

MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF EAST HELENA
CITY HALL – 306 EAST MAIN - ROOM 110
COUNCIL MEETING: 6:30 PM
DATE: TUESDAY, APRIL 1, 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 Leland 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, Police Chief Mike Sanders, and Fire Chief Roger Campbell

PUBLIC PRESENT: Alexandra Holmes

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

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

(0:00:55) APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The draft minutes of the March 18, 2025 meeting were included in the council packet. There was no public comment. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

CITY COURT REPORT: City Judge Dennis Loveless was excused.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

(0:01:15) Administration – A copy of METG’s January Status Report was included in the council packet. Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren reported that employee benefits would increase by 12.2% in FY26.

(0:02:10) Police Department – Police Chief Mike Sanders reported that the department was adjusting to using the new Records Management System (RMS); Officer Kyle Butler is participating in Crisis Intervention Training; and that Officer Zach Butler will be graduating from the Montana Law Enforcement Academy on April 18th.

(0:04:00) Public Works – A written report was included in the council packet. Public Works Director Kevin Ore reported that the new Town Pump had start-up and training with city staff on their R/V dump station and flow data will be read monthly along with other meter reads; Helena Sand & Gravel started on the Washington Street water main replacement and will complete the water main project at the intersection of Valley Drive and Lewis street when school is out for summer; he ordered 350 residential garbage cans which will last the

next couple of budget cycles; he had a meeting with Helena Sand & Gravel regarding the paving of Lewis, Dudley, and 2nd Streets; and he attended meetings with Habitat for Humanity regarding their preliminary subdivision application.

(0:08:20) Volunteer Fire Department - Fire Chief Roger Campbell reported that his department was also adjusting to the new RMS software; Bee McLean has been declared Firefighter of the Year; he met with Public Works Director Ore regarding water flow in the new subdivisions; he spoke with Building Official Thomas regarding a structure that had burned and was being rebuilt; the Public Safety Open House is scheduled for April 26th; and that the department would be disposing of their 1999 Crown Victoria.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. **(0:13:15) Volunteer Fire Department Purchase of Truck from Lewis & Clark County** – A copy of a letter to Mayor Harris and Council from Fire Chief Campbell was included in the council packet. He handed out a report on response times. Chief Cambell discussed the opportunity to purchase the pickup from the sheriff's office with the intension of using it as a rapid-response vehicle. He noted that the intended use of the vehicle had been discussed with the insurance company. (0:22:20) Kevin Ore commented in support of purchase. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve the purchase of the vehicle. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
2. **(0:28:15) AARP Collaborative Agreement to Fund FitLot Classes at Kennedy Park** – A copy of the draft agreement was included in the council packet. Clerk/Treasurer Thorngren noted that the \$2,500.00 grant would cover the costs of providing the classes on the FitLot equipment in Kennedy Park this summer. There was no public comment. Councilmember Leland made a motion to approve the agreement. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **(0:29:15) Request to Use Main Street Park for the East Helena Tuesday Farmers Market July 8 to September 16th to Include a Blanket Business License for the Vendors** – Clerk/Treasurer Thorngren presented Dot Vieth's annual request for the Tuesday Farmers Market. (0:29:55) Roger Campbell commented in favor of the market. Council discussed whether insurance was required for the market. Councilmember Ferguson made a motion to approve the request. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
2. **(0:31:10) Lewis and Clark Deputy Reserve Graduation Request for Gym Fee Waiver June 13th** – Alexandra Holmes requested Council's approval to hold the graduation in the gym on June 13th at no charge. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to grant the request. Councilmember Dahl seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
3. **(0:32:45) Resolution 617 Authorizing the Sale of Surplus Property** – A copy of the draft resolution was included in the council packet. Public Works Director Ore

discussed the scrap vehicles listed. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve Resolution 617. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. **(0:36:20) Relinquishment and Termination of Waterline Easement Agreement** – A draft copy was included in the council packet. Public Works Director Ore reported that the old easement was being abandoned due to the McClellan Creek waterline project. There was no public comment. Councilmember Dahl made a motion to approve. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

(0:38:25) MAYOR'S REPORT: Mayor Harris reported that he had taken part in discussions on the swimming pool, the FY26 budget, and a potential cell tower on city property. He also met with Lieutenant Governor Juras regarding the city's water rights.

COUNCILMEMBERS' REPORTS:

Don Dahl had nothing to report.

Judy Leland had nothing to report.

(0:41:40) Wesley Feist reported that he attended the Helena Area Chamber of Commerce's Guinness Story with McDantim; he talked with the Montana Business Assistance Connection (MBAC) regarding funding for a community review assessment for which MBAC has chosen East Helena; he handed out information about becoming an AARP Age-Friendly community; he handed out information about the United Way Spirit of Service project; and he noted that the construction at Clark Street and Washington Avenue was going well.

Suzanne Ferguson had nothing to report.

LEGAL REPORT: City Attorney Elverum was excused.

(0:45:30) PAYMENT OF BILLS: Claims 298605 through 298643 were presented for Council's review. Councilmember Feist made a motion to pay the bills. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

MEETING SCHEDULE:

1. East Helena City Council Meeting, Tuesday, April 15, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Room 110
2. East Helena City Council Meeting, Tuesday, May 6, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Room 110

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

ATTEST:

Clerk/Treasurer

Mayor