



HELENA CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

September 22, 2025, 5:00PM

PRE-COUNCIL: Work Session

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

All Members Present. Work session started at 5:03 pm.

1. Review 09/22/2025 Agenda Items

- AP/Bill Payments
- 09/08/2025, 09/11/2025 Meeting Minutes Review

Will be adding Chief Wood to discuss grant funding and request for budget amendment for Police K9 to the Work Session. Will be removing Sherry Wood from the Agenda tonight at her request to the City Clerk earlier today.

2. Update from Council Boards and Committee Business

TAG Grant Discussion from below discussed now. TAG Board wants to set their fall grant timeline and make sure that the funding is consistent with last time, with no increase to grants dispersed.

Beautification Board pumpkin house and scarecrow display staging is set for October 2 at 5:30PM at the Caboose, volunteers are welcome, and a Facebook post should be going up soon for volunteers; Teen Council to volunteer as well. Farmers Market will be having their next event on October 25 from 8AM-12PM. Also, we are hearing that vendors are being approached on Facebook, being asked to Venmo funds to the Farmers Market. Please be advised that those are scams and are not a representative of the Farmers Market or the City.

Helena Historical Preservation Committee reports that Myers Tree Service came out and cleared out trees at the coke ovens and the trail, they went above and beyond also cleaning up supports over the Buck Creek trail and railbed approach. Also, please keep Ken Penhale in your prayers as he has been in the hospital recently.

Oktoberfest event for the HOT Board went well and had good turnout. This year they had more tents to give some more shade for folks and that probably helped some people stay longer. HOT Board had a meeting last week and reviewed and approved the application for Jonathan Hollabaugh to join the board; this item is currently not on the agenda for tonight for Council to approve, will be added to tonight's Agenda.

Library will have a book sale coming up in October. Buck Creek Festival is coming up on October 10-11, and October 11 is also Jack Gray Day and will be celebrated at the festival.

Harold Woodman states that Jill Jones that presented to Council at the last meeting RE: Bee City USA has reached out to Pelham and is working on getting quotes for the program.

3. Mayor's Update

I just want to show appreciation to the City Clerk for all of the hard work she has put in this election season.

4. TAG Grant Discussion

It was discussed during Council Boards and Committee Business.

5. Chief Wood – Police Department Grant Funding

Police Department was awarded a Kowaca grant today, in addition to grant funding secured from Jefferson County Commissioner in pursuit of reinstating a K9 unit. There was another grant in the works, but they have backed out and not responded. Each grant would have made up about 1/3 of the total costs. The total cost for the K9 unit would be approximately \$27,000, and the grants secured so far leave the Police Department only lacking \$7900 for the K9 insert for the vehicle. Chief Wood is asking Council if the remaining \$7900 needed could come from General Fund in either this budget as an amendment, or the next budget. Chris Willis states that we can add it as a budget amendment for this current budget. Alice Lobell asks what kind of dog we would be getting, and Chief Wood states a tracking/sniffing dog for locating missing children/residents but also can do drug tracking if needed.

6. Sports Complex Turf Discussion

Mayor Puckett states that he sent out a timeline last week to Council for whether the project starts now or not, fields would not be ready until spring 2027. Chris Willis states he has had parents ask him at the ballfield recently why Council delayed the approval because they felt this was a great use of funds; Alice Lobell agrees. Laura Joseph thinks it is a good project, not sure if it is the best use of funds or timing right now and thinks that the new administration coming in should have the

opportunity to look at this as well. Mayor Puckett states that the bond already secured and being paid for will be paying for these updates, why delay now when we're already paying for the bond itself. The current phase one for the new Sportsplex would leave 3.5MM at the end for updates to existing parks. Chris Willis and Alice Lobell both express concerns if we continue to delay and potentially drive costs up as time goes on.

7. Discussion of FY25 FY26 Budget

Laura Joseph stated that Resolution 09222025B to amend payroll has not really been discussed yet what all promotions are included. Mayor Puckett stated that this resolution would include the promotions, cost of living adjustment, and step raises where applicable. Chris Willis stated that we would have to do the budget amendment for payroll in order to approve Resolution 09222025C to extend the current budget out 90 days. Willis asked which promotions are mentioned in the resolution, to which Mayor Puckett stated that there are three promotions in the Parks Department, and the City Clerk/Treasurer position as well. Chris Willis also asked if this would also include the new employee needs that have previously been discussed, Mayor Puckett stated that it did not in Resolution 09222025B. Willis states that one Admin, three Fire Department, and 2 Police Department positions are needed in quarter one of FY2026. Willis also states that the Police Department Corporal scale needed to be corrected to mirror the FireMedic scale, as the current scale only goes through step 6. Laura Joseph asked if all this needs to be done tonight, or could we possibly wait for the new administration to come in to look at and approve. Alice Lobell asked both Fire and Police Chiefs what they need right now, and both stated at least two new employees, but that the resolution would also need to include training and equipment costs associated with new employees. Laura Joseph stated that she wants to wait on all new employees, minus the admin position as that would affect the move to the new City Hall when completed, stating that she does not want the Council to make a ton of changes and hand that over to the incoming Council to sift through. Alice Lobell argues that any new hires would take at least 30 days, but states that Council should look at at least one Admin, two Fire Department, and two Police Department, stating that at the moment she does not have enough information to speak on Parks or Public Works as to what their immediate needs are, but can speak with those department heads later. Attorney Brian Hayes states that any new employees approved would need its own resolution, and we can draft that tonight before the Council Meeting begins.

8. Confirmation of 10/27/2025 Meeting, and 09/30/2025 Election Canvas Meeting.

There being no further business, the work session was dismissed at 5:49 pm.

ATTEST:



Madison Harris
City Clerk

SIGNED:



Alice Lobell
Council President



HELENA CITY COUNCIL

September 22, 2025

**MINUTES HELENA CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
September 22, 2025**

The Council of the City of Helena met in a regularly scheduled meeting on Monday night, September 22, 2025, in the Helena Municipal Building at 6:00 P.M., the regular place and time for holding said meetings.

Council President Alice Lobell called the meeting to order at 6:46 P.M.

Representative Kenneth Paschal led the prayer.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Teen Council member Piper Boss and Marin Radice.

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, Bill Miller, 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)

Chris Willis made a motion to approve the Pre-Council minutes and regular meeting minutes from September 8, 2025, with a second by **Andy Healy**.

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Laura Joseph

Motion carried.

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

Chris Willis made a motion to approve the special-called meeting minutes from September 11, 2025, with a second by **Laura Joseph**.

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

NAY: None

ABSTAIN: Harold Woodman

Motion carried.

7. Revenue Report: Bill Payment

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

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

NAY: None

Motion carried.

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

Make sure you all get out and vote tomorrow for the runoff election from 7AM-7PM.

9. Library Grant Presentation – Representatives Hulsey, Representative Paschal, and Senator Weaver

Dan Dearing to present.

10. Approve/Deny – New HOT Board Appointment per HOT Board Recommendation – Jonathan Hollabaugh

Laura Joseph made a motion to approve New HOT Board Appointment per HOT Board Recommendation – Jonathan Hollabaugh; with a second by **Chris Willis**.

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

NAY: None
Motion carried.

11. Proclamation – Recognizing October 2025 as Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Presented to Mary Katherine Thorne with SafeHouse.

12. Approve/Deny – Resolution 08252025A – Bond Proceeds

Chris Willis made a motion to approve Resolution 08252025A – Bond Proceeds; with no second.

AYE: None

NAY: None

Motion not carried.

13. Approve/Deny – Resolution 09112025A – Award Low Bid to Specialty Turf and CO-OP Turf Purchase from GeoSources

Per Council President Alice Lobell, Resolution 09112025A is contingent on the approval of Resolution 08252025A, and since that was not approved Resolution 09112025A will be tabled tonight.

14. Approve/Deny – Resolution 09222025 – Declaring October 14th Charlie Kirk Day

Chris Willis made a motion to approve Resolution 09222025 – Declaring October 14th Charlie Kirk Day, with a second by **Laura Joseph**.

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

NAY: None

Motion carried.

15. Approve/Deny – Resolution 09222025A – Declaring Certain Property Listed Under the Assets of the Helena Police Department

Chris Willis made a motion to approve Resolution 09222025A – Declaring Certain Property Listed Under the Assets of the Helena Police Department; with a second by **Laura Joseph**.

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

NAY: None

Motion carried.

16. Approve/Deny – Resolution 09222025B – Amendment to FY25 Budget for Payroll

Harold Woodman made a motion to amend Resolution 09222025B and remove section "WHEREAS, the City Council recognizes the need to honor and implement all promotions that were previously approved and scheduled to take effect on October 1, 2025;" with a second by **Laura Joseph**.

AYE: Andy Healy, Laura Joseph, Harold Woodman

NAY: Alice Lobell, Chris Willis

Motion carried.

Laura Joseph made a motion to approve Resolution 09222025B – Amendment to FY25 Budget for Payroll as amended; with a second by **Harold Woodman**.

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

NAY: None

Motion carried.

17. Approve/Deny – Resolution 09222025F – Resolution to Add New Employees Under Current Fiscal Year 2025 Budget

Harold Woodman made a motion to amend Resolution 09222025F to state hiring after November 3, 2025; with a second by **Andy Healy**.

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

NAY: None

Motion carried.

Chris Willis made a motion to approve Resolution 09222025F – Resolution to Add New Employees Under Current Fiscal Year 2025 Budget as amended; with a second by **Harold Woodman**.

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

NAY: None

Motion carried.

18. Approve/Deny – Resolution 09222025G – Purchase and Install a K-9 Insert for Police Vehicle

Chris Willis made a motion to approve Resolution 09222025G – Purchase and Install a K-9 Insert for Police Vehicle; with a second by **Harold Woodman**.

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

NAY: None

Motion carried.

19. Approve/Deny – Resolution 09222025H – Budget Amendments for Fire Department

Chris Willis made a motion to approve Resolution 09222025H – Budget Amendments for Fire Department; with a second by **Laura Joseph**.

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

NAY: None

Motion carried.

20. Approve/Deny – Resolution 09222025C – Continuation of FY25 Budget

Laura Joseph made a motion to table Resolution 09222025C – Continuation of FY25 Budget until special-called meeting on September 30, 2025; with a second by **Andy Healy**.

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

NAY: None

Motion carried.

21. Approve/Deny – Resolution 09222025D – FY26 Budget

Chris Willis made a motion to remove Resolution 09222025D – FY26 Budget; with a second by **Andy Healy**.

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

NAY: None

Motion carried.

22. Approve/Deny – Resolution 09222025E – Renewal of Utility Franchise Agreement

Laura Joseph made a motion to approve Resolution 09222025E – Renewal of Utility Franchise Agreement; with a second by **Chris Willis**.

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

NAY: None

Motion carried.

23. First Reading – Ordinance 309-82 Second Amendment Accepting ADOR Edit

Laura Joseph made a motion to suspend the rules for immediate consideration; with a second by **Chris Willis**.

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

NAY: None

Motion carried.

Laura Joseph made a motion to approve Ordinance 309-82 Second Amendment Accepting ADOR Edit; with a second by **Andy Healy**.

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

NAY: None

Motion carried.

19. Period for Public Comment – 3 Minutes per Resident, to Sign in with City Clerk between Work Session and Council Meeting

Residents wanting to speak will sign-in with City Clerk prior to the meeting and will be given three minutes to speak. Public comment was taken.

20. Council Comments

Harold Woodman: HOT Board did outstanding for Oktoberfest, and I want to thank them for all of their hard work.

Chris Willis: Thanks to all of you for hanging around, this has been a long night.

Andy Healy: Tom, I understand that we need to do better with the microphones, and we will try. Thanks to all of you for coming out, Teen Council as well, I know you have school tomorrow. Please make sure and get out and vote tomorrow.

Laura Joseph: Thank you to the HOT Board for another amazing season, and congrats to Jonathan on joining the team. Library will be having a book sale in October, please make sure to support. Thank you to the representatives here tonight for the grants for the Library, we appreciate it.

Alice Lobell: Everyone took my comments, but I want to say Jonathan, I am very proud of you. Teen Council, thank you for hanging in there tonight. Our next meeting will be September 30, 2025 at noon.

24. Adjourn

There being no further business meeting was adjourned at 7:48 pm.

ATTEST:

Madison Harris

Madison Harris
City Clerk

SIGNED:

Alice Lobell

Alice Lobell
Council President