



HELENA CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

November 25, 2024, 5:00PM

PRE-COUNCIL: Work Session

A discussion and review of City Council agenda items, projects, department, committee, and board liaison reports, and task assigned for City operations and business.

All Members Present except Laura Joseph and Chris VanCleave.

1. Review 10/28/2024 Agenda Items

- AP/Bill Payments
- 10/28/2024 Meeting Minutes Review
- 11/07/2024 Special Meeting Minutes Review

2. Update from Council Boards and Committee Business

No board updates; no committee business. Reminder about the Christmas Parade coming up on December 7th, and the Christmas Tree Lighting and Market on December 6th.

3. Mayor's Update- Hillsboro Trail is back open as of Friday, November 22nd. Please keep our Fire Marshal Keith Martin in your prayers, as he had a medical emergency over the weekend. Also, another reminder for the Christmas Tree Lighting and Market, and the Christmas Parade.

4. Manpower Assessment by Legacy Leadership Services LLC

In the interest of wanting to update documents, policies, and procedures for the City, we will be conducting a manpower assessment, starting with the Police Department. Five to ten different companies were considered for this study, this one is highly recommended and has no affiliation with the police department whatsoever. The purpose is to get an honest assessment of where the department is, and where the department needs to go. This assessment will consist of a confidential report, obscuring all names and identifying information of people he speaks with. Upon completion, an executive summary will be presented to the council.

5. Designation of Grievance Committee Member

Will be tabled this evening, since no names have been discussed yet. Council to work on names to discuss for a potential committee member. The council is to designate one member, city employees to designate one member by vote/election, and the two members to then designate a third member. We have a couple of outstanding grievances that need to be addressed, so a committee member needs to be designated by the Council during the December 9th work session.

6. Gretchen DiFante – City Manager, Pelham

Presentation on Railroad Crossing Elimination, aka: flyover grant. The proposed solution realigns CR-52 at US-31 with the construction of a bridge over two railroad crossings on CR-52, eliminating the existing railroad crossings at Lee Street. The proposed solution will also widen CR-52 east of US-31 to four lanes to accommodate current and future traffic needs. Two additional bridges will also be required: a bridge over Buck Creek at the west end of the project and a bridge on US-31N to reconfigure the intersection to meet current and future traffic demands.

Funding is still being negotiated for the \$10.6 million needed local match, but proposed funding has ALDOT and CSX funding 30%; Shelby County funding 35%; and Pelham and Helena to split the remaining 35% at \$2 million for Pelham and \$1.5 million for Helena, respectively. The project is proposed to start the first quarter of 2026; Pelham is asking the city council to commit to these funds in the next FY budget to have available for 2026.

7. Discussion to Modify Mayor's Salary and Separate Mayor from Helena Utility Board; Discussion of Modification of Council Salaries

The Utility Board voted last week to separate the Mayor from the Utility Board starting next term; questions still remain on the Council regarding what, if anything, the council needs to do from this point. According to city attorney Brian Hayes, the Utility Board passed by-laws stating that the mayor cannot also serve as chairman or board member of the Utility Board, effective November 2025. Hal Woodman expressed wanting more information regarding travel/education/conference expenses to factor into the mayor's salary going forward. Mayor Puckett reminds the council that both the Mayor's and City Council's salaries must be passed before February 26th for the next term.

8. Confirmation of 12/09/2024 Meeting date.

There being no further business the work session was dismissed at 5:40 pm.

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Madison Harris".

Madison Harris
City Clerk

SIGNED:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alice Lobell".

Alice Lobell
Council President



HELENA CITY COUNCIL

November 25, 2024

MINUTES HELENA CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING November 25, 2024

The Council of the City of Helena met in a regularly scheduled meeting on Monday night, November 25, 2024, in the Helena Municipal Building at 6:00 P.M., regular place and time for holding said meetings.

Council President Alice Lobell called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.
Gary Bowman, pastor from Gospel Light Baptist Church led the prayer.
The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Katelyn Holmes.

Roll Call

Present: Alice Lobell, Chris Willis, Laura Joseph, and Harold Woodman
Members: Alice Lobell, Chris Willis, Chris VanCleave, Harold Woodman, Laura Joseph
Absent: Chris VanCleave
Visitors: Mayor Puckett, City Attorney Brian Hayes, Fire Chief Chris Miller, Police Lieutenant Charles Hudson, Daniel Dearing, Jason Poe, Bill Miller, DJ Jones, and others (list attached)

Council President Alice Lobell declared a quorum present, and meeting was open for business.

5. Minutes Approved/Corrected from Prior Meeting(s)

Chris Willis made a motion to approve the Pre-Council minutes, Regular Meeting Minutes October 28, 2024, with a second by **Laura Joseph**.

AYE: Chris Willis, Laura Joseph, Harold Woodman, Alice Lobell.
NAY: None
Motion carried.

6. Minutes Approved/Corrected from Prior Meeting(s)

Chris Willis made a motion to approve the Special Called Meeting Minutes November 7, 2024, with a second by **Laura Joseph**.

Roll Call:
AYE: Chris Willis, Laura Joseph, Alice Lobell.
NAY: None
ABSTAIN: Harold Woodman
Motion carried.

7. Revenue Report: Bill Payment

Chris Willis made a motion to approve the bills with a second by **Harold Woodman**.

AYE: Chris Willis, Harold Woodman, Alice Lobell, Laura Joseph.
NAY: None
Motion carried.

8. Municipal Operations Report from Mayor J. Brian Puckett:

Christmas Tree Lighting and Market is Friday, December 6th; followed by the Christmas Parade on December 7th. Please keep Fire Marshal Keith Martin in your prayers as he had a medical emergency over the weekend. The Hillsboro trail is officially back open.

9. Recognition – Employees Retiring with 25+ Years of Service

Mayor Puckett recognized employees from the City and Utility Board retiring this year after 25+ years of service to the City; including Chaed Agee (25 years), Randy Perrin (25 years), Heath Bartlett (26 years), Keith Sims (26 years), Amanda Traywick (27 years), Brian Hinds (37 years)

10. Recognition – Completion of Economic Development Academy

Mayor Puckett recognized employees, council members, and board members that completed the Economic Development Academy for the City of Helena; including Brian Puckett, Amanda Traywick, Alice Lobell, Chris VanCleave, Chris Willis, Harold Woodman, Brian Hayes, and Trish Rushing.

11. Recognition – Certified Municipal Official

Mayor Puckett recognized Chris Willis becoming a Certified Municipal Official.

12. Wade Roley – 3519 Stonecreek Place – Requested to Speak RE: Helena Forward Project

Addressed the Council with concerns regarding the Helena Forward Project.

13. Recognition – Resolution 11252024 – Katelyn Holmes' Achievement of Eagle Scout

Harold Woodman presented Resolution 11252024 – Recognizing Katelyn Holmes' Achievement of Eagle Scout to Katelyn Holmes and parents.

14. Approve/Deny: Resolution 11252024A – Hillsboro Parkway Functional Classification

Harold Woodman made a motion to approve Resolution 11252024A – Hillsboro Parkway Functional Classification; with a second by **Laura Joseph**.

Roll Call Vote:

AYE: Harold Woodman, Laura Joseph, Chris Willis, and Alice Lobell

NAY: None

Motion carried.

15. Approve/Deny: Delegation of Authority of Director of Personnel

Chris Willis made a motion to approve the Delegation of Authority of Director of Personnel; with a second by **Harold Woodman**.

Roll Call Vote:

AYE: Harold Woodman, Alice Lobell, Laura Joseph, and Chris Willis

NAY: None

Motion carried.

16. Approve/Deny: Designation of Grievance Committee Member

Alice Lobell made a motion to table Designation of Grievance Committee Member until a committee member could be decided at the next council meeting.

Roll Call Vote:

AYE: None

NAY: None

Tabled for next work session/council meeting.

17. Approve/Deny: Police Department Manpower Study by Legacy Leadership Services LLC with a Budget Amendment of up to \$15,000.00

Laura Joseph made a motion to approve Police Department Manpower Study by Legacy Leadership Services LLC with a Budget Amendment of up to \$15,000.00; with a second by **Chris Willis**.

Roll Call Vote:

AYE: Alice Lobell, Chris Willis, Laura Joseph, and Harold Woodman

NAY: None

Motion carried.

18. First Reading – Ordinance 999-2024A – Annexation – Kathy Townsend – 163 Pleasant Place – 12 8 28 0 000 009.002

19. First Reading – Ordinance 1000-2024A – Annexation – David & Lois Weaver – 8901 Bluff Ridge Road – 42 00 32 2 000 004.000

20. First Reading – Ordinance 1001-2024A – Annexation – David & Lois Weaver – 8885 Bluff Ridge Road – 42 00 32 2 000 003.000

21. First Reading – Ordinance 1002-2024A – Annexation – Devin Harmon – 8891 Bluff Ridge Road – 42 00 32 2 000 003.002

22. First Reading – Ordinance 1003-2024A – Annexation – Debra McCraw – 8927 Bluff Ridge Road – 42 00 32 2 000 004.001

23. First Reading – Ordinance 1004-2024 – Requirements to Work Within the Public Right of Way

24. Council Comments

Chris VanCleave: absent

Harold Woodman: Congratulations again to Katelyn Holmes and your accomplishment in our community. It's so great to

see all of the recent retirees, we will miss you guys, appreciate all of your dedication to the city, and we will notice your absence.

Laura Joseph: I'd like to echo Hal, and also give congratulations to those that completed the Economic Development Study. It's a great time to visit the library this week while the kids are out of school and check out some books. The library has a new app called myLIBRO. The library was also present at International Night at HMS with the Diversity & Inclusion Board. Happy Thanksgiving to all!

Chris Willis: Congratulations to the employees that retired, we lost a lot of institutional knowledge with all your years of service. I also wanted to congratulate both the police and fire departments for the success at the active shooter training today – that's one training we hope is never needed.

Alice Lobell: I also want to echo congratulations to everyone recognized tonight. I also want to read a portion of a letter I received today from Councilman Chris VanCleave: "As you know, in February of this year I was hospitalized for a heart ailment, during which my medical team discovered a malignancy in my pancreas. While the overall prognosis has been good, complications have persisted, and my doctors have strongly encouraged me to cut back commitments and prioritize my health and well-being. I have wrestled with this decision for several months now, and I know that it is the right decision for me. With Immediate effect, I am resigning from the Helena City Council."

25. Adjourn

There being no further business meeting was adjourned at 6:34 pm.

ATTEST:



Madison Harris
City Clerk

SIGNED:



Alice Lobell
Council President