

**A REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING OF THE LEWISTOWN CITY COMMISSION ON JULY 21, 2025 WHICH WAS HELD AT THE CENTRAL MONTANA COMMUNITY CENTER AND STARTED AT 7:00 P.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Day called the meeting to order.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chairman Day asked everyone to stand and say the Pledge to the Flag.

**ROLL CALL**

Present were Commissioners: Buehler, Day, Hrubes, Hewitt, Robertson and Spika. Commissioner Terry was absent.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Day asked that without objection the minutes for July 7, 2025 be brought back before the Commission at the next meeting for approval.

**COURTESIES**

There were none.

**PROCLAMATIONS**

There were none.

**BOARD AND COMMISSION REPORTS**

Commissioner Buehler reported that the Library met on July 16, 2025. The Board reviewed the summer reading program. There were 360 student aged participants and over 100 adults. The intern from Stanford is doing very well and her help is very much appreciated by the staff and the Library. Commissioner Buehler commented that the Library Board reviewed and updated the budget for the upcoming fiscal year.

Commissioner Hrubes reported that the Central Montana Health Board will be meeting July 28<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Robertson reported that the Tax Increment Finance and the Targeted Economic Development board met on Monday, July 14<sup>th</sup>. A couple of items that were approved at that meeting are on the agenda for Commission approval tonight.

Commissioner Robertson reported that there is an upcoming snow committee meeting. They will be reviewing code and parking changes.

Commissioner Day reported the Park and Recreation Board met last Wednesday, July 9<sup>th</sup>. There was a presentation by Kyle Rector representing the youth baseball program. Commissioner Day explained

that the members of the program are wanting to do an extensive upgrading of all the fields in the parks in the community. This would include new fencing, new dugouts and this is being done with private donations and volunteer hours. Commissioner Day commented the capital improvement plan for the recreation department. There was a review of the swimming pool reporting that everything is running smoothly and fully staffed. The pool vacuums are working well and lots of compliments on how clean the pool looks. The trails are being maintained nicely.

### **CITY MANAGER REPORT**

City Manager Holly Phelps reported on the following issues:

This is fair week in Lewistown and because of this the hours at the pool and Civic Center will change. The fair parade will be held on Thursday. Centerfest will be held at Creekside on August 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The City Manager has received several phone calls regarding Republic Services beginning trash collection on the streets. The manager has been told that Republic Services are working hard to get the message out regarding these changes and if residents have concerns to contact the site manager, but they do have a plan to assist residents that cannot put their trash in front of their homes. The City Manager did bring up the concerns for trash cans within the right of way and issues with snow removal.

Last week the City Manager participated in a webinar on the recent tax changes that the legislature approved. Most of these changes will not go into effect until 2026. The Department of Revenue has until the first Monday in August to get the certified values out. Currently, we are planning to hold the necessary public hearings at the Commission meetings and passing a preliminary budget on August 18<sup>th</sup>. The final budget would then be approved on September 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The Civic Center is busy with their signups for flag football. Registration information can be found on the Park and Recreation Facebook page or on the City's website. Practice starts August 5<sup>th</sup>.

The City Manager has recently had several conversations with the Department of Environmental Quality on the clean up of the old dump. They are working through the process to get the Environmental Assessment for the capping of the site approved so that they can proceed with construction again.

The water system improvement project has moved from Brassey to 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave S. Wastewater improvements project continues as scheduled. The water department has been completing regular maintenance, repairing several curb stops and has also repaired a water leak last week.

The City Manager will be out of the office August 5<sup>th</sup> through August 11<sup>th</sup> but will be available by phone and regularly checking email.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT** – non agenda items

There were none.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Commissioner Robertson made the motion to approve the consent agenda and Commissioner Buehler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The consent agenda was the acknowledgment

of the claims that have been paid from June 30, 2025 to June 30, 2025 for a total of \$249,121.06 and claims that have been paid from July 1, 2025 to July 17, 2025 for a total of \$309,745.33.

**\*REGULAR AGENDA – Resolutions, Ordinances & Other Action Items:**

1. Annual Library Presentation

Library Director Alissa Wolenetz introduced the following board members that were in attendance: Mary Jo Hamling, Andrea Payne, Mariah Shammel and Dani Buehler, who is the Commission representative. Library Director Wolenetz expressed her appreciation for her staff. Library Director Wolenetz explained who all her staff are and their roles in the Library. Library Director Wolenetz took a few minutes introduce the Library Board and the experience they bring to the Board and to thank the Commission. Commissioner Buehler explained that this year the Library Board negotiated a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the City this year. The mou is a direct relationship with the City and how the two entities work together. Commissioner Buehler commented that it is very important to note that the City takes care of, hires and keeps the Library staff employed. The City carries all of the insurance for the Library. Commissioner Buehler stated that the relationship is very important.

2. Discussion and action on allowing the Lewistown Ice Skating Association (LISA) to apply for a Land and Water Conservation grant on behalf of the City of Lewistown and submit an application to Fish Wildlife and Parks

City Manager Phelps explained that included in the Commission packets was a previous resolution passed by the City Commission for a land and water conservation grant and the guidance for the grant application process. The Lewistown Ice Skating Association (LISA) addressed the Commission explaining that project they would like to submit a preapplication for a land and water conservation grant. City Manager Phelps stated that this project has been discussed briefly at the Park and Recreation Board. Mr. Bill Berg, Mr. Ryan Durbin and Jacques Rutten with the LISA were at the meeting to present the project and drawings to the Commission. The proposed project is a covered ice rink, new enclosed picnic area, which would replace the current warming shelter, more picnic tables, and additional parking. Mr. Durbin explained that the youth hockey program continues to grow and in order to be able to schedule games with other teams you much be able to guarantee a scheduled ice time. Mr. Durbin commented the association continues to fight with the sun and snow, which makes it difficult to guarantee ice time. Mr. Durbin commented the association would like to keep the rink open and free to the public all the time. There was some discussion on what the rink could be used for when not being used for hockey. The corners will be closed in but really only be a covered top. Mr. Berg explained LISA did have to ask for a variance due to being close to the 10 foot rule. Members from LISA went door to door during the variance process and all the feedback was very positive. Commissioner Buehler asked if LISA would apply on behalf of the City. City Manager Phelps answered yes, the grant must be sponsored by a government entity. Commissioner Robertson asked if the City is giving LISA permission to put this building on this property as a result this. City Manager Phelps stated this item is to allow them to apply for the grant and the plans and expenses will be discussed at a later date. City Manager Phelps explained that if they are awarded the grant the association will have to follow the buy American provisions, and the purchasing policy. If they do secure the funding there are several provisions, one, is it will have to remain a park forever. There is a match component, which that funding will come from private donations. However, both the revenues and expenses will be running

through the City budget. The park will need to be maintained in perpetuity at the City's expense. Mr. Berg explained that LISA raises all of the funds to maintain the facility. Commissioner Robertson made the motion to grant permission to construct and operate a covered open-air facility over the current skating rink and allow the Lewistown Ice Skating Association (LISA) to apply for a Land and Water Conservation grant on behalf of the City of Lewistown and submit an application to Fish Wildlife and Parks and Commissioner Buehler seconded the motion. Commissioner Hrubes asked if the facility is covered by the City's insurance. City Manager answered yes, the facility is covered by the City, and any events are covered by the association. Commissioner Hrubes asked about the maintenance of the facility fifteen years from now. City Manager Phelps answered yes, it would be maintained by the City. Commissioner Hrubes asked if there would be a lease. City Manager Phelps answered that they have been working on a memorandum of understanding but has been put on hold while waiting on this project. Commissioner Day asked for comments from the audience and Commission. There being none, the question was called for and the Clerk took a roll call vote with all voting in favor of the motion.

3. Discussion and action on Resolution No. 4194, a resolution approving an application from Bill Buck for TIF funds made to the Lewistown Tax Increment Financing District Board

City Manager Phelps explained that Mr. Bill Buck came to the last TIF board meeting and he owns a rental property at 524 W Washington. Mr. Buck has invested a lot of money into the property and he applied for some TIF funds for some concrete work. The board did award up to \$14,700, which is 50% of the total project cost. Commissioner Hrubes made the motion to approve Resolution No. 4194, a resolution approving an application from Bill Buck for TIF funds made to the Lewistown Tax Increment Financing District Board and Commissioner Spika seconded the motion. Commissioner Buehler confirmed that this application was approved by the TIF board. Commissioner Robertson answered yes. Commissioner Day asked for comments from the audience and Commission. There being none, the question was called for and the Clerk took a roll call vote with all voting in favor of the motion.

4. Discussion and action on Resolution No. 4195, a resolution approving an application from Gerri Campbell for TEDD funds made to the Lewistown Targeted Economic Development District Board

City Manager Phelps explained that the Targeted Economic Development District (TEDD) was created in 2017 and amended in 2019 to include some additional property. This is the first TEDD application. Ms. Gerri Campbell owns Ballyhoo printing and is expanding the business to add additional access to the business. The board approved up to \$10,000 for the project. Commissioner Hrubes made the motion to approve Resolution No. 4195, a resolution approving an application from Gerri Campbell for TEDD funds made to the Lewistown Targeted Economic Development District Board and Commissioner Spika seconded the motion. Commissioner Day asked if this was a retro project because construction has started. Commissioner Robertson explained the contractor started earlier than they were contracted to start, as a result the application was brought to the board at a last minute. The applicant explained that there is a long way to go before the project will be completed and these funds have not been spent yet. The board did look at the situation carefully and application should be considered before the funds are expended. Commissioner Hrubes asked if the limit is \$10,000. City Manager Phelps answered yes that is the limit at this time and there are different rules what the funding can be utilized for. The land is leased from the airport. Commissioner Day asked for comments from the audience and Commission. There being none, the question was called for and the Clerk took a roll call vote with all voting in favor of the motion.

5. Discussion and action on approving an emergency services dispatch agreement between the City of Lewistown and Fergus County

City Manager Phelps explained this agreement is for basic 911 services and not the full-service dispatch that the City provides the County. This agreement is the same as the agreement with Judith Basin and Petroleum Counties. City Manager Phelps further explained that Fergus County has paid us a set amount for several years and that amount will remain the same until the other counties are paying the same contributions as Fergus County and the City of Lewistown. Commissioner Robertson made the motion to approve an emergency services dispatch agreement between the City of Lewistown and Fergus County and Commissioner Buehler seconded the motion. Commissioner Day asked for comments from the audience and Commission. There being none, the question was called for and the Clerk took a roll call vote with all voting in favor of the motion.

6. Discussion and action on setting the boulevard maintenance assessment for fiscal year 2025-2026

City Manager Phelps explained that the Commission has been provided a spreadsheet showing the boulevard maintenance assessment rates for the past several years. City Manager Phelps stated that she is not proposing an increase this year. There are a couple of projects for the boulevards. Those are concrete, pavement restoration and replacing some lights. The assessment is based on the lineal frontage of the property for owners directly adjacent to the boulevards and there are currently 59 properties affected. The properties are located on 7<sup>th</sup> Ave N and East and West Boulevard. Commissioner Buehler asked if keeping the rate the same would cause a larger increase in the future. City Manager Phelps explained that past Commissions have discussed the boulevards benefit the entire community and the adjacent property owners should not bear all of the cost. Commissioner Spika made the motion to approve the current rate of 75 cents per lineal foot for the boulevard maintenance assessment for fiscal year 2025-2026 and Commissioner Buehler seconded the motion. City Manager Phelps explained that she did promote this project which would determine what the future look like for the boulevards. It was looked at as a urban route project and unfortunately urban route projects have to be approved by both the City and the County. The project was not supported by the county and Ash Street was the approved project. Commissioner Day asked for comments from the audience and Commission. There being none, the question was called for and the Clerk took a roll call vote with all voting in favor of the motion.

7. Discussion and action on setting the street maintenance assessment for fiscal year 2025-2026

City Manager Phelps explained there are three different funding sources for street maintenance. The City gets a small portion from the entitlement share, gas tax and the major funding comes from the street maintenance assessments. The proposed funds for gas tax are just over \$310,000. There is a significant amount of cash carry forward from previous years, however public works is working on a street project estimated at 1 to 1.5 million. Once the project is put together it will go through the bidding process and be brought back before the Commission for approval. This proposed project is looking at concrete work, chip seals and overlay work. The street maintenance overall budget was briefly discussed. City Manager Phelps stated that included in the budget is an additional \$100,000 budgeted for snow plow equipment and part time help for snow removal. There is also an increase in the building maintenance code due to the need for a new roof for the public works building. City Manager Phelps reviewed the options with the Commission and explained if the Commission decides not to raise the rate it will be the fourth year at the same rate. The rate is calculated on square footage and residential lots are capped at a

maximum of 15,000 square feet. Commissioner Buehler asked if there was an option the City Manager recommends to be able to fund the proposed increases. City Manager Phelps answered that her recommendation would be option # 4 at 4 cents per square foot and it would come close to breaking even where we are at today. Commissioner Hrubes made the motion to set the street maintenance assessment at \$.04 cents for fiscal year 2025-2026 and Commissioner Robertson seconded the motion. Commissioner Hrubes stated that street maintenance is very important to him. Commissioner Day asked for comments from the audience and Commission. There being none, the question was called for and the Clerk took a roll call vote with all voting in favor of the motion.

8. Discussion and action on approving the rebuild of a sewage pump for the sewer department

City Manager Phelps explained that last spring the sewer plant brought in purchase requisition for \$10,000 for the rebuild of a pump for the wastewater treatment plant. This is a truck mounted pump that can be used inside and outside of the plant. City Manager stated that unfortunately time has passed and costs have gone up and the cost is now \$15,725.85. City Manager Phelps explained the City's purchasing policy requires any purchase over \$15,000 must come before the Commission for approval. Commissioner Spika made the motion to approve the rebuild of a sewage pump for the sewer department and Commissioner Buehler seconded the motion. Commissioner Day asked for comments from the audience and Commission. There being none, the question was called for and the Clerk took a roll call vote with all voting in favor of the motion.

**CITIZENS' REQUESTS**

Mr. Richard Battrick asked how much the City gets from the Council on Aging each year. City Manager Phelps answered the City receives \$1,000 for improvements and \$1,000 goes into a roof fund.

**COMMISSIONER'S MINUTE**

Commissioner Day thanked staff for the information and complete packet. Commissioner Day asked the City Manager where we are at with an ordinance for dogs at large. City Manager Phelps answered that she will check with the attorney on where we are at with the ordinance.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Day adjourned the meeting.

Dated this 21<sup>st</sup> day of July 2025

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Loraine Day, Commission Chairman

ATTEST:

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Nikki Brummond, City Clerk