

MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF EAST HELENA
CITY HALL – 306 EAST MAIN - ROOM 110
COUNCIL MEETING: 6:30 PM
DATE: TUESDAY, JANUARY 2, 2024
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 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, Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren, Public Works Director Kevin Ore, City Attorney Pete Elverum, Police Chief Mike Sanders, and Volunteer Firefighter Roger Campbell

PUBLIC PRESENT: Shawn White Wolf and Dave Jensen

ABSENT/EXCUSED: City Judge Dennis Loveless

(0:00:50) PUBLIC COMMENTS: President of Helena Area Crime Stoppers Shawn White Wolf introduced himself to Council and announced that he had recently started the East Helena Senior Citizens Club which will host activities for area seniors.

(0:05:35) APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The draft minutes of the December 19, 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. Councilmembers Dahl, Leland, and Ferguson voted aye. Councilmember Feist abstained. The motion passed.

CITY COURT REPORT: City Judge Dennis Loveless was excused.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

(0:06:15) Administration – Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren reported that she had attended the meeting with Robert Peccia & Associates (RPA) regarding HB355 funding for roads; Red Fox Meadows has 187 connections to the wastewater system; and that the printer in the admin office may need to be replaced next fiscal year.

(0:07:20) Police Department – Police Chief Mike Sanders reported that there had been 286 calls-for-service in December; he attended the Helena Area Crime Stoppers meeting; and that there were two additional applicants for the open Patrol Officer position.

(0:10:10) Public Works – A written report was included in the council packet. Public Works Director Kevin Ore reported that the groundwater discharge permitting process was moving

forward; a possible solution had been found for the phosphorous levels at the wastewater treatment plant; he will be attending a water rights meeting later in the week; the school district will be lending the city a pickup bed street sander; and that he met with RPA and Stahly Engineering regarding the Transportation Alternatives (TA) grant.

***Mayor Harris moved the meeting to New Business #1 at this time.

(0:18:10) Volunteer Fire Department - Fire Chief Roger Campbell reported that December had been a busy month for the department and broke down the frequency of the various calls-for-service; noted that the Christmas Stroll had gone well; and mentioned that the department had visited two daycares within the last month.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **(0:14:30) Appointment of Roger Campbell as Fire Chief** – City code regarding the fire department was included in the council packet. Mayor Harris reported that Roger Campbell had been voted chief by the membership of the East Helena Volunteer Fire Department. Mr. Campbell introduced himself to Council. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to appoint Roger Campbell as Fire Chief. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

***Mayor Harris returned the meeting to the Volunteer Fire Department Report at this time.

2. **(0:23:00) FY24 2nd Quarter Budget vs. Actual Report** – A copy of the report was included in the council packet. There was no public comment. This was an information-only item.
3. **(0:23:45) Appointment of Representative to the Montana Opioid Abatement Trust (MOAT) Program Local Governance Committee** – Information on the program and the draft memorandum of understanding were included in the council packet. Council discussed the potential benefits of participating in the program. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to volunteer himself to represent East Helena on the committee. Councilmember Dahl seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

(0:30:55) MAYOR'S REPORT: Mayor Harris reported that many city staff members had been sick and that he met with RPA about supplying water to the new developments.

COUNCILMEMBERS' REPORTS:

(0:33:50) Don Dahl reported that the Planning Board will be meeting on January 24 to hold a public hearing for amendments to the subdivision regulations.

Judy Leland had nothing to report.

(0:34:25) Wesley Feist reported that he attended the Helena Area Chamber of Commerce's annual retreat. He noted that the funeral for resident Rick Pyfer would be held on Friday.

Suzanne Ferguson had nothing to report.

(0:35:50) LEGAL REPORT: City Attorney Elverum reported that the discussion with developers regarding the proposed relocation of the new rodeo grounds parking lot had ended and that the lot would be constructed as originally planned. He recommended including a bike track in the future parks plan.

(0:38:05) PAYMENT OF BILLS: Claims 297091 through 297126 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, January 16, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Room 110
2. East Helena City Council Meeting, Tuesday, February 6, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Room 110

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Harris adjourned the meeting at 7:08 p.m.

ATTEST:

Clerk/Treasurer

Mayor