HELENA CITY COUNCIL SEPTEMBER 14, 2026, 5:00PM

MINUTES HELENA CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION
SEPTEMBER 14, 2026

The purpose of the work session was to discuss and review City Council agenda items, projects, departmental updates, committee and board liaison reports, and tasks related to City operations and business.

All Council Members were present except Councilman McDaniels. Council President Brooke Dodson called the work session to order at 5:00 PM.

1. Review of 09/14/2026 Agenda Items

Council President Dodson reviewed the agenda. Council discussed sidewalk connectivity associated with the Riverwoods Sector 12 final plat. It was noted that the approved plans showed sidewalks and that sidewalks outside the individual lots had been installed, with one remaining correction in progress. No questions were raised regarding the second reading of Ordinance 1043-2026 Amended.

4. Update from Council Boards and Committee Business

Council members provided brief updates. Andy Healy reported that the TAG Grant meeting had been rescheduled. Cathy Hammann discussed the pergola project and noted that Helena Hollow had offered to donate materials and cover certain project costs. Mayor Rosener reported that work on the pergola was expected to begin Wednesday and that cedar would be used where practical. Dennis Wilson reminded everyone of upcoming Oktoberfest and Buck Creek Festival activities.

5. Discussion of FYE 27 Budget

Mayor Rosener provided a preliminary update on preparation of the FY 2027 budget. He emphasized that the figures were still preliminary and would be made available for public review before adoption. Revenue projections were discussed, including sales tax performance, which was trending above projected budget levels.

Department-level budget-to-actual information was discussed for Court, Inspections, Library, and Public Works. Discussion included staffing changes, training and certification costs, the possible need for an additional vehicle in Inspections, grant accounting, seasonal staffing in Public Works, and the use of restricted or other eligible funding sources for certain Public Works expenses.

Mayor Rosener stated that additional department meetings were scheduled and that the goal was to have a more complete budget available for review around the September 28 meeting. Council discussed whether department heads should make formal budget presentations. Department heads will be available to answer Council questions, and formal presentations may be scheduled if Council desires. Council also discussed allowing adequate time for both Council and the public to review the proposed budget before adoption.

6. Discussion – Shelby County Reporter / Helena The Magazine FY2027 Contract

Representatives of Shelby County Reporter/Helena The Magazine discussed the proposed FY 2027 publication contract with Council. Topics included page count, advertising and editorial content, mailing coverage, digital availability, distribution to Helena residents in both Shelby and Jefferson Counties, production deadlines, quality control, event calendars, and the use of QR codes to direct readers to current online information.

Council discussed beginning with a bi-monthly publication schedule and developing a small internal group to coordinate content. Council also discussed including practical City information and frequently asked questions from residents. The representatives stated that the publication can be adjusted as the City refines the format.

Council requested confirmation of the mailing/distribution population, particularly for Helena residents in Jefferson County who may not currently receive the publication. Andy Healy requested that the contract not be signed until the updated distribution count and pricing could be confirmed. The item was left for further consideration.

6. Public Comment Sign-Up

Council President Brooke Dodson announced that members of the public wishing to address the Council during the regular meeting could register with the City Clerk between the conclusion of the work session and the start of the Council Meeting.

Adjournment

The next regularly scheduled Work Session was announced for September 28, 2026, at 5:00 PM. There being no further business, the Work Session was adjourned at 6:05 PM. Council President Brooke Dodson announced that the regular City Council Meeting would begin at 6:30 PM.

ATTEST:
Patti Morrow
Treasurer/Financial Director

SIGNED:
Brooke Dodson
Council President

MINUTES HELENA CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
September 14, 2026

The Council of the City of Helena met in a regularly scheduled meeting on Monday night, September 14, 2026, in the Helena Municipal Building at 6:30 P.M., the regular place and time for holding said meetings.

1. Call to Order

Council President Brooke Dodson called the meeting to order at 6:31 P.M.

2. Prayer

The invocation was given by Van C. Houser New Vision Christian Church

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Led by members of the Helena Teen Council.

4. Roll Call

Present: Councilwoman Cathy Hammann, Councilman Andy Healy, Council President Brooke Dodson, and Councilman Dennis Wilson.
Absent: Councilman Jeff McDaniels.
Visitors: Chief Wood, Chief Miller, Dan Dearing, and others (see attached list)

Finance Director Patti Morrow served as recording secretary in the City Clerk's absence.

Council President Dodson declared a quorum present and the meeting open for business.

5. Presentation/Approval of Minutes from 08/24/2026

Councilwoman Hammann made a motion to approve the August 24, 2026, work session and regular meeting minutes. Councilman Healy seconded the motion.

AYE: Councilwoman Hammann, Councilman Healy, Council President Dodson, Councilman Wilson
NAY: None

Motion carried.

6. Revenue Report and AP/Bill Payment

Council reviewed the revenue report and bill payments. No questions were raised. Councilman Wilson made a motion to approve the bill payments, with a second by Councilman Healy.

AYE: Councilwoman Hammann, Councilman Healy, Council President Dodson, Councilman Wilson
NAY: None

Motion carried.

7. Introduction of the 2026–2027 Helena Teen Council Members

The 2026–2027 Helena Teen Council members were introduced. Councilman Wilson welcomed the group and spoke about the value of the Teen Council to the City. The Teen Council's new leadership structure and the students' upcoming year of service were also discussed.

8. Municipal Operations Report – Mayor Billy Rosener

Mayor Rosener congratulated the Teen Council members and provided updates on City operations and upcoming community events. Updates included Helena High School homecoming activities, the Police Department's Cops and Goblins/Trunk or Treat event scheduled for October 22, and ongoing road and traffic improvements.

Mayor Rosener and Councilman Wilson also discussed upcoming Oktoberfest and Buck Creek Festival events. Mayor Rosener thanked residents who attended the recent Coffee with the Mayor and stated that he intends to continue holding opportunities to meet and speak with residents.

9. Special Presentation – Helena Farmers Market

A $500 donation was presented to Helena Middle School art teacher Jessie Tisdale in appreciation for student artwork used for Helena Farmers Market merchandise. The donation is designated for instructional materials and supplies. Councilman Healy described the student design process and thanked the students and teacher for their contribution.

10. Alzheimer's of Central Alabama

Dr. Melanie Mitros, PhD-A representative of Alzheimer's of Central Alabama introduced the organization and described services available to individuals and families in Central Alabama, including caregiver support, scholarships, incontinence products, adult day services, nutrition services, and other resources. Information was also shared regarding a new day health center in Pelham and the Alzheimer's Walk scheduled for November 7.

11. Proclamation – Constitution Week, September 17–23, 2026

Council President Dodson read the proclamation declaring September 17–23, 2026 as Constitution Week in the City of Helena. Members of the Daughters of the American Revolution the Sybil Ludington Chapter and Cahawba Chapter were present for the presentation.

12. Approve/Deny Final Plat – Riverwoods Sector 12 (30 Lots) – Harris Doyle Homes

Council discussed sidewalk connectivity and the status of improvements associated with the Riverwoods Sector 12 final plat. It was reported that improvements outside the individual lots had been installed and that one remaining correction was in progress. No additional Council or public comments were offered.

Councilman Healy made a motion to approve the final plat for Riverwoods Sector 12. Councilman Wilson seconded the motion.

AYE: Councilwoman Hammann, Councilman Healy, Council President Dodson, Councilman Wilson
NAY: None

Motion carried. Final plat approved.

13. Second Reading – Ordinance 1043-2026 Amended

Council considered Ordinance 1043-2026 Amended, providing for a temporary suspension on the establishment or expansion of gas stations, auto parts/mechanic shops, automobile or manufactured home dealerships, and data centers. Discussion included two projects that had begun the review process before the moratorium was adopted and questions regarding their status.

During public comment on the item, Daniel Barron of South Shades Crest Road expressed concern regarding a proposed gas station near his subdivision and questioned allowing projects to proceed during the moratorium.

Councilwoman Hammann made a motion to deny the ordinance amendment. The motion died for lack of a second. Councilman Wilson then made a motion to approve Ordinance 1043-2026 Amended, with a second by Councilman Healy. A roll call vote was requested, and the following votes were cast:

AYE: Councilman Healy, Council President Dodson, Councilman Wilson
NAY: Councilwoman Hammann

Motion carried. Ordinance 1043-2026 Amended was approved.

14. Approve/Deny Shelby County Reporter – Helena The Magazine FY 2027 Contract

Council deferred consideration of the FY 2027 Helena The Magazine contract until the next Council meeting so that the distribution population, including Helena residents in Jefferson County, could be confirmed.

15. Period for Public Comment

Council President Dodson reminded speakers of the three-minute public comment limit. The following residents addressed the Council:

- Tim Hill, 908 Whitebarn Circle, discussed City parks and athletic facilities, including reinvestment in existing facilities, Penhale Park improvements, expansion possibilities at the Sports Complex, field scheduling, and pedestrian/sidewalk safety. Mayor Rosener responded with an update on plans and ongoing work related to athletic facilities.

- Mary Beth Lindsey, Stoneridge Drive, spoke regarding Constitution Week and the First Amendment, including citizens' right to petition government and respectfully bring concerns to elected officials.
- Joanne Kneynsberg, Silver Lakes, expressed concern about scheduling conflicts between Silver Lakes HOA meetings and City Council meetings and the effect on residents wishing to participate in both.
- Tom Stansbury 141 Cedar Bend Drive spoke regarding civility, public discourse, anonymous online comments, and respect for residents who raise concerns before Council.
- Deb Lousey, 161 Moss Bend Drive, commented on meeting-room acoustics, online references to Helena, Alabama, e-bike safety, the moratorium, and Alzheimer's caregiver resources. Council President Dodson noted that the City Attorney had provided research regarding possible e-bike legislation.
- Dennis Rickertsen, 1484 Secretariat Drive, discussed garbage and recycling service and provided Council with suggestions he believed could help reduce costs in a future contract.
- Kathey Rickertsen, 1484 Secretariat Drive, discussed garbage rates, possible rate structures based on household usage, and water-system rehabilitation and replacement. Councilman Wilson noted that discussions with the Water Board were ongoing and referenced planned long-term system work.

16. Council Comments

Councilwoman Hammann thanked attendees and encouraged support of the Fire Department's breast cancer awareness T-shirt fundraiser.

Councilman Wilson reminded residents about Oktoberfest and Buck Creek Festival. He also commented on his vote regarding the moratorium amendment, stating that he believed the City needed to consider potential litigation and act in the City's best interest.

Councilman Healy thanked residents for attending and commented on the importance of respectful public discourse. He also referenced classroom needs and support for teachers.

Council President Dodson thanked residents, Teen Council members, the Daughters of the American Revolution, and Alzheimer's of Central Alabama for participating. He reflected on the importance of First Amendment rights and recognized the impact of Alzheimer's disease on families and caregivers.

17. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:28 P.M.

The meeting was attended and minutes taken by Finance Director, Patti Morrow

ATTEST:

Patti Morrow
Treasurer/Financial Director

SIGNED:

Brooke Dodson
Council President