

A REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING OF THE LEWISTOWN CITY COMMISSION ON JUNE 16, 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: Day, Hrubes, Hewitt, Spika and Terry. Commissioner Buehler was absent and Commissioner Robertson participated virtually.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Day stated that without objection and based on the corrections the minutes for May 19, 2025 are approved. Commissioner Day asked that the minutes for June 2, 2025 be brought back before the Commission for approval at the next Commission meeting.

COURTESIES

There were none.

PROCLAMATIONS

There were none.

BOARD AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner Spika reported she attended the Snowy Mountain Development Corporation (SMDC) meeting. Commissioner Spika explained the big topic of discussion was membership dues. It was determined that all members would be charged \$4.09 per capita, the prior rate was \$2.38. Commissioner Spika stated the City will need to budget approximately \$25,000 and that she is very much in support of this increase. Commissioner Spika explained that this may be a large increase but a small number for a large investment for growth, development and assistance they bring to our community. The annual SMDC meeting is June 26th in Roundup which include a regular board meeting, annual meeting and tour. Commissioner Day asked if the new rate is final. Commissioner Spika answered that the main board will have to vote on the rate and then it will be finalized. Commissioner Spika commented that the City can choose not to pay it or negotiate a different amount. This rate is inline with other economic development agencies in the state.

Commissioner Terry reported the Central Montana Foundation will meet on June 24, 2025.

Commissioner Robertson reported on the Airport Board meeting. Commissioner Robertson commented the Airport may have 1 or 2 large airport hangars on taxi way E. There are 2 major

construction projects schedule for the airport. One is the large hangar door for the WWII hangar. There was a bid letting right after the meeting for this project. There were three bids and the lowest bid was approximately \$527,000, which Commissioner Robertson reported it would be an appropriate bid. The second project is a large taxiway project.

Commissioner Day reported that the Park and Recreation Board will not be meeting this month but will be participating in the annual East Fork Clean up. The clean up will be June 18th at 6 pm, anyone can participate.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

City Manager Holly Phelps reported on the following issues:

As a reminder, fireworks are allowed inside the City limits on July 4th from 8 am to midnight. They can only be done on private property and must be a safe distance from any structures. Fireworks are not allowed in City parks or on streets and sidewalks.

There are a lot of festivities planned for the 4th of July, in Lewistown. Please check out the Chamber of Commerce website for more details.

The Park and Recreation Board will be going out to East Fork for the annual work night Wednesday June 18th beginning at 6 pm. Everyone is welcome to join.

The Montana Department of Transportation will be hosting an in person public hearing on the Central Montana Regional Transportation Plan, June 17th at Fergus High School from 4 to 6 pm. You can also participate in the online open house, by visiting the MDT website at mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/centralmt/

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) is hosting an open house on the proposed Walnut & Ash Improvements project. The open house will be held Wednesday, June 25th from 4 to 6 pm in the lobby area of Fergus High School. The purpose of this project is to improve accessibility and enhance safety features along Walnut and Ash Streets. The proposed project includes plans to widen and reconstruct the Ash Street bridge over Big Spring Creek.

There will be a grand reopening ceremony for the Civic Enter gym on Wednesday, June 18th from 4 to 5 pm. There will be a presentation to celebrate the investment made to keep the gym around for another 100 years. If you are available, please stop by.

Some Lewistown water customers may receive a flyer sent by Water & Environmental Technologies, on the City's behalf. These mailers will help us continue to get more and more information on service lines connected to City water. People can fill out the information on the mailer and drop it off at the City Office, mail it in or submit the information online. For more information on this flyer or the City's lead service line inventory please reach out to Public Works at 406-535-1770.

There are also 5 Mondays in June and I was wanting to hear from you if you would like to have a training or work session on the evening of June 30th. City Manager Phelps explained that a budget report for the current fiscal year and the first draft of the budget for fiscal year 2025 was given to the Commission for review. It was determined to not hold a special meeting on June 30th.

There are also several upcoming events at Creekside this month, this includes Shakespeare in the Parks on June 25th at 6:30 pm and the Susan Gibson concert at 7 pm on June 27th.

PUBLIC COMMENT - non agenda items

Ms. Peggy Butler, Director of Saving Animals from Euthanasia (SAFE), explained that there was a recent newspaper article regarding the SAFE shelter getting ready to break ground. Ms. Butler explained that a couple of days after the article the residents of Hanover Junction called and asked to meet with the SAFE board. Ms. Butler further explained that the residents of Hanover Junction have made it very clear that they will not allow a shelter to come into that area. When the property was purchased, it was a commercial area and now it is a commercial residential area. Ms. Butler commented that the residents do not want a animal shelter in the area. Ms. Butler is not sure why they were not notified sooner and now they will have to sell the lot and look for another piece of property. Ms. Butler explained the reason they are coming to the Commission is the possibility of using the City pound temporarily. City Manager Phelps answered yes, the City would be willing to relook at the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that was started. City Manager Phelps commented she doesn't know who started the MOU but it will be a good starting point. There was some discussion as to the reason and how the change was done to the property. It appears there is a home owners association and there are some covenants. It was suggested that they consider contacting council.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Terry made the motion to approve the consent agenda and Commissioner Hewitt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The consent agenda was the acknowledgment of the claims that have been paid from June 1, 2025 to June 12, 2025 for a total of \$603,220.38

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

1. Discussion and action on reviewing and approving the Lewistown Tree Removal Program Policy

City Manager Phelps stated that this a draft of the revised policy. This policy was discussed at a previous Commission meeting. City Manager Phelps explained that in the past this policy was only used for removal of hazardous or diseased trees. City Manager Phelps commented she would like to use this policy to also prune, trim trees that are still diseased or hazardous on public property but not to the point of needing removal. City Manager Phelps stated that if a project is going to exceed \$10,000 of City resources it will be approved by the City Commission. The co-pay for the program is proposed to be \$500 per tree and the City will offer a \$100 gift certificate to purchase a tree to be planted on the property. This sentence was corrected to say “The property owner will be given a \$100 gift certificate per tree for the purchase of a new tree to be planted on the property. Commissioner Spika asked if any of the trimming or pruning would cost less than \$500? City Manager Phelps answered no typically if a contractor needs to be hired, the cost comes close to \$500 but that does not include any labor or disposal costs.

Commissioner Terry made the motion to approve the Lewistown Tree Removal Program Policy with corrections and Commissioner Hrubes seconded the motion. Ms. Bobbie Atchison asked if the co pay amount of have the trimming and pruning done would be \$500. City Manager Phelps answered yes, where the tree is trimmed, pruned or removed it would be \$500. Ms. Atchison asked if this program has been funded in the upcoming budget. City Manager Phelps answered that if this policy is approved tonight, we will make sure this is funded in the budget. Commissioner Hrubes asked to briefly explained the changes. City Manager Phelps answered the co pay amount is being increased, adding the ability to

do trimming and pruning and giving a credit back for a new tree. 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 being in favor of the motion.

2. Discussion an ordinance amending Lewistown City Code Section 10-5-3 designating snow route area as Tier I and Tier II priorities, creating parking restrictions for snow routes and amending penalties

City Manager Phelps explained that before the Commission is what the new snow route ordinance would look like. The snow route would have a Tier I and Tier II and those roads shown on the map are now listed in the ordinance as well as the parking limitations. The parking limitations are from November 1st to May 1st, which is adding a month. The Tier I snow routes are the critical driving routes throughout town and in the event of a snow event that would mean no person can park on the Tier I routes any day during the time period. It would be the responsibility of the car's registered owner to make sure the vehicle is moved or would face the penalties. The Tier II is the odd and even parking, which is a priority route with limited parking on those streets. There was discussion on the proposed ticketing process and fines. There are some notification requirements. Commissioner Robertson commented there maybe need some clarification on even or odd calendar days after midnight. City Attorney Tyler West suggested that maybe a definition could be added and maybe even a sub section. There was discussion regarding the process and how to educated the public.

3. Discussion and action on authorizing the City Manager to sign a memorandum of understanding between the Montana Department of Transportation and the City of Lewistown for the state funded City Park rest area maintenance program FY 2026 (Kiwanis Park public rest area)

City Manager Phelps explained the City partners with the Kiwanis Club to maintain the facility. The City serves as a pass through between the State of Montana and Kiwanis. The eligible expenses include janitorial supplies, grounds maintenance, garbage, electricity and water testing to maintain the facility. The amount this year is \$6,980 to maintain the facility. Commissioner Terry made the motion to approve authorizing the City Manager to sign a memorandum of understanding between the Montana Department of Transportation and the City of Lewistown for the state funded City Park rest area maintenance program FY 2026 (Kiwanis Park public rest area) and Commissioner Spika seconded the motion. Commissioner Hrubes commented that it states cleaning and is that done by City employees? City Manager Phelps answered no it is all maintain by the Kiwanis Club. 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 being in favor of the motion.

4. Discussion and action on approving a business license for Big Dog Solar

City Manager Phelps explained this is another electrician coming into the community to do some work. This company installs solar panels and does the electrical for the project. City Code requires Commission approval which is why the item is before the Commission for approval. Commissioner Spika made a motion to approve a business license for Big Dog Solar and Commissioner Terry seconded the motion. Commissioner Hrubes asked if private enterprises like this have to submit letters of recommendation from previous customers. City Manager Phelps answered no. 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 being in favor of the motion.

5. Discussion and action on reappointing Patty Turk to another 3-year term on the Board of Adjustments

City Manager Phelps explained that when Patty Turk left the City Commission she wanted to stay engaged in the community and agreed to serve on the Board of Adjustments. City Manager Phelps stated

that Ms. Turk's first term on the board of adjustment lapsed earlier this year, and again we do plan on absorbing the board of adjustments in the Planning Commission. However, it has not been accomplished yet. City Manager Phelps commented that Ms. Turk has agreed to serve another term which makes sure variations and other items are being processed in a timely manner. Commissioner Hewitt made the motion to approve reappointing Patty Turk to another 3-year term on the Board of Adjustments and Commissioner Spika 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 being in favor of the motion.

CITIZENS' REQUESTS

There were none.

COMMISSIONER'S MINUTE

Commissioner Terry reported that she will be laying low for the month of July and will try to participate virtually.

Commissioner Hewitt commented that every time the Commission tours the treatment plant, she is absent. It was discussed that a future tour could be schedule for a couple of other Commissioners.

Commissioner Day commented that it was a lovely tour of the swimming pool earlier this evening.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Day adjourned the meeting.

Dated this 16th day of June, 2025.

Loraine Day, Commission Chairman

ATTEST:

Nikki Brummond, City Clerk