in the discussions about the proposed fire department merger.

(0:48:00) PAYMENT OF BILLS: Claims 296729 through 296777 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 City Council Meeting, Tuesday, October 3, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Room 110
2. East Helena City Council Meeting, Tuesday, October 17, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Room 110

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Harris adjourned the meeting at 7:18 p.m.

ATTEST:

Clerk/Treasurer

Mayor