

MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF EAST HELENA
CITY HALL – 306 EAST MAIN - ROOM 110
COUNCIL MEETING: 6:30 PM
DATE: TUESDAY, JULY 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, Fire Chief Roger Campbell, and City Attorney Pete Elverum

PUBLIC PRESENT: Bridgett Teilking, Kelly Williams, Nicole Rogers, Stu Rogers, and Dave Jensen

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

(0:00:55) Dave Jensen commented in opposition to certain pavement repairs in the city and the height of vegetation at the new Town Pump construction site. Mr. Jensen provided a written version of his comments for the record.

(0:04:05) Nicole Rogers informed Council of an incident at East Valley Middle School in which a teacher is believed to have sexually harassed a student.

(0:06:55) Stu Rogers shared her account of the incident Nicole Rogers had reported.

(0:08:30) APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The draft minutes of the June 18, 2024 meeting were included in the council packet. **(0:08:40) Dave Jensen** commented in favor of adding a more detailed version of the comments he made during the public hearing portion of the meeting. Mr. Jensen provided a written version of his comments for the record. Councilmember Leland made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

CITY COURT REPORT: City Judge Dennis Loveless was excused.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

(0:10:15) Administration – Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren reported that the city’s Montana State Fund audit would occur on the 17th and that the exit interview for the FY23 audit was anticipated in two weeks.

Police Department – Police Chief Mike Sanders was excused.

(0:12:35) Public Works – A written report was included in the council packet. Public Works Director Kevin Ore reported that sewer-jetting should be completed within the next day; that there are upcoming wastewater capacity planning meetings; a fire hydrant was replaced at the intersection of Porter Street and Grand Avenue; somebody ran over the bleachers, picnic table, and fence at the pool over the weekend; and that the city had been awarded the RAISE grant to rebuild Montana Avenue.

(0:18:15) Volunteer Fire Department - Fire Chief Roger Campbell reported that the department had seen a surge in gas line hits; the department would be meeting that night to discuss a 4th of July action plan; he met with a representative from the rodeo association in preparation for the rodeo; and noted that a replacement fire engine will be needed soon. He explained the need for another fire station on the other side of the creek.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **(0:28:15) Telephones of the Wind** – Bridgett Tielking and Kelly Williams were present to request Council’s approval to post a Telephone of the Wind on a tree in Kennedy Park for people to reach out to lost loved ones. A video of Telephones of the Wind was played onscreen. A mock-up of the telephone was in the council room. There was no public comment. Councilmember Dahl made a motion to approve the request. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
2. **(0:41:20) Robert Peccia & Associates Task Order 27** – A copy of the task order was included in the council packet. Public Works Director Ore explained that the task order was for the Manlove Lift Station project. He answered questions from the public and Council. Councilmember Dahl made a motion to approve the task order. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
3. **(0:46:20) Robert Peccia & Associates Task Order 28** – A copy of the task order was included in the council packet. Public Works Director Ore explained that the task order was for the Clark Street Sewer Main Replacement project. (0:47:45) Dave Jensen commented in opposition to the schedule of estimated engineering costs. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve the task order. Councilmember Dahl seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
4. **(0:46:20) Reappointment of Zoning Commission Members** – A copy of the Planning Board roster was included in the council packet. Mayor Harris noted that Terrie Casey had been a servant of the city for many years. There was no public comment. Councilmember Dahl made a motion to reappoint Terrie Casey to the East Helena Zoning Commission. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
5. **(0:49:35) Reappointment of Planning Board Members** – A copy of the Planning Board roster was included in the council packet. Council discussed the membership of the planning board and noted that Jean Riley’s reappointment would need to be forwarded to Lewis and Clark County. There was no public comment.

Councilmember Feist made a motion to reappoint Gloria Soja, Jean Riley, and Terrie Casey to the East Helena Planning Board. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

(0:51:10) MAYOR’S REPORT: Mayor Harris reported that he attended the Board of Health meeting; the city will be reimbursed for the damages at the pool through the driver’s insurance carrier; newly hired Building Official Colin Thomas had already received a building permit application to review; and that he attended the awarding of the RAISE grant.

COUNCILMEMBERS’ REPORTS:

(0:56:15) Don Dahl reported that he attended the awarding of the RAISE grant.

(0:56:25) Judy Leland reported that she attended the awarding of the RAISE grant.

(0:56:35) Wesley Feist reported that he attended the awarding of the RAISE grant; attended the Chamber of Commerce Business After-Hours at Valley Bank; attended Coffee with the Chamber; attended the Opioid Abatement Trust meeting; and thanked Public Works Director Ore for always being available by phone.

(0:58:50) Suzanne Ferguson didn’t have anything to report.

(0:58:55) LEGAL REPORT: City Attorney Elverum reported that he had been out of town for an Army training.

(1:00:40) PAYMENT OF BILLS: Claims 297699 through 297741 were presented for Council’s review. Councilmember Leland made a motion to pay the bills. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

MEETING SCHEDULE:

1. East Helena Zoning Commission Meeting, Tuesday, July 9, 6:00 p.m., City Hall Room 110
2. East Helena City Council Meeting, Tuesday, July 16, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Room 110
3. East Helena City Council Meeting, Tuesday, August 6, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Room 110

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Harris adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

ATTEST:

Clerk/Treasurer

Mayor