

MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF EAST HELENA
CITY HALL – 306 EAST MAIN - ROOM 110
COUNCIL MEETING: 6:30 PM
DATE: TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 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 Judy Leland, Councilmember Suzanne Ferguson, Councilmember Wesley Feist, Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren, Public Works Director Kevin Ore, Deputy Police Chief Ed Royce, City Attorney Pete Elverum, and Patrol Officer Chris Kirkegaard

PUBLIC PRESENT: Eric Dunn, Jim Dauenhauer, Shaun Murgel, Kevin Schulte, Matt Horner, Katee Horner, and Mike Hossfeld

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

(0:00:35) EAST HELENA HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES UPDATE: East Helena High School Activities Director Shaun Murgel reported on the outcome of the winter sports season and discussed the upcoming spring sports season.

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

(0:03:35) APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The draft minutes of the March 4, 2025 meeting were included in the council packet. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

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

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

(0:04:10) Administration – Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren reported that she had attended the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting; attended a meeting with AARP regarding the upcoming summer FitLot classes; and attended a meeting regarding the upcoming pool season. She noted that the audit of FY24 would be conducted the week of May 5th.

(0:06:10) Police Department – A written report was on the council room table. Police Chief Mike Sanders was excused. Deputy Police Chief Royce reported that he would be sitting in panel interviews for the Helena Police Department.

(0:06:30) Public Works – A written report was included in the council packet. Public Works Director Kevin Ore reported that the lead and copper rule was being updated; he had met with Paradise Farms regarding summer weed spraying; the FY26 gas tax maps have been submitted to MDT; and that he will be participating in the League of Women Voters panel discussion.

Volunteer Fire Department - Fire Chief Roger Campbell was excused.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. **(0:09:10) Second Reading of the Updated East Helena Floodplain Ordinance** – The draft ordinance was included in the council packet. Mayor Harris noted that a correction had been made to the title of the fee schedule. There was no public comment. Councilmember Dahl made a motion to approve the second reading. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
2. **(0:09:50) Volunteer Fire Department Purchase of Truck from Lewis & Clark County** – Mayor Harris reported that there were no updates at this time. There was no public comment. Councilmember Ferguson made a motion to table. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **(0:02:25) Request to Use Kennedy Park for a Car Show May 17th** – Jim Dauenhauer of the United States Warrant Officers Association requested Council's approval to park the cars on the grass inside the park with the proceeds going to area high school trade programs. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve the request. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
2. **(0:12:15) Request for the Use of Main Street Park for Craft Show July 12th** – A copy of the use agreement was included in the council packet. Clerk/Treasurer Thorngren presented Juli Barnes' annual request to use the grassy areas in Main Street Park for a craft fair during rodeo weekend. There was no public comment. Councilmember Dahl made a motion to approve the request. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
3. **(0:13:35) Request for Fee Waiver for the Main Street Park Pavilion for the VFW Day of Service May 5th** – A copy of the use agreement was included in the council packet. Eric Dunn reported that last year's day of service had gone well and requested a fee waiver for use of the pavilion again during this year's event. The date of the event was corrected to Saturday, May 3rd. There was no public comment. Councilmember Dahl made a motion to approve the request. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
4. **(0:15:15) Discussion of Unauthorized Long-Term Parking** – Mike Hossfeld of Eagles 4040 discussed the problem of unauthorized parking in the club's members-

only private parking lots. He requested the city's assistance in finding a solution. City Attorney Elverum explained the city's limitations in enforcing parking on private property. Deputy Police Chief Royce talked about the towing of abandoned vehicles. (0:29:00) Matt Horner of Leny's Repair agreed that parking was limited on Main Street, acknowledged that some of the vehicles have been left by his customers, and thanked Mr. Hossfeld for his grace in those instances. (0:33:05) Kevin Schulte of Galaxy Roasting agreed that the parking situation on Main Street was limited and shared his experience in finding parking solutions at his business in Helena. Public Works Director Ore recounted the city's history of parking challenges. This was an information-only item.

5. **(0:36:40) Lewis & Clark Library East Helena Branch Request to Use Main Street Park Including a Fee Waiver for the Pavilion for Summer Programs** – A list of requested dates was included in the council packet. The library's summer program brochure was on the council room table. Clerk/Treasurer Thorngren presented East Helena Branch Manager Andrea Eckerson's request to use Main Street Park and its pavilion for summer programs at no charge. There was no public comment. Councilmember Ferguson made a motion to approve the request. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
6. **(0:38:30) AARP Collaborative Agreement to Fund FitLot Classes at Kennedy Park** – Clerk/Treasurer Thorngren reported that the agreement had not yet been received. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to table. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

(0:38:55) MAYOR'S REPORT: Mayor Harris reported that he attended the Montana Environmental Trust Group (METG) open house and met with the prospective pool managers.

COUNCILMEMBERS' REPORTS:

(0:40:20) Don Dahl reported that he had attended the METG open house and site tour and the Habitat for Humanity Rose Hills Subdivision information meeting.

Judy Leland had nothing to report.

(0:40:50) Wesley Feist reported that he had attended Coffee with the Chamber which is held the third Tuesday of each month; the Montana Opioid Abatement Trust (MOAT) meeting; and the METG open house and site tour.

Suzanne Ferguson had nothing to report.

(0:42:55) LEGAL REPORT: City Attorney Elverum reported that court was going well, the officers are doing a great job, and that he was tracking bills that affect the city in the legislature.

(0:45:20) PAYMENT OF BILLS: Claims 298570 through 298604 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, April 1, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Room 110
2. East Helena City Council Meeting, Tuesday, April 15, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Room 110

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Harris adjourned the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

ATTEST:

Clerk/Treasurer

Mayor