

MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF EAST HELENA
CITY HALL – 306 EAST MAIN - ROOM 110
COUNCIL MEETING: 6:30 PM
DATE: TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 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 Wesley Feist, Councilmember Suzanne Ferguson, Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren, City Attorney Pete Elverum, Public Works Director Kevin Ore, Fire Chief Roger Campbell, Police Chief Mike Sanders, Patrol Officer Josh Buissereth, and Deputy Police Chief Ed Royce

PUBLIC PRESENT: Emily Frazier

ABSENT/EXCUSED: City Judge Dennis Loveless

(0:00:30) PUBLIC HEARING:

1. **FY26 Municipal Budget** – The draft budget was included in the council packet. Mayor Harris noted that changes discussed at the August 25th special budget meeting had been implemented. This was an information only item.
2. **FY26 Municipal Budget** – Mayor Harris called for public comment on the proposed budget and received none.
3. **FY26 Municipal Budget** – Council discussed the change to the police department's capital improvement allocation with Chief Sanders. The city's newly taxable property value was also discussed. Councilmember Dahl made a motion to approve the FY26 budget as presented. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. **(0:09:15) August 19, 2025 Draft Minutes** – The draft minutes of the August 19th council 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.
2. **(0:09:40) August 25, 2025 Draft Minutes** – The draft minutes of the August 25th special budget meeting were included in the council packet. There was no public comment. Councilmember Leland made a motion to approve the minutes as

presented. Councilmember Feist 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:

(0:10:30) Administration – A flyer for Lewis & Clark Public Health’s Neighborhood Parties 2026 was included in the council packet. An invitation to the METG and EPA Community Open House was on the council room table. Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren reported that the organizer of the Christmas Convoy was changing the date of the event from December 6th to December 13th.

(0:12:00) Police Department – Police Chief Mike Sanders reported that there had been 542 calls-for-service in August and that Officer Buissereth would be patrolling on his own soon.

(0:12:30) Public Works – A written report was included in the council packet. Public Works Director Kevin Ore reported that the sludge had been washed down at the wastewater treatment plant, he was moving ahead with finding a new garbage truck, and Helena Sand & Gravel will resume pavement repairs in mid-September.

(0:15:10) Volunteer Fire Department - Fire Chief Roger Campbell reported that the department had been standing by at football games and that three new members had joined.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **(0:16:15) Request for Use and Fee Waiver of the Council Room on Saturday, September 6th** – Helena Area Community Foundation Executive Director Emily Frazier requested use of the council room at no charge for the non-profit’s board retreat. There was no public comment. Councilmember Leland made a motion to approve the request. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. Councilmembers Leland, Ferguson, and Dahl voted aye. Councilmember Feist abstained. The motion passed.
2. **(0:19:10) Appointment of Eric Seidensticker to the East Helena Zoning Commission** – Mr. Seidensticker’s application was included in the council packet. Mayor Harris requested council’s approval to appoint him to the zoning commission. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve. Councilmember Dahl seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

(0:20:40) MAYOR’S REPORT: Mayor Harris reported that he had been shopping for a garbage truck and executing the budget. He showed Council METG’s Phoenix Award.

COUNCILMEMBERS’ REPORTS:

(0:23:15) Don Dahl reported that he attended the special budget meeting and the zoning commission meeting.

(0:23:55) Judy Leland reported that she attended the special budget meeting.

(0:24:05) Wesley Feist reported that he attended the Helena Area Chamber of Commerce board meeting, attended the Montana Opioid Abatement Trust meeting, met with the new Advanced Opportunities Facilitator at East Helena High, and he discussed East Helena's needs with Helena Food Share.

(0:26:00) Suzanne Ferguson reported that she attended the special budget meeting and the zoning commission meeting.

(0:26:25) LEGAL REPORT: City Attorney Elverum reported that he attended the special budget meeting and that he talked to an attorney regarding stormwater and the EPA and the DEQ.

(0:27:10) PAYMENT OF BILLS: Claims 299139 through 299169 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, September 16, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Room 110
2. East Helena Planning Board Meeting, Wednesday, September 24, 6:00 p.m., City Hall Room 110

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Harris adjourned the meeting at 6:57 p.m.

ATTEST:

Clerk/Treasurer

Mayor