

MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF EAST HELENA
CITY HALL – 306 EAST MAIN - ROOM 110
COUNCIL MEETING: 6:30 PM
DATE: TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 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 Feist 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, City Engineer Jeremy Perlinski, Zoning Officer Jeremy Fadness, and City Engineer Trevor Larson

PUBLIC PRESENT: Joe Nistler, Landy Leep (via Zoom), Julie Stoner, Jacob Kuntz (via Zoom), Josh French (via Zoom), and Jeff Larson

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

(0:00:30) PUBLIC HEARING:

1. **Conditional Use Permit for Multi-Family Development to Include 12 Four-Plex Buildings on the North Side of East Helena** – A copy of the staff report was included in the council packet. Zoning Officer Fadness discussed the report and conditions of approval. He recommended approval of the conditional use permit. Jeremy Perlinski of Robert Peccia & Associates answered questions regarding wastewater treatment plant capacity. This was an information-only item.
2. **Conditional Use Permit for Multi-Family Development to Include 12 Four-Plex Buildings on the North Side of East Helena** – Written public comment in opposition to the conditional use permit had been received from Julie Stoner and Prickly Pear Estates. Mayor Harris called for public comment. (0:08:40) Joe Nistler commented in favor of the conditional use permit. (0:09:45) Landy Leep commented on wastewater treatment plant capacity regarding the conditional use permit. (0:11:10) Jeff Larson commented in support of the conditional use permit. (0:12:05) Julie Stoner commented in opposition to the conditional use permit. (0:14:50) Jacob Kuntz commented on wastewater treatment plant capacity regarding the conditional use permit.
3. **Conditional Use Permit for Multi-Family Development to Include 12 Four-Plex Buildings on the North Side of East Helena** – Joe Nistler, Jeff Larsen, Jeremy Fadness, and Jeremy Perlinski answered questions from Council. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve the conditional use permit with consideration for

amendment to the seventh condition. Councilmember Dahl seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

(0:30:45) WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT UPGRADE PRESENTATION:

Jeremy Perlinski of Robert Peccia & Associates presented the second part of his presentation on upgrades to the wastewater treatment plant. He answered questions from Council. This was an information-only item.

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

(1:15:50) APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A copy of the draft minutes of the September 2, 2025 meeting was 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: City Judge Dennis Loveless was excused.

(1:16:10) DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

Administration – A copy of the Planning Board & Zoning Commission Roster was included in the council packet. Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren reported that the FitLot classes at Kennedy Park had concluded another successful season.

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

Public Works – A written report was included in the council packet. Public Works Director Kevin Ore reported that a request for proposals for a garbage truck would be published soon, a meeting with Federal Highways regarding the BUILD grant was upcoming, pavement repairs on Montana Avenue are scheduled for October 16th and 17th, and that the front door of city hall would be replaced on Friday.

Volunteer Fire Department - Fire Chief Roger Campbell had left by this time.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **(1:21:50) Resolution No. 633 to Authorize Submittal of MCEP Infrastructure Planning Grant** – A copy of the draft resolution was included in the council packet. There was no public comment. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve Resolution 633. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
2. **(1:22:30) Request to Close City Hall Administration Office Friday, November 28, 2025 and Allow Staff to Use Vacation Time** – Mayor Harris presented the admin office staff's annual request to close the office the day after Thanksgiving. There was no public comment. Councilmember Leland made a motion to approve the request. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

(1:23:25) MAYOR'S REPORT: Mayor Harris reported that he had been in discussions regarding budgeted personnel and meetings regarding the reconstruction of Montana Avenue/Valley Drive. He noted that METG's custodial appointment was still in limbo and that a letter had been received from Lieutenant Governor Juras regarding water rights for the city.

(1:25:30) COUNCILMEMBERS' REPORTS:

Don Dahl had nothing to report.

Judy Leland had nothing to report.

Wesley Feist reported that a former resident wants to put a bench along Prickly Pear Creek, he attended the Chamber of Commerce awards breakfast, met with members of Helena Regional Sports Association, attended the Montana Jewish Project's window dedication, attended a Rose Hills Subdivision community listening session, attended Coffee with the Chamber, and accepted the Community Relations position for NorthWestern Energy.

Suzanne Ferguson had nothing to report.

(1:27:50) LEGAL REPORT: City Attorney Elverum advised that a meeting be held to discuss Lieutenant Governor Juras' letter regarding water rights before the October 1st deadline.

(1:30:30) PAYMENT OF BILLS: Claims 299170 through 299238 were presented for Council's review. Councilmember Leland made a motion to pay the bills. Councilmember Ferguson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

MEETING SCHEDULE:

1. East Helena Planning Board Meeting, Wednesday, September 24, 6:00 p.m., City Hall Rm 110
2. East Helena City Council Meeting, Tuesday, October 7, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Rm 110
3. East Helena City Council Meeting, Tuesday, October 21, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Rm 110

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Harris adjourned the meeting at 8:02 p.m.

ATTEST:

Clerk/Treasurer

Mayor