

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**CITY OF EAST HELENA**  
**CITY HALL – 306 EAST MAIN - ROOM 110**  
**COUNCIL MEETING: 6:30 PM**  
**DATE: TUESDAY, MARCH 4, 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, Councilmember Judy Leland, Councilmember Suzanne Ferguson, Councilmember Wesley Feist, Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren, Public Works Director Kevin Ore, Police Chief Mike Sanders, Deputy Police Chief Ed Royce, Patrol Officer Kyle Butler, and Fire Chief Roger Campbell

**PUBLIC PRESENT:** Damian Briggs, Markus Briggs, John Frisch, Carolyn Jones, Unidentified Woman, and David MacAdam (via Zoom)

**ABSENT/EXCUSED:** City Judge Dennis Loveless and City Attorney Pete Elverum

**(0:00:30) PUBLIC HEARING:**

1. **City of East Helena Resolution Establishing an East Helena PACE Program –** Draft Resolution 616 was included in the council packet. Mayor Harris noted that no changes had been made since the resolution of intent was approved on March 4<sup>th</sup>. This was an information-only item.
2. **City of East Helena Resolution Establishing an East Helena PACE Program –** Mayor Harris called for public comment on the proposed resolution and received none.

\*\*\*Mayor Harris moved the meeting to New Business #5 at this time.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** There were no public comments on non-agenda items.

**(0:04:25) APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The draft minutes of the February 18, 2025 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:** City Judge Dennis Loveless was excused.

## **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:**

**(0:04:55) Administration** – Invitations to Helena Area Habitat for Humanity and Montana Environmental Trust Group events were included in the council packet. Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren reported that the first lifeguard application had been received; she attended the Community Needs Assessment and Wastewater Funding meetings; local students had toured city hall on 227 Day; and that AARP had offered to sponsor the FitLot classes at Kennedy Park.

**(0:07:00) Police Department** – Police Chief Mike Sanders reported that there had been 396 calls-for-service in February; the department will be attending Records Management System (RMS) training; and that Deputy Chief Royce will be meeting with Helena Police Chief Petty and Assistant Police Chief Bailey monthly.

**(0:08:50) Public Works** – A written report was included in the council packet. Public Works Director Kevin Ore reported that he met with Robert Peccia & Associates (RPA) regarding updates to the wastewater master plan; met with Habitat for Humanity regarding the need for an upper pressure zone for their new development; met with Federal Highways regarding the Valley Drive/Montana Avenue project; and that open gym has been cancelled until further notice due to user misbehavior. He invited Council's input on the FY26 budget.

**(0:14:25) Volunteer Fire Department** - Fire Chief Roger Campbell reported that he would be attending a Disaster and Emergency Services (DES) mass-casualty table-top exercise in York; the department will attend trainings from NorthWestern Energy and LPG Gas; that he had received the initial plat for the Rose Hills Subdivision; and that EMS licenses will be administered by the Department of Labor & Industry (DLI).

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

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

1. **(0:17:50) First Reading of the Updated East Helena Floodplain Ordinance** – The updated ordinance and fee schedule were included in the council packet. Mayor Harris noted that the updates were made to meet FEMA regulations. There was no public comment. Council discussed references to Montana Code, court penalties, and whether the correct year was used in the fee schedule title. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve the first reading pending a possible amendment to the year on the fee schedule title. Councilmember Dahl seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
2. **(0:22:55) Confirmation of Appointment of Patrol Officer Kyle Butler** – Police Chief Sanders discussed Officer Butler's successful first year with the department and requested his confirmation of appointment. Mayor Harris and Council commended his service. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to confirm Officer Butler's appointment. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
3. **(0:28:15) Pontiac Pac Car Show** – Damian Briggs was present to request Council's approval to close Main Street for a car show again this summer. He asked to extend it from the VFW all the way down to Calamity Ann's from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. on May

24<sup>th</sup>. There was no public comment. Councilmember Ferguson made a motion to approve. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. **(0:31:50) Volunteer Fire Department Purchase of Truck from Lewis & Clark County** – Fire Chief Campbell discussed an opportunity to acquire a vehicle from the Lewis and Clark County Sheriff's Office. Council discussed possible funding options. There was no public comment. Councilmember Ferguson made a motion to table pending more information. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
5. **(0:01:40) City of East Helena Resolution Establishing an East Helena PACE Program** – Clerk/Treasurer Thorngren noted that the resolution needed a correction to the date of the first public hearing which was March 4<sup>th</sup> rather than February 18<sup>th</sup>. Carolyn Jones of the Montana Department of Commerce answered questions from Council. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve Resolution 616 as amended. Councilmember Dahl seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

\*\*\*Mayor Harris returned the meeting to Public Comments at this time.

**(0:38:35) MAYOR'S REPORT:** Mayor Harris reported that he attended the Montana League of Cities and Towns (MLCT) Executive Forum; spent some time at the Montana Legislature; the date set for water rights transfer meeting with Lieutenant Governor Juras is March 24<sup>th</sup>; met with Cindy Brooks of METG regarding their upcoming open house; and that he had been planning the swimming pool season with Public Works Director Ore. He noted that the grant to rebuild Valley Drive/Montana Avenue was in limbo.

**COUNCILMEMBERS' REPORTS:**

**Don Dahl** had nothing to report.

**Judy Leland** had nothing to report.

**(0:43:10) Wesley Feist** reported that he attended the Helena Area Chamber of Commerce meeting; the Helena SWISH tournament will be held on the upcoming weekend; and that he was named chair of the Lewis & Clark Metro Region Opioid Governance Committee.

**Suzanne Ferguson** had nothing to report.

**LEGAL REPORT:** City Attorney Elverum was excused.

**(0:45:55) PAYMENT OF BILLS:** Claims 298529 through 298574 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 City Council Meeting, Tuesday, March 18, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Rm 110
2. East Helena City Council Meeting, Tuesday, April 1, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Rm 110

**ADJOURNMENT:** Mayor Harris adjourned the meeting at 7:16 p.m.

ATTEST:

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Clerk/Treasurer

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Mayor