

MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF EAST HELENA
CITY HALL – 306 EAST MAIN - ROOM 110
COUNCIL MEETING: 6:30 PM
DATE: TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5, 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 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, Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren, Public Works Director Kevin Ore, City Attorney Pete Elverum, City Judge Dennis Loveless, Police Chief Mike Sanders, and Fire Chief Troy Maness (via Zoom)

PUBLIC PRESENT: Larry Bauer and Dave Jensen

ABSENT/EXCUSED: None

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

(0:00:50) APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The draft minutes of the November 21, 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 Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

(0:01:10) CITY COURT REPORT: City Judge Dennis Loveless reported that the court had received 563 cases so far in 2023 and commended the police department for their good work. He answered questions from Council.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

(0:03:50) Administration – A written report was included in the council packet. Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren reported that City Hall had been prepared for the Christmas Stroll; the city website had been down temporarily; city facilities were being rented frequently; she attended the Transit Advisory Committee meeting; and that she would be attending the AARP Volunteer Recognition Ceremony to accept the city’s Outstanding Community Partner Award.

(0:07:50) Police Department – Police Chief Mike Sanders reported that there had been 287 calls-for-service in November; the department had been working to solve internet connectivity problems; he attended Officer Kirkegaard’s graduation from the Montana Law

Enforcement Academy; the department had received six applicants for the open Patrol Officer position; and that he would be attending the quarterly Board of Crime Control meeting.

(0:11:40) Public Works – A written report was included in the council packet. Public Works Director Kevin Ore reported that he'd been researching automatic locks for City Hall's exterior doors; he attended a very encouraging meeting regarding the RAISE grant that would assist greatly in the rebuilding of Montana Avenue/Valley Drive; and that there would be a meeting regarding the EPA's proposed ESD that would modify the soil-lead cleanup level in East Helena

(0:16:55) Volunteer Fire Department - Fire Chief Troy Maness reported that the department had completed EMS relicensing with the state; he had completed the relief associations AFR; the department had responded to a porch fire that afternoon; and that he would not be running for chief in the fire department elections this month.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **(0:21:35) Request to Allow a Rooster in City Limits** – A narrative was included in the council packet. Larry Bauer presented his request to allow his rooster to remain at his residence as an emotional support animal. A copy of a letter from Mr. Bauer's doctor was on the council room table. City Attorney Elverum discussed the city's animal ordinance which does not allow roosters. Police Chief Sanders and Public Works Director Ore reported that they had received complaints about the rooster. Mr. Bauer answered questions from Council. There was no public comment. Councilmember Ferguson made a motion to deny the request. Councilmember Dahl seconded the motion. Councilmembers Ferguson and Dahl voted aye. Councilmembers Leland and Feist voted no. Mayor Harris voted aye. The motion passed.
2. **(0:38:15) Adventures in Cardboard Park Rental Fee** – A copy of an email from the event coordinator was in the council packet. Clerk/Treasurer Thorngren requested Council's approval to charge the same amount for the Adventures in Cardboard event in the summer of 2024. There was no public comment. Councilmember Ferguson made a motion to approve the fee of \$100 per week. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

(0:39:40) MAYOR'S REPORT: Mayor Harris reported that he had conversations regarding the EPA's proposed ESD that would modify the soil-lead cleanup level in East Helena; he was interviewed by an Eagle Scout; he attended Officer Kirkegaard's graduation from the Montana Law Enforcement Academy; and encouraged everyone to attend the East Helena Christmas Stroll on Thursday.

COUNCILMEMBERS' REPORTS:

(0:45:25) Don Dahl reported that he liked the holiday lights at City Hall and the lighted tree in Main Street Park.

(0:46:10) Judy Leland had nothing to report.

(0:46:15) Wesley Feist asked for clarification on when the scheduled power outages would occur later in the week. He asked whether there were objections to including the council picture in the Chamber of Commerce's weekly updates. He reported that he had spoken with Lewis and Clark County Health Officer Drenda Neiman regarding including East Helena in the discussion about an opioid abatement grant.

(0:48:30) Suzanne Ferguson had nothing to report.

(0:48:35) LEGAL REPORT: City Attorney Elverum reported that court had been going well and agreed with Judge Loveless that the police department was doing a good job. He noted that traffic enforcement had been an adjustment for the community. He reported that progress had been made in conversations on the new rodeo grounds.

(0:53:05) PAYMENT OF BILLS: Claims 297003 through 297046 were presented for Council's review. Councilmember Leland made a motion to pay the bills. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

SPECIAL EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. East Helena Christmas Stroll Thursday, December 7, 5:30 p.m.

MEETING SCHEDULE:

1. East Helena City Council Meeting, Tuesday, December 19, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Room 110
2. East Helena City Council Meeting, Tuesday, January 2, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Room 110

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Harris adjourned the meeting at 7:23 p.m.

ATTEST:

Clerk/Treasurer

Mayor