

MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF EAST HELENA
CITY HALL – 306 EAST MAIN - ROOM 110
COUNCIL MEETING & PUBLIC HEARINGS: 6:30 PM
DATE: TUESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2025
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 Wesley Feist, Councilmember Suzanne Ferguson, Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren, Public Works Director Kevin Ore, Police Chief Mike Sanders, Deputy Police Chief Ed Royce, City Attorney Pete Elverum, and Zoning Officer Jeremy Fadness

PUBLIC PRESENT: Jason Crawford, Linda Kent, Laura Mozer, Chris Munson, Julie Munson, Bob Murdo, Teri Weideman (via Zoom), and Dave Jensen

ABSENT/EXCUSED: City Judge Dennis Loveless, Councilmember Judy Leland, and Fire Chief Roger Campbell

PUBLIC HEARING 1:

1. **(0:00:30) Vigilante West Subdivision Application & Resolution of Intent to Consider Annexation** – The public notice, staff report, and draft resolution were included in the council packet. Zoning Officer Fadness discussed the staff report and recommended conditional approval of the subdivision application and resolution of intent to annex. This was an information-only item.
2. **Vigilante West Subdivision Application & Resolution of Intent to Consider Annexation** – Mayor Harris called for public comment. (0:10:20) Dave Jensen commented neither in favor nor against the proposed annexation. Mr. Jensen provided a written version of his comments for the public record.
3. **Vigilante West Subdivision Application & Resolution of Intent to Consider Annexation** – Council discussed the dead-end of Lizzy Street and cash-in-lieu of parkland. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve the subdivision application and resolution of intent to consider annexation per staff conditions. Councilmember Dahl seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING 2:

1. **(0:09:25) Vigilante West Subdivision Zone Map Amendment Ordinance** – The staff report and draft ordinance were included in the council packet. Zoning Officer

Fadness discussed the report and recommended approval of the ordinance. This was an information-only item.

2. **Vigilante West Subdivision Zone Map Amendment Ordinance** – Mayor Harris called for public comment. (0:11:20) Dave Jensen commented neither in favor nor against the ordinance. Mr. Jensen provided a written version of his comments for the public record.
3. **Vigilante West Subdivision Zone Map Amendment Ordinance** – Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve the ordinance per staff conditions. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

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

(0:17:05) APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The draft minutes of the December 17, 2024 meeting were included in the council packet. There was no public comment. Councilmember Dahl made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

CITY COURT REPORT: A written report was in the council packet. City Judge Dennis Loveless was excused.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

(0:17:25) Administration – Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren reported that payments had been coming in through the Doxo app; there had been many dog and business license renewals; and subdivision application fees had been received from Habitat for Humanity for the Rose Hills Subdivision.

(0:18:50) Police Department – Police Chief Mike Sanders reported that there had been 488 calls-for-service in December and discussed the increase in calls over the last several years. He noted that Patrol Officer Zach Butler would be attending the Montana Law Enforcement Academy in January.

(0:21:05) Public Works – A written report was included in the council packet. Public Works Director Kevin Ore reported that he attended a meeting about the proposed upper pressure zone; met with the school district regarding the training of lifeguards; lead and copper samples tested well; and that the school district had offered to give the city a scoreboard for the gym.

Volunteer Fire Department - Fire Chief Roger Campbell was excused.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. **(0:23:15) East Clark Street Sewer District Interlocal Agreement** – The draft reinstatement agreement was on the council room table. City Attorney Elverum discussed the agreement. (0:26:30) Dave Jensen commented that the public could not comment because the draft agreement was not distributed before the meeting. (0:26:55) Bob Murdo commented in favor of reinstating the interlocal agreement. City Attorney Elverum answered questions from Council. Councilmember Feist made

a motion to table in order to allow more time for the public to review the draft reinstatement agreement. Councilmember Dahl seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **(0:36:20) Christmas Convoy Update** – A video of the convoy was shown onscreen. Event organizer Laura Mozer reported on how the first East Helena Christmas Convoy had gone and discussed plans for next Christmas. Council expressed their appreciation of the convoy. The item died for lack of motion. Ms. Mozer agreed to come back in June to request a specific date for the 2025 Christmas Convoy.
2. **(0:46:15) Personnel Policy Manual Update to Section 03-4 Holidays** – The draft revision was in the council packet. Mayor Harris noted that the update provided for one floating holiday per year rather than alternating Election Days. (0:47:15) Dave Jensen commented in opposition to the update. Dave Jensen provided written comments in opposition to the update. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve the update. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
3. **(0:47:50) New Town Pump Deviation from Garbage Ordinance** - Mayor Harris explained that the new Town Pump required a garbage compactor for which the city cannot provide service, but Tri County Disposal can. (0:50:35) Dave Jensen requested clarification on the item and commented in opposition to the proposed deviation. Mr. Jensen provided a written version of his comments including a picture for the public record. Council discussed an administrative fee. Councilmember Dahl made a motion to table the item until the monthly tonnage could be established. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
4. **(0:57:45) Star of David Window Agreement** – The draft agreement was on the council room table. Mayor Harris noted that it allowed for the Montana Jewish Project to display one of the city’s restored Star of David windows at Temple Emanuel. City Attorney Elverum discussed the details of the agreement. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve the agreement. Councilmember Dahl seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

(1:00:10) MAYOR’S REPORT: Mayor Harris reported that he had been enjoying the holidays; had been in discussions regarding water rights; and that he attended the county commission meeting regarding a plow truck.

COUNCILMEMBERS’ REPORTS:

(1:01:40) Don Dahl reported that he had attended the Zoning Commission meeting.

Judy Leland was excused.

(1:02:05) Wesley Feist thanked everyone who organized the staff Christmas party and reported that he visited with Senator Dunwell about water rights.

(1:02:50) Suzanne Ferguson reported that she had attended the Zoning Commission meeting.

(1:03:05) LEGAL REPORT: City Attorney Elverum reported that court was going well and that his substitute would be in court the next morning while he attends the legislative session.

(1:03:30) PAYMENT OF BILLS: Claims 298297 through 298388 were presented for Council's review. Councilmember Ferguson 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 21, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Rm 110
2. East Helena City Council Meeting, Tuesday, February 4, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Rm 110

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Harris adjourned the meeting at 7:36 p.m.

ATTEST:

Clerk/Treasurer