

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

CITY OFFICIALS & STAFF PRESENT: Mayor Kelly Harris, Council President Don Dahl (via Zoom), Councilmember Judy Leland (via Zoom), Councilmember Suzanne Ferguson, Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren, Public Works Director Kevin Ore, City Attorney Pete Elverum, and Fire Chief Roger Campbell

PUBLIC PRESENT: Odell Cantrell, Mike Schey, Curtis Cline, Roy Rain, Unidentified Man, Bob Murdo, and Dave Jensen

ABSENT/EXCUSED: City Judge Dennis Loveless, Councilmember Wesley Feist, and Police Chief Mike Sanders

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were no comments from the public on matters that were not on the meeting agenda.

(0:01:30) APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The draft minutes of the January 7, 2025 meeting were included in the council packet. There was no public comment. Councilmember Ferguson made a motion to table due to lack of quorum. Councilmember Dahl seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

CITY COURT REPORT: City Judge Dennis Loveless was excused.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

(0:02:40) Administration – Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren reported that the admin staff had been working on 2024 tax forms; swimming lesson inquiries had already been received; and many summer park reservations had already been made.

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

(0:03:35) Public Works – A written report was included in the council packet. Public Works Director Kevin Ore discussed a timeline of wastewater system improvements which was included in the council packet. He reported that the newly repaired fence at Kennedy Park had been run into again and that he would be meeting with the school district regarding the crosswalk at Main Street and Kalispell Avenue.

(0:05:25) Volunteer Fire Department - Fire Chief Roger Campbell reported that he had received a request from Special Olympics to hold their Passion Plunge at the new Town Pump which would require the filling of a temporary pool from the fire hydrant. He discussed the department's recent calls-for-service.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. **(0:09:20) East Clark Street Sewer District Interlocal Agreement** – The draft agreement was included in the council packet. Mayor Harris noted that there had been no changes made to the draft that was on the table at the last meeting. (0:09:45) Dave Jensen commented in opposition to the agreement. Mr. Jensen provided a written version of his comments for the record. (0:12:10) Bob Murdo, counsel for the bondholder, commented in support of the agreement. Councilmember Ferguson made a motion to approve the agreement. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
2. **(0:14:15) Second Reading of Ordinance 291 Rezoning Vigilante West Subdivision to Residential District** – The first reading of the ordinance was included in the council packet. Mayor Harris noted that no changes had been made since the first reading of the ordinance. There was no public comment. Councilmember Dahl made a motion to approve the second reading of Ordinance 291. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
3. **(0:15:05) New Town Pump Deviation from Garbage Ordinance** – Mayor Harris reported that there were no numbers available yet on the amount of solid waste tonnage being produced by the new Town Pump location. (0:15:40) Dave Jensen commented in opposition to the deviation. Mr. Jensen provided a written version of his comments for the record. Councilmember Ferguson made a motion to table pending more data. Councilmember Dahl seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **(0:18:20) Bike Blessing 2025 at Main Street Park April 26th** – Representatives of Set Free Ministries were present to make their annual request for the event. There was no public comment. Councilmember Leland made a motion to approve the use of Main Street Park at no charge for the event. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
2. **(0:19:55) Request to Waive the Fee for the Kennedy Park Pavilion July 31st, 2025 for the Montana Joining Community Forces Barbeque** – Clerk/Treasurer Thorngren presented Steve Garrison's request to hold the event again this year. There was no public comment. Councilmember Ferguson made a motion to approve the use of Kennedy Park at no charge for the event. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
3. **(0:24:20) First Reading of Ordinance 292 Regulating Jake Brakes** – The draft ordinance was on the council room table. City Attorney Elverum explained that the ordinance could only be adopted for roads and streets within city limits and discussed

the direction of the ordinance. There was no public comment. Councilmember Ferguson made a motion to table pending revisions. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. **(0:26:45) Suspension of Billing for 704 E Riggs St** – Clerk/Treasurer Thorngren explained that the residence had been uninhabitable since the garage was destroyed by fire on November 9th. The owner had requested suspension of the bill until mid-summer. There was no public comment. Councilmember Ferguson made a motion to approve the suspension of the bill. Councilmember Dahl seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

(0:22:55) MAYOR’S REPORT: Mayor Harris reported that a new manager would be needed for the swimming pool in the summer: he attended an event at the new Prickly Pear Land Trust trailhead; attended author Charles Marohn’s discussion of his book Escaping the Housing Trap presented by Habitat for Humanity; and that he attended Coffee with the Chamber.

COUNCILMEMBERS’ REPORTS:

Don Dahl had nothing to report.

Judy Leland had nothing to report.

Wesley Feist was excused.

Suzanne Ferguson had nothing to report.

(0:30:40) LEGAL REPORT: City Attorney Elverum reported that court was going well and that he had been working on the Jake brake ordinance.

(0:31:15) PAYMENT OF BILLS: Claims 298389 through 298428 were included in the council packet. Councilmember Leland made a motion to pay the bills. Councilmember Dahl seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

MEETING SCHEDULE:

1. East Helena City Council Meeting, Tuesday, February 4, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Room 110
2. East Helena City Council Meeting, Tuesday, February 18, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Room 110

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Harris adjourned the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

ATTEST:

Clerk/Treasurer

Mayor