

Regular City Council Meeting

City Hall

May 18, 2026

Mayor Ferguson opened the Regular City Council Meeting at 7:00pm and led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Others Attending are:

Council: Kerri Baird, Jeff Davis, Mike Duval, and Leonard Woehler.

City Staff: Hope Mosness, Clerk/Treasurer, and Jim Lippert, City Attorney (via phone)

Public: Angela Selby, Michael Shirley, Joy Larsen, Skye Rouwhorst, Mark Curry, Barbara Selk, Linda Brunckhorst, Anita Dore, Aaron Freed, Sally Owen-Still, and Thomas R. Still

Councilwoman Baird made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 4, 2026, Regular City Council Meeting, seconded by Councilman Davis. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council.

Councilman Davis made a motion of informal consideration of all the remaining agenda items, seconded by Councilman Duval. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council.

Skye Rouwhorst from Big Timber Grade School PTA asked for use of the Lions Club Park for the End of the Year School Bash on May 21, 2026. Councilman Woehler made a motion to approve use of the Lions Club Park for the Big Timber Grade School End of the Year Bash, seconded by Councilwoman Baird. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council.

Joy Larsen from Friends of Dornix Park asked the council for permission to use 250 goats for weed control at the park May 22-31. Councilwoman Baird made a motion to approve the use of goats for weed control at Dornix Park, seconded by Councilman Duval. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council.

Sally Owen-Still asked the city for permission to use water at Dornix Dog Park for a short-term due to the lack of rain for the grass seed that has been planted. Councilman Duval would like to set a limit until the end of July and then come back and revisit it if needed. Councilwoman Baird made a motion to approve the use of water at Dornix Dog Park until the end of July, seconded by Councilman Duval. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council.

Ryan Coffman from Republic Services did not attend the meeting.

Mayor Ferguson presented the council with a Memorandum of Understanding for the county weight credit due to the city each month for the county weight that is run through the transfer site. Clerk/Treasurer, Hope Mosness explained that by using her spreadsheet referenced in the MOU, the city would receive the exact credit needed to cover the cost of the county trash. Councilman Davis made a motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding with Republic Services for the county weight credit, seconded by Councilwoman Baird. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council.

Jim Lippert presented information on two water court attorneys that can represent the city with respect to the objections to our water rights claim. He referenced the information in the council packets. Both firms have attorneys that acted as water masters with the water court. He recommended using Cusik

and Michael because of their close proximity to Big Timber. Jim expected that there would be 10-12 hours upfront in understanding our claims which would be about \$3000-5000 in the first month or two. Then the cost would depend on what they would recommend to us and what the council would approve. He hoped there would be conversations with Fish, Wildlife, and Parks and the US Bureau of Reclamation instead of going to court. Mayor Ferguson stated that what this objection appears to be is that the Boulder Water Basin is being adjudicated now and there are other water users that have objections to their claims as well. Jim verified that the mayor was correct. After Council discussion the majority of the council felt the need to discuss this with a water court attorney. Public Comment: Aaron Freed stated that he does not want to give up any of the city's water and the cost for the attorney could be paid for by selling bulk water. Councilman Woehler made a motion to approve Cusik and Michael Law Firm as the water court attorney, seconded by Councilman Duval. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council.

Councilwoman Baird presented the pros and cons of the two architectural firms to choose from for the new City Hall building. Councilman Woehler added that Greg Bunton Architecture would have a weekly meeting and Collaborative Design Architects would meet 1-2 times per month. Greg Bunton Architecture stated about \$85,000 in costs compared to \$116,000 from Collaborative Design. He also stated that because it is not a huge project or complicated, he feels we should save money by going with Greg Bunton. Jim Lippert cautioned the Council to move forward without having the Council vote to approve to build a new City Hall building. He did not have an objection to selecting an architect firm as long as they realize we still need to vote on building a new City Hall. Public Comment: Mike Shirley stated that he thought the city was moving forward on a new building and doesn't understand why we are waiting. Linda Brunckhorst stated that we need to know how much we are going to pay for a new City Hall. Aaron Freed would like to know what the build costs or selling the piece of land and investing the money and using the returns on that money to rent somewhere else. He would like to see what the lifetime costs and benefits are for each option. Mark Curry asks if benefits of building a new City Hall were presented to the residents and wants to see why we would spend \$2 million. Councilman Woehler made a motion to approve Greg Bunton Architecture as Architectural/Engineering Services for the New City Hall Building, seconded by Councilman Davis. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council.

Mayor Ferguson asked the council to make a decision on the Workers' Compensation Coverage through Montana State Fund. Councilman Duval made a motion to approve Workers' Compensation Coverage from Montana State Fund through Key Insurance, seconded by Councilman Woehler. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council.

Mayor Ferguson asked the council to reappropriate money in the water and sewer funds that was set aside for unforeseen costs to increase our loan payments on our water and sewer loans to help pay down the debt the city has. Councilman Davis made a motion to appropriate \$200,000 from FY 26 water fund budget and \$200,000 from FY26 Sewer fund budget for additional payments to principal on loans pending budget amendment, seconded by Councilman Woehler. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council. Clerk/Treasurer Hope Mosness will advertise for a public hearing for a budget amendment.

Councilwoman Baird made a motion to approve the claims for the second half of April 2026, seconded by Councilman Davis. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council.

Public Comment: Anita Dore asked for information on the Spring Cleanup Day on June 6th.

Council Concerns: Councilman Davis had a few citizens talk to him about the temperature of the pool for the early morning class. He would like to be involved with monitoring the pool temperature.

Councilman Woehler would like an idea on how to approach the wealthy people in our county to donate money to the city for city hall or for the pool.

Hope Mosness asked the Council members to decide on dates in June to begin budget work meetings. The first meeting will be on June 15th.

There being no further business to go before the Council, Councilman Duval, made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:37pm seconded by Councilman Woehler. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Justin Ferguson". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Justin Ferguson, Mayor

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Hope Mosness". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Hope Mosness, Clerk/Treasurer