



HELENA CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

April 14, 2025, 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.

1. Review 04/14/2025 Agenda Items

- AP/Bill Payments
- 03/24/2025 Meeting Minutes Review

2. Update from Council Boards and Committee Business

Helena Historical Preservation Committee – Linda Wurstner spoke and thanked all of the effort from HES for the 100th birthday celebration. Hikes are ongoing every Saturday this month at Lee Springs and are unguided, except for the guided hike on April 26.

Beautification Board – Rebekah Henderson stated that the Board has several new members, and will be gearing up for the annual basket planting on April 26 at the Caboose.

TAG Board – Ken Griffith stated that reviewing this round of applications went extremely well, and that the Board was able to fund all but about 5 applications received. Ken Griffith also stated that he has been checking with the bookkeepers at the schools regarding the spending of the funds awarded.

Teen Council – Alice Lobell stated that the Teen Council had their field trip to the Capitol Building last week, it went very well and they asked some really great questions. The annual Teen/Seniors Dinner will be coming up at the beginning of May as well.

3. Mayor's Update

The railroad crossing in Old Town is coming up on April 26; CSX notified us that they would be closing HWY 261 in Old Town for 24 hours to complete repairs, but we do not have a start time yet. Public Works have been busy with lots of street patching and stormwater cleaning. The valve box at Joe Tucker Pond is in need of repairs and will have to drain the pond to complete the repairs. Two of our firefighters just graduated from Fire College – are both local graduates of HHS, and both completed a degree in EMS from USA – and are now working as Fire Medics. The Annual Easter Egg Hunt will be this Saturday at Joe Tucker Park, sponsored by the Church at Old Town. Our auditor is here tonight to talk to us about the annual audit for the City.

4. General Fund Audit for FYE2024

Walker Gann from Dent Moses presented annual audit to the Council.

5. Discussion of Vacancy on TAG Board and Accepting New Applications

David Little submitted a resignation letter to Councilmember Andy Healy via email on 04/03/2025. Opening applications back up on website for two weeks.

6. Discussion of Spring TAG Grant Applications

Ken Griffin spoke during board updates; next round of grants will be in October, and that will put them back on schedule. Current Spring grants will be awarded at the next Council Meeting.

7. Discussion of Employee Handbook

We originally reached out to HRM, who just completed a handbook for the Utilities Board, and have completed handbooks for other cities such as Pelham, Calera, and Clanton. Attorney Brian Hayes states that other HR companies will be subscription-based, and we'd have to pay for that annually as opposed to HRM which would be a one-time expense. Chris Willis would like to make sure we have interest and involvement from employees in the process, maybe a representative from each department to convey department concerns and make sure that all employees feel that they're being heard.

8. Discussion of Adding Regular Period for Public Comment in Council Meetings

Andy Healy states that he thinks having a regular period each Council Meeting for public comment is important; he states that where other cities have this it seems to be well-received by residents. Other considerations were to either have specific topics for discussion that correlate to the agenda versus having a period for general concerns; maybe adding rules for speaking and establishing a 3-minute limit per resident; perhaps waiting to open public comment towards the end of the meeting before Council Comments.

Hal Woodman states that we have to have and allow public hearings on certain topics anyway, and asked how this would be different.

Alice Lobell states that she is not opposed to this idea, but would prefer to have the topics and information ahead of time to make sure we're not hearing multiple speakers on the same exact topic, and would be able to narrow down the time if possible. Maybe having something like a speakers list with the sign-in sheet or with the City Clerk to gauge topics and interest.

This item will be added to the agenda on 04/28/2025 for consideration.

9. Discussion of Pelham Flyover Project

Mayor Puckett states that we have not been party to negotiations since their presentation, and there was no discussion prior to them coming to our work session several months ago. Hal Woodman suggested going back to Pelham and asking for a seat at the table for any future negotiations on the project so Helena can be involved more directly. Mayor Puckett stated that he would make contact and ask to be party to any further negotiations.

10. Confirmation of 04/28/2025 Meeting date.

There being no further business, the work session was dismissed at 5:53 pm.

ATTEST:



Madison Harris
City Clerk

SIGNED:



Alice Lobell
Council President



HELENA CITY COUNCIL

April 14, 2025

MINUTES HELENA CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING April 14, 2025

The Council of the City of Helena met in a regularly scheduled meeting on Monday night, April 14, 2025, 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 6:02 P.M.

Representative Kenneth Pascal led the prayer.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Anna Kate Joseph and Grayson Mayer.

4. Roll Call

Present: Alice Lobell, Andy Healy, Chris Willis, Laura Joseph, Harold Woodman

Members: Alice Lobell, Andy Healy, Chris Willis, Laura Joseph, Harold Woodman

Absent:

Visitors: City Attorney Brian Hayes, Fire Chief Chris Miller, Police Chief Mike Wood, Dan Dearing, Jason Poe, and others (see attached list)

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

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

Laura Joseph made a motion to approve the Pre-Council minutes and regular meeting minutes on March 24, 2025, with a second by **Andy Healy**.

AYE: Alice Lobell, Laura Joseph, Andy Healy

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Harold Woodman, Chris Willis

Motion carried.

6. Revenue Report: Bill Payment

Chris Willis made a motion to approve the bills with a second by **Andy Healy**.

AYE: Alice Lobell, Andy Healy, Laura Joseph, Chris Willis, Harold Woodman

NAY: None

Motion carried.

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

The railroad crossing in Old Town is coming up on April 26; CSX notified us that they would be closing HWY 261 in Old Town for 24 hours to complete repairs, but we do not have a start time yet. Public Works have been busy with lots of street patching and stormwater cleaning. The valve box at Joe Tucker Pond is in need of repairs and will have to drain the pond to complete the repairs. Two of our firefighters just graduated from Fire College – are both local graduates of HHS, and both completed a degree in EMS from USA – and are now working as Fire Medics. The Annual Easter Egg Hunt will be this Saturday at Joe Tucker Park, sponsored by the Church at Old Town. Our auditor is here tonight to talk to us about the annual audit for the City.

9. Approve/Deny – Appointment of New Police Chief

Chris Willis made a motion to accept the Appointment of New Police Chief Mike Wood; with a second by **Andy Healy**.

Roll Call Vote:

AYE: Alice Lobell, Andy Healy, Laura Joseph, Chris Willis, Harold Woodman

NAY:

Motion carried.

Judge Victor Portella swore in Mike Wood as Police Chief.

10. Recognition – Helena High School Band Majorettes – State Champions

11. Recognition – Madison Randall – High School Classic Champion

12. Recognition – Piper Boss – 1st Place Advanced 13-15 Show Twirl

13. Recognition – Marlin Radice – 3rd Place Advanced 16-18 Show Twirl

14. Recognition – Keirstan Rodgers – 5th Place Beginner Show Twirl

15. Resolution 04142025 – Declaring April as Child Abuse Prevention Month

Judge Erin Wellborn accepted the Resolution presented by Laura Joseph.

16. Approve/Deny – General Fund Audit for FYE2024

Andy Healy made a motion to approve General Fund Audit for FYE2024; with a second by **Harold Woodman**.

Roll Call Vote:

AYE: Alice Lobell, Andy Healy, Chris Willis, Harold Woodman

NAY:

ABSTAIN: Laura Joseph

Motion carried.

17. Public Hearing – RE: Ordinance 1009-2025R

RESIDENTS TO SPEAK IN FAVOR:

ZAC PARRISH – PROPERTY OWNER

ASHLEY COOPER – 4558 S SHADES CREST ROAD

KATHY HAMMANN – 2728 ROSEBAY LANE

RESIDENTS TO SPEAK IN OPPOSITION:

CHARMAINE FILLMORE – 2695 JASMINE LANE

SULTANA GODWIN – 2856 ASTER LAKE ROAD

DAVID CLAYBOUGH – 2548 OAKLEAF CIRCLE

CHERYL CLAYBOUGH – 2548 OAKLEAF CIRCLE

KWANFARI HERNDON – 817 GINGER LANE

DAVID LEE – 2516 OAKLEAF CIRCLE

LAETITIA COLEMAN – 7204 SILVERBELL CIRCLE

CHRISTINE SALBERG – 2741 PIEDMONT DRIVE

18. Approve/Deny – Ordinance 1009-2025R – Pre-zone/Annexation – Parrish Building Company – 660 Aviation Road SE and 680 Aviation Road SE – 42 00 11 4 000 003.000 and 42 00 11 3 000 003.000, with a favorable recommendation from Planning & Zoning on March 20, 2025

Chris Willis made a motion to approve Ordinance 1009-2025R – Pre-zone/Annexation – Parrish Building Company – 660 Aviation Road SE and 680 Aviation Road SE – 42 00 11 4 000 003.000 and 42 00 11 3 000 003.000; with a second by **Harold Woodman**.

Roll Call Vote:

AYE: Alice Lobell, Andy Healy, Chris Willis, Harold Woodman, Laura Joseph

NAY:

Motion carried.

19. Council Comments

Harold Woodman: None.

Chris Willis: It is National Telecommunication Week, so I wanted to thank our Dispatchers for all of their hard work; they are often overlooked. I would like to thank Sgt. O'Farrell and Lt. Hudson for all of their work these past few weeks, and congratulations to Chief Wood!

Andy Healy: Congratulations to Chief Wood, we look forward to working with you. Thank you to the citizens for coming out and speaking, I know I say it every time, but we do really appreciate hearing from you. I also wanted to note that I drove out to the site on Aviation several times leading up to this to help inform my decision.

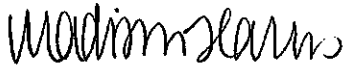
Laura Joseph: Thank you to the citizens, and congratulations to Chief Wood. The Planning & Zoning meeting is this week on Thursday at 6PM. Our next HOT Board concert is on May 17. Also the Library enjoyed a visit from the HES first grade classes on their field trip last week. The Library will also be hosting a Plant Swap on April 26 from 11-1.

Alice Lobell: I want to thank the Council for all of their hard work, and also thank the residents that came out to speak. I know it is frustrating, but we do want to hear from you. We take all of your feedback into account, but ultimately we have to do what is best for the City. Also, Teen Council has left the room, but that is because they are currently busy stuffing Easter eggs for the Easter event this weekend, and we appreciate all of their work!

20. Adjourn

There being no further business meeting was adjourned at 6:54 pm.

ATTEST:



Madison Harris
City Clerk

SIGNED:



Alice Lobell
Council President