

MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF EAST HELENA
CITY HALL – 306 EAST MAIN - ROOM 110
COUNCIL MEETING: 6:30 PM
DATE: TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 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 (via Zoom), Councilmember Judy Leland, Councilmember Wesley Feist, Councilmember Suzanne Ferguson, Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren, Public Works Director Kevin Ore, Deputy Police Chief Ed Royce, Patrol Officer Chris Kirkegaard, and Zoning Officer Jeremy Fadness

PUBLIC PRESENT: Cassie Wasoba, Greg Wirth, Jacob Kuntz, Cindy Stevick, Tony Prothero, Kim Copeland, Mark Runkle, Heather Lay, Jared Lay, Mark Leland, Piper Heath (via Zoom), Cindy Brooks (via Zoom), Sandra Kuntz (via Zoom), Unidentified (via Zoom), jfabian (via Zoom), Jeff Buscher, Dave Jensen, Vince Bray, Rachel Bray, Unidentified, Unidentified, Unidentified, and Callie Aschim

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

(0:01:00) PUBLIC HEARING 1:

1. **Conditional Use Permit for Re-Establishment of a Commercial Use at 422 Manlove Avenue in the Residential District** – A copy of the staff report was included in the council packet. Zoning Officer Fadness discussed the staff report and noted that the property is zoned residential and required the re-establishment of commercial use with the change of ownership. He recommended conditional approval of the permit. Kim Copeland answered questions from Council. This was an information-only item.
2. **Conditional Use Permit for Re-Establishment of a Commercial Use at 422 Manlove Avenue in the Residential District** – Mayor Harris called for public comment on the proposed re-establishment of the conditional use permit. There was no public comment.
3. **Conditional Use Permit for Re-Establishment of a Commercial Use at 422 Manlove Avenue in the Residential District** – Councilmember Leland made a motion to approve. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

(0:05:10) PUBLIC HEARING 2:

1. **Rose Hills Zone Map Amendment and Text Amendments** – A copy of the staff report was included in the council packet. Zoning Officer Fadness discussed the staff report and recommended conditional approval. This was an information-only item.
2. **Rose Hills Zone Map Amendment and Text Amendments** – Mayor Harris called for public comment on the proposed zone map and text amendments. (0:08:55) Greg Wirth of Stahly Engineering commented in support of the amendments. (0:12:20) Jacob Kuntz of Helena Area Habitat for Humanity presented information on the development and answered questions from Council.
3. **Rose Hills Zone Map Amendment and Text Amendments** – Councilmember Ferguson made a motion to approve. Councilmember Feist seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

(0:25:45) PUBLIC HEARING 3:

1. **Rose Hills Major Subdivision Application** – A copy of the staff report was included in the council packet. Zoning Officer Fadness discussed the staff report and recommended conditional approval. This was an information-only item.
2. **Rose Hills Major Subdivision Application** – Mayor Harris called for public comment on the application. (0:42:30) Greg Wirth commented in support of the subdivision application.
3. **Rose Hills Major Subdivision Application** – Council discussed their concerns regarding the proposed carriage lanes in the subdivision. Jacob Kuntz of Helena Area Habitat for Humanity, Zoning Officer Fadness, and Public Works Director Ore answered questions from Council and public present. Councilmember Feist made a motion to approve. Councilmember Leland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

(1:07:15) Community Impact Coordinator Jeff Buscher of the United Way of the Lewis and Clark Area presented information about the emergency sheltering plan for the unhoused population in the community.

(1:10:55) Dave Jensen commented in opposition to the condition of the new picnic tables installed at Main Street Park, enforcement of the Jake brake ordinance, and enforcement of the designated truck route. Mr. Jensen provided pictures and a written version of his comments for the record.

(1:15:25) APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A copy of the draft minutes of the October 7, 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.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS:

(1:16:10) Administration – Clerk/Treasurer Amy Thorngren reported that there had been requests for the water rights response letter to Lieutenant Governor Juras, a scam email had been reported by a conditional use permit applicant, and that the East Helena Police and Fire Departments had responded to an individual who collapsed in City Hall the day before.

(1:18:15) Police Department – A written report was on the council room table. Police Chief Mike Sanders was excused. Deputy Police Chief Ed Royce reported that there had been 467 calls-for-service so far in October, Officer Buissereth finished field training, Chief Sanders attended the Lewis & Clark County Citizens Advisory Committee meeting, Officer Zach Butler and Officer Kyle Butler had successfully resuscitated an individual during an emergency response, and that members of the department had attended the coordinating meeting with the county attorney.

(1:20:55) Public Works – A written report was included in the council packet. Public Works Director Kevin Ore reported that he attended the groundwater monitoring meeting, DEQ had performed the drinking water compliance inspection, the McClellan Creek water tank had it's one-year warranty inspection, there had been power surge damage at the well houses, and that Helena Sand & Gravel had performed pavement repairs.

Volunteer Fire Department - Fire Chief Roger Campbell was excused.

NEW BUSINESS: There was no new business.

(1:24:20) MAYOR'S REPORT: Mayor Harris reported that he had received calls regarding road repairs on Montana Avenue and trees downed by the heavy snow and that he had procured candy for the Halloween Stroll.

COUNCILMEMBERS' REPORTS:

(1:27:45) Don Dahl reported that he attended a sewer rate meeting.

(1:27:55) Judy Leland reported that she attended a sewer rate meeting.

(1:28:00) Wesley Feist reported that he attended a sewer rate meeting, Coffee with the Chamber, the MBAC board meeting, and the Community Health Improvement Plan meeting.

(1:30:10) Suzanne Ferguson thanked the public works department for their work cleaning up the tree branches downed by heavy snow in the parks.

LEGAL REPORT: City Attorney Elverum was excused.

(1:30:40) PAYMENT OF BILLS: Claims 299311 through 299333 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, November 4, 6:30 p.m., City Hall Room 110

2. East Helena City Council Meeting, Tuesday, November 18, 6:30 p.m., City Hall
Room 110

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Harris adjourned the meeting at 8:01 p.m.

ATTEST:

Clerk/Treasurer

Mayor