

MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF EAST HELENA
CITY HALL – 306 EAST MAIN - ROOM 110
COUNCIL MEETING: 6:30 PM
DATE: TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 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 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 (via Zoom), Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren, Public Works Director Kevin Ore, and City Attorney Pete Elverum

PUBLIC PRESENT: Jacob Kuntz, Jerry Verbanac, Mary Hollow, Landy Leep (via Zoom), and Greg Wirth

ABSENT/EXCUSED: City Judge Dennis Loveless, Police Chief Mike Sanders, and Fire Chief Roger Campbell

(0:01:05) PUBLIC COMMENTS: Jacob Kuntz of Helena Area Habitat for Humanity invited Council to a presentation by Chuck Marohn, author of the book Escaping the Housing Trap. He discussed Habitat for Humanity’s Critical Home Repair Program.

(0:04:30) APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The draft minutes of the December 3, 2024 meeting were included in the council packet. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Councilmember Dahl seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

CITY COURT REPORT: A written report for the month of November 2024 was included in the council packet. City Judge Dennis Loveless was excused.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

(0:05:05) Administration – A copy of METG’s slag pile survey was on the council room table. Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren reported that she had attended the wastewater funding call and that the organizer of the Christmas Convoy would be attending the next meeting to give an update.

Police Department – A written report was on the council room table. Police Chief Mike Sanders was excused.

(0:06:55) Public Works – A written report was included in the council packet. Public Works Director Kevin Ore reported that he visited a few different types of wastewater treatment plants; he will be attending a follow-up meeting with Federal Highways regarding the TA grant; and the truck route designation signs have been installed.

Volunteer Fire Department - Fire Chief Roger Campbell was excused.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. **(0:11:45) East Clark Street Sewer District Interlocal Agreement** – Mayor Harris reported that there was no update and requested a motion to table. There was no public comment. Councilmember Ferguson made a motion to table. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **(0:12:35) WWC Engineering Master Services Agreement and Work Orders** – Copies of the master service agreement and work orders were included in the council packet. Public Works Director Ore noted that it was a good time to update these agreements because the capital improvements plan update had been awarded to WWC. There was no public comment. Councilmember Dahl made a motion to approve the agreement and work orders. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
2. **(0:13:55) Adventures in Cardboard at Kennedy Park Summer 2025**– A copy of the emailed request was included in the council packet. Clerk/Treasurer Thorngren noted that the same park rental arrangement as previous years had been requested, but that the organizers were wondering if Council would consider a weekly rate to use the pavilion as well. There was no public comment. Councilmember Dahl made a motion to approve Adventures in Cardboard’s use of the use of the back area of Kennedy Park for \$100/week and maintain the normal daily rate for the pavilion. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
3. **(0:15:05) East Helena Letter of Support** – The draft letter was included in the council packet. Prickly Pear Land Trust Director Mary Hollow explained that METG’s reappointment as trustee of the East Helena restoration site by Governor Gianforte was due in January and requested Council’s support of the reappointment. (0:20:15) Landy Leep commented in support of METG’s reappointment and requested that Council sign the letter. (0:23:20) Jacob Kuntz commented in support of METG’s reappointment. (0:24:35) Greg Wirth commented in support of METG's reappointment. Councilmember Dahl made a motion to sign the letter of support. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

(0:28:30) MAYOR’S REPORT: Mayor Harris reported that he had attended the Christmas Stroll, the Christmas Convoy, meetings regarding water rights, and met with the Montana Jewish Project regarding the Star of David windows.

COUNCILMEMBERS' REPORTS:

(0:30:20) Don Dahl reported that he attended the Christmas Convoy, the Christmas Stroll, and the Planning Board meeting.

(0:31:05) Judy Leland reported that she attended the Christmas Convoy and the Christmas Stroll.

(0:31:45) Wesley Feist reported that he attended Helena Area Chamber of Commerce Small Business Expo, the Christmas Stroll, an opioid abatement meeting, the MBAC board meeting, and the Montana Jewish Project meeting. He provided information about C-PACE.

(0:34:30) Suzanne Ferguson reported that she attended the Christmas Convoy and the Christmas Stroll.

(0:34:55) LEGAL REPORT: City Attorney Elverum reported he had been researching restrictions on jake brakes, working on the new East Clark Street Sewer District agreement, and had introduced his substitute to staff.

(0:36:15) PAYMENT OF BILLS: Claims 298266 through 298296 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, Thursday, December 19, 6:00 p.m., City Hall Room 110
2. East Helena City Council Meeting, Tuesday, January 7, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Room 110
3. East Helena City Council Meeting, Tuesday, January 21, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Room 110

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Harris adjourned the meeting at 7:06 p.m.

ATTEST:

Clerk/Treasurer

Mayor