

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**CITY OF EAST HELENA**  
**CITY HALL – 306 EAST MAIN - ROOM 110**  
**COUNCIL MEETING: 6:30 PM**  
**DATE: TUESDAY, AUGUST 19, 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 Wesley Feist, Councilmember Suzanne Ferguson, Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren, City Attorney Pete Elverum, Public Works Director Kevin Ore, Fire Chief Roger Campbell, Patrol Officer Chris Kirkegaard, and City Engineer Jeremy Perlinski

**PUBLIC PRESENT:** Shaun Murgel, Kyle Sturgill-Simon, Stephanie Chambers, Andrea Eckerson, and Chris Pratt

**ABSENT/EXCUSED:** City Judge Dennis Loveless and Police Chief Mike Sanders

**(0:00:30) EAST HELENA HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES UPDATE:** Activities Director Shaun Murgel updated Council on EHHS fall sports and events.

**(0:04:10) WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT UPGRADE PRESENTATION:** A printed copy of the presentation was included in the council packet. Jeremy Perlinski of Robert Peccia & Associates discussed the need for an upgrade to the wastewater treatment plant. This was an information-only item.

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

**(0:55:45) APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The draft minutes of the August 5<sup>th</sup> 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:** City Judge Dennis Loveless was excused.

**DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:**

**(0:56:15) Administration** – Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren reported that she attended the Montana Department of Commerce on-site pre-monitoring visit for the wastewater system

improvement projects, that the pool was closed for the season, and that facility rentals were at a record high.

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

**(0:57:15) Public Works** – A written report was included in the council packet. Public Works Director Kevin Ore reported that a transformer failed at the wastewater treatment plan, he attended the DEQ groundwater permit application meeting, and that he was working with Helena Sand & Gravel on pavement repairs. He discussed the unpaved block of Clinton Street.

**(1:02:00) Volunteer Fire Department** - Fire Chief Roger Campbell reported that a few new members were joining the department.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

1. **(1:02:50) East Helena Christmas Stroll** – Council discussed the need for Valley Bank to coordinate all the vendors at the Christmas Stroll. (1:03:45) Chris Pratt noted that vendors next to J4's tent were not a problem. Councilmember Dahl made a motion to refer the request to Valley Bank. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

1. **(1:06:10) J4 Automotive Request to Use Main Street Park for the Halloween and Christmas Strolls** – Chris Pratt requested Council's approval to use Main Street Park for the Halloween and Christmas Strolls and close off Lane Avenue for the East Helena Block Party. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve the request. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
2. **(1:11:35) Valley Bank Request to Use City Facilities for the East Helena Christmas Stroll December 4th** – Stephanie Chambers requested Council's approval to use City Hall and the Recreation Hall for the annual stroll. Fire Chief Roger Cambell discussed his safety concerns about overcrowding during the event. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve the request with fire department coordination. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
3. **(1:20:00) Appointment of Jennifer Opie to the East Helena Police Commission** – Relevant MCA was included in the council packet. Mayor Harris requested Council's approval to appoint Jennifer Opie to the police commission. There was no public comment. Councilmember Dahl made a motion to approve. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
4. **(1:20:50) City of East Helena Western Montana Hazard Mitigation Plan Adoption Resolution** – A letter from Lewis and Clark Emergency Management and Draft Resolution 629 were included in the council packet. Emergency Manager Kyle Sturgill-Simon was present to discuss the mitigation plan and answer questions. There

- was no public comment. Councilmember Dahl made a motion to approve Resolution 629. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
5. **(1:26:35) Resolution of Respect and Esteem for Isabelle Pistelak** – A copy of the resolution was included in the council packet. Mayor Harris spoke about Isabelle Pistelak’s accomplishments and shared memories of her. There was no public comment. Councilmember Leland made a motion to approve the Resolution. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
  6. **(1:28:10) Resolution to Hold the November 4<sup>th</sup> General Election** – A letter from the county elections supervisor and the draft resolution were included in the council packet. Mayor Harris requested to hold the election in the interest of democracy even though it is uncontested. There was no public comment. Councilmember Ferguson made a motion to approve Resolution 631. Councilmember Dahl seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
  7. **(1:29:15) Prickly Pear Estates Regional Lift Station Grant of Easement** – A copy of the agreement was included in the council packet. Public Works Director Ore discussed the proposed easement. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve the agreement. Councilmember Dahl seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**(1:31:40) MAYOR’S REPORT:** Mayor Harris reported that he attended the Joe Mitchell State Farm Food Truck Festival, attended the DEQ groundwater permit application meeting, and that the Brownsfield Conference in Chicago where the Phoenix Award was presented was a great experience. He thanked Public Works Director Ore for his work on the budget and set a budget meeting for Monday, August 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.

**COUNCILMEMBERS’ REPORTS:**

**Don Dahl** had nothing to report.

**(1:39:25) Judy Leland** reported that she attended the Joe Mitchell State Farm Food Truck Festival.

**(1:39:40) Wesley Feist** reported that he attended the Joe Mitchell State Farm Food Truck Festival, attended Coffee with the Chamber that morning, will attend the MBAC board meeting that evening, and that he had received several calls regarding the old mobile homes accumulating on the east end of Main Street and had referred them to the county health department.

**Suzanne Ferguson** had nothing to report.

**(1:42:50) LEGAL REPORT:** City Attorney Elverum updated Council on the status of the East Clark Street Sewer District. He reported that he received a phone call from an attorney regarding the limited capacity of the wastewater treatment plant and that he will be attending the DEQ meeting regarding stormwater.

**(1:52:35) PAYMENT OF BILLS:** Claims 299083 through 299138 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 Zoning Commission Meeting & Public Hearing, Wednesday, August 20, 6:00 p.m., City Hall Room 110
2. East Helena City Council Meeting, Tuesday, September 2, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Room 110
3. East Helena Planning Board Meeting, Wednesday, September 10, 6:00 p.m., City Hall Room 110
4. East Helena City Council Meeting, Tuesday, September 16, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Room 110

**ADJOURNMENT:** Mayor Harris adjourned the meeting at 8:22 p.m.

ATTEST:

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Clerk/Treasurer

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Mayor