

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**CITY OF EAST HELENA**  
**CITY HALL – 306 EAST MAIN - ROOM 110**  
**COUNCIL MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING: 6:30 PM**  
**DATE: TUESDAY, MAY 21, 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 Ferguson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

**PUBLIC PRESENT:** Dave Jensen, Whitney Mitchell, and Joe Mitchell

**ABSENT/EXCUSED:** City Judge Dennis Loveless and Fire Chief Roger Campbell

**(0:00:50) PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Dave Jensen commented in opposition to the amount of money being spent on parks. Mr. Jensen provided a written version of his comments for the record.

**(0:04:45) APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The draft minutes of the May 7, 2024 meeting were included in the council packet. There was no public comment. Councilmember Leland made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**CITY COURT REPORT:** City Judge Dennis Loveless was excused.

**DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:**

**(0:05:10) Administration** – Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren reported that she had attended the wastewater system improvement funding call, the Transportation Advisory Committee meeting, and a meeting regarding the upcoming classes on the Kennedy Park AARP Fitlot equipment.

**(0:06:55) Police Department** – Police Chief Mike Sanders reported that there had been 290 calls-for-service so far this month; he had been coordinating with the body and car camera distributor; he met with county IT to fine-tune equipment; he spoke at the Montana Board of Crime Control awards ceremony; he will be attending the public safety lunch with Helena PD and representatives of the county attorney’s office; he will be attending the Criminal Justice

Coordinating Committee meeting; and that reserve deputies are lined up to assist with rodeo weekend.

**(0:10:05) Public Works** – A written report was included in the council packet. Public Works Director Kevin Ore reported that the city crew continues to perform sewer jetting of the wastewater mains; a reject pump at the wastewater treatment plant had failed; attended the preconstruction meeting with Helena Sand & Gravel for the McClellan Creek transmission main; the portable restrooms at Main Street and Schiller Parks had been vandalized; and that MDT had given the green light on the TA grant for the walking path along Valley Drive.

**Volunteer Fire Department** - Fire Chief Roger Campbell was excused.

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

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. **(0:16:10) Request to Use Main Street Park for Food Truck Festival Thursdays, June 13, July 11, & August 8, 2024, 4:00-7:00 p.m.** –Whitney Mitchell and Joe Mitchell of Joe Mitchell State Farm requested Council’s approval to hold a food truck festival in Main Street Park on second Thursdays during the summer. They intend to have a live band and a bounce house for which they would provide insurance documentation. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve the request. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
2. **(0:24:50) Discussion on the Open Container Ordinance** – Relevant city code was included in the council packet. Council discussed changes they would like to see to the existing ordinance. Police Chief Sanders provided guidance from a law enforcement perspective. City Attorney Elverum agreed to bring a draft ordinance update to a future meeting. There was no public comment. This was an information-only item.
3. **(0:38:00) Valley Bank Deviation for Solid Waste Trash Pickup** – Relevant city code was included in the council packet. Public Works Director Ore explained that the bank was required to use a locking dumpster that the city does not provide, but city code states that the city is the sole garbage service provider within city limits. The deviation was being requested so that they could utilize a garbage service that could provide the locking dumpster. The bank will still pay the regular monthly garbage rate. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve the deviation. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**(0:41:30) MAYOR’S REPORT:** Mayor Harris reported that he’d met with certain Clinton Street residents regarding paving the street; he’d been working on hiring a building official; he attended the car show at Kennedy Park; he attended both the auction and the bingo night that were fundraisers for the new rodeo grounds; and that he would be meeting with Senator Tester’s legislative director regarding the RAISE grant.

**COUNCILMEMBERS' REPORTS:**

**(0:46:15) Don Dahl** reported that he attended the EPA's yard cleanup meeting at Prickly Pear Elementary School.

**(0:47:00) Judy Leland** reported that she participated in the lifeguard hiring interviews.

**(0:47:20) Wesley Feist** reported that he attended the Vision Helena meeting; he spoke at the Invest in (East) Helena meeting; attended the fundraising auction for the new rodeo grounds; attended the MBAC meeting; and that he received a call from a resident regarding zoning.

**Suzanne Ferguson** didn't have anything to report.

**(0:50:05) LEGAL REPORT:** City Attorney Elverum reported that he'd met with certain Clinton Street residents regarding paving the street and that court was going well.

**(0:50:15) PAYMENT OF BILLS:** Claims 297546 through 297593 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 Zoning Commission Meeting, Tuesday, May 28, 6:00 p.m., City Hall Room 110
2. East Helena City Council Meeting, Tuesday, June 4, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Room 110

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

ATTEST:

---

Clerk/Treasurer

---

Mayor