

# Regular City Council Meeting

City Hall

September 21, 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 attended via phone, ~~Jim Lippert, City Attorney~~ <sup>not at the meeting</sup>

Public: Michael Shirley, Hunter Roberts, Peter D. Fox, Shar-A-Lee Smith, Sandra Smith, Anita Dore, Mark Curry, Barbara Selk, Wayne Pollari, Page Dringman, Melanie Roe, Bryan Sondano, Joan Hansen, Sarah Gregie, Aaron Freed, and Bill Warwick

Councilwoman Baird made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 8, 2026, Regular City Council Meeting, seconded by Councilman Davis. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council.

Peter Fox, Sweet Grass County board member for the Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority, presented information about the possibility of passenger rail service returning to Montana.

Sarah Gregie discussed the drainage issue at her house on 413 E 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Public Works Director, Kris Novotny, Great West Engineering and a representative from the survey company met at her house. They put a tanker of water in front of the house and driveway, and it pooled in front of her house. She said it doesn't drain properly. Councilman Duval stated he could see the issue and that it needs to be corrected. They will work with the engineer to check the elevations and compare and make sure the recommendations are followed and get the elevation raised so the water will flow correctly. Councilman Woehler agrees there is a problem but wants to understand who is going to pay to fix the issue.

Hunter Roberts asked the Council to rescind their approval of the Sweet Grass County Port Authority. His biggest concern is funding the position of economic developer. He would like the public to see a draft of the bylaws before they are voted on. He would like to see the documents for the port authority be publicly available and discussed before it is created. Councilman Woehler made a motion of informal consideration, seconded by Councilman Davis. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council. Public Comment: Shar-A-Lee Smith and Aaron Freed spoke in favor of establishing the port authority. They believe having an economic developer and board will help our community thrive and create a strong future for our community. They stated it would be a disservice to our community to rescind it. They also stated a port authority would be able to help with affordable housing and downtown businesses. Bryan Sondano spoke against the port authority stating it would be a financial burden that requires significant resources, more government oversight, pressure to issue bonds and levy taxes, and the possibility of eminent domain. He stated that we already have tools in place for economic development i.e.: Chamber of Commerce, Montana Main Street Program, Planning Office, etc. He suggested one single position rather than a huge board. Page Dringman commented that they have looked at having just an economic developer versus a board and verified that any meetings would be open to the public. Melanie Roe added that this has been in the works since 2024 and there have been a handful of meetings open to the

public. She said this is designed to be collaborative between the city and the county so we can adapt and prosper. She asked the council to not rescind their support of the port authority. Councilman Duval made a motion to table this item until further information is received from the city attorney, seconded by Councilman Woehler. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council.

Mayor Ferguson presented the Whistle Creek Right-of-Way Agreement. Councilman Davis, made a motion to approve the Whistle Creek Right-of-Way Agreement, seconded by Councilwoman Baird. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council.

Mayor Ferguson presented the updated lease agreement with Circle T Construction for the City Hall offices. He stated that Councilman Duval notified him of Logan Todd office space for \$850/month. However, only two parking spaces would be designated for the city and that would not be enough. He also contacted Mark Norem about office space, but he didn't hear back from him. Councilman Duval asked about the possibility of contacting Circle T about coming down on their rent and seeing what else is available. Public Comment: Mike Shirley stated we are being charged too much. He stated that the city should purchase a trailer and put it on the city hall lot we already own. We could have already purchased one for the cost we have paid in rent. Councilman Davis would like to hear back from Mark Norem so we have a comparison. Councilman Woehler would like to keep the same agreement we have with Circle T. Councilman Davis made a motion to table the Circle T Lease Agreement, seconded by Councilman Duval. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council.

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

Public Comment: None

Council Concerns: Councilman Davis asked if a map should be made of potholes that need to be fixed. The city purchased a Durapatcher but the streets have the same potholes. Mayor Ferguson stated that the Durapatcher is in the shop being repaired.

There being no further business to go before the Council, Councilman Woehler made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:25pm, seconded by Councilman Duval. Motion carried by unanimous vote of the Council.



Justin Ferguson, Mayor

ATTEST:



Hope Mosness, Clerk/Treasurer