

**A REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING OF THE LEWISTOWN CITY COMMISSION ON MARCH 17, 2025 WHICH WAS HELD AT THE CENTRAL MONTANA COMMUNITY CENTER AND STARTED AT 7:00 P.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Terry called the meeting to order.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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

**ROLL CALL**

Present were Commissioners: Buehler, Day, Hrubes, Robertson, Spika and Terry. Commissioner Hewitt participated virtually.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Terry stated that without objection and based on the corrections the minutes for March 3, 2025 are approved.

**COURTESIES**

There were none.

**PROCLAMATIONS**

There were none.

**BOARD AND COMMISSION REPORTS**

Commissioner Buehler reported that the Library Board met on March 6<sup>th</sup> and the staff are starting to prepare for the summer reading program and look at seasonal staffing needs. Commissioner Buehler explained the Library Director was able to secure a Stanford University intern who will be coming to Lewistown for nine weeks starting in July. The intern will be working at the library, it will be no cost to the library and an interesting nine weeks for the individual. Commissioner Buehler reported the library staff are working on updating the youth collection. The story walk has been very well received. Commissioner Buehler explained Library staff will be evaluating the frequency of changing out the book during the winter, but are very excited to see how the story walk grows through the summer. Commissioner Buehler commented the Library Director is working on updating the Library's website. The Library Board will be meeting again Thursday, March 20<sup>th</sup>. The MOU will be discussed here with the Commission shortly.

Commissioner Spika reported that Snowy Mountain Development met on February 20<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Spika commented there was not a lot to report, except Dani Buehler is a new employee. There was discussion on legislative issues and review of the financials.

Commissioner Day reported that she attended the recent Friends of the Trails meeting. They asked if Commissioner Day could get an update on the installation of the flashing beacons. City Manager Phelps answered that she is currently working to get quotes on installing two sets of the flashing beacons and the third set will be installed as part of the First Avenue Project.

Commissioner Day reported she attended the most recent Lewistown Downtown Association meeting that is held quarterly. Commissioner Day stated that there was a lot of information and shared it with the Commission by email.

Commissioner Day reported she attended the Park and Recreation Board meeting on March 5<sup>th</sup>. The Little Eagle Basketball program started the beginning of March and will be wrapped up the first of April. The gym floor at the Civic Center is expected to be replaced and the project is hoped to be completed by the end of May. The capital improvement list for the Civic Center was discussed. Bill Berg gave a report on the ice-skating rink. Commissioner Day explained that the ice-skating rink needs to be covered so that the season can be extended. The Lewistown Ice Skating Association (LISA) have already received donations and have begun the design process to cover the rink. The Friends of the Pool have purchased pool tarps and a large robotic vacuum.

Commissioner Hewitt reported that the Airport Board met and reviewed some of the discussion with regards to the equipment at the Airport.

Commissioner Robertson reported the snow storm reaction committee did meet. Commissioner Robertson explained that this is just an after-action report meeting as to what happened. The City's equipment and personnel was discussed and some of the enforcement challenges for law enforcement. Commissioner Robertson commented that some of the challenges discussed were not having towing services, ticketing enforcement, balance between plowing and brining people in and when tickets are written they are getting dismissed. Police Chief Jenness commented that black and white regarding code enforcement is easier. Then staff are clear on what they are and are not to enforce and what will be held up in court is really important. Commissioner Robertson explained the last thing discussed was potentially some ideas for going forward at different levels of maybe assertiveness or service. The next meeting is scheduled for April 10<sup>th</sup> at the Civic Center.

Commissioner Terry reported the Central Montana Foundation will meet March 25<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Robertson reported that he attended the Big Spring Watershed Council meeting. Commissioner Robertson commented he listened carefully to what was said and tried to give them some perspectives on some of the topics and challenges that have been discussed.

### **CITY MANAGER REPORT**

City Manager Holly Phelps reported on the following issues:

The recent warm weather has allowed Public Works to begin sweeping streets. The Public Works is also getting a jump on spring and summer work during this time. The City also has several construction projects that will be starting very soon.

The City Manager has finalized the offer for the purchase of the Berg Lumber property. The developer and the City Manager have continued the discussion the development agreement.

Rules of Procedure and additional training resources. City Clerk Nikki Brummond did some research and was able to get some Robert's Rules of Order training for the Commission. The training will be sent out to each Commission and you can learn at your own speed. Also, as part of the monthly Montana Main Street meeting Ashley Kent, MSU local government center, did a quick presentation on Montana's Open Meetings Laws. The City Manager will try to get the recording and a copy of her presentation.

Election season is around the corner. Information for filing deadlines and other important dates visit the Secretary of State website. The municipal elections the candidate filing opens April 17<sup>th</sup> and closes June 16<sup>th</sup>. This year there will be four positions up for election.

Spring is training season and there is training available for elected in May. If any of the Commissioners are interested in attending, please let the City Manager or City Clerk know. If you are interested in a specific training, please let the City Manager know. The City Manager continues to look for training opportunities for the Commission.

Winter activities around the civic Center are rapidly coming to a close. They are finishing up the Little Eagle Basketball program. The soccer association is ready for spring soccer and the first signups for baseball and softball have been done. The Civic Center staff is gearing up for the pool season. Also, beginning April 1<sup>st</sup> the civic center gym will be closed for approximately 8 weeks. The Fergus Federal Credit Union made a very large donation for the new gym floor. Commissioner Buehler asked if the gym floor had been resurfaced in the last five years. City Manager Phelps answered that it has been refinished, which is sanding down and refinished. The gym floor is resealed annually which is several coats of sealer and wax. City Manager Phelps stated that when the gym was resurfaced last it was determined that it can't be sanded down again. The credit union was looking at doing some charitable gifting and did some in the school gyms around the area. The credit union wanted to do something for the Civic Center knowing that it's such a key part of recreation and sports in the community.

The City Manager will be out of town from March 18<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup>. She will be available by phone and email if needed.

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

There were none.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Commissioner Day made the motion to approve the consent agenda and Commissioner Hrubes seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The consent agenda was the acknowledgment of the claims that have been paid from March 1, 2025 to March 13, 2025 for a total of \$250,271.28

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

1. Discussion and action on approving entering into a one-year maintenance contract with Lumen for the 911 phone system in the amount of \$17,220.36

City Manager Phelps explained that the 911 phone system integrates into the dispatch computers. City Manager Phelps further explained that there are three dispatch workstations here and one separate identical workstation in Judith Basin County. Lewistown currently dispatches for Judith Basin County and have the ability to transfer calls out there if we are overwhelmed or if our systems go down. Judith Basin County has a dispatcher from 8 am to 5 pm. City Manager Phelps commented that she was informed that this is probably the last maintenance contract for this phone system. The state is trying to get grant funding to install phone systems for approximately 10 or 13 public safety answering point (PSAP) system. The state is hoping to get the consistency across the state and better pricing. City Manager Phelps commented it would be her thoughts that the City would still continue to be responsible for maintenance. City Manager Phelps stated that we did just get this maintenance proposal but has been in place since October 2024. Commissioner Hrubes made the motion to approve entering into a one-year maintenance contract with Lumen for the 911 phone system in the amount of \$17,220.36 and Commissioner Spika seconded the motion. Commissioner Terry asked for comments from the public and Commission. There being none, the question was called for and the City Clerk took a roll call vote with all being in favor of the motion.

2. Discussion and action on approving the purchase of a Vaughn chopper pump for the Wastewater Treatment Plant in the amount of \$24174.71

City Manager Phelps explained these are proprietary pumps at the wastewater treatment plant and our staff maintains them as part of our maintenance program. City Manager Phelps stated there are three pumps that are maintained and this is a new pump. The pumps are very expensive and there is funding in the budget for this. Commissioner Hrubes made the motion to approve the purchase of a Vaughn chopper pump for the Wastewater Treatment Plant in the amount of \$24174.71 and Commissioner Day seconded the motion. Commissioner Terry asked for comments from the public and Commission. There being none, the question was called for and the City Clerk took a roll call vote with all being in favor of the motion.

3. Discussion and action on Resolution No. 4190, a resolution authorizing the sale of Motorola radios from the Lewistown Police Department

City Manager Phelps explained that we recently replaced the old radios with new 800-megahertz radios. Several of the radios were transferred to the Public Works Department. The remaining radios are not needed in the Police Department and the Police Chief would like to dispose of them. There are other agencies around the state or locally that could still use them. Commissioner Day made the motion to approve Resolution No. 4190, a resolution authorizing the sale of Motorola radios from the Lewistown Police Department and Commissioner Buehler seconded the motion. Commissioner Terry asked for comments from the public and Commission. There being none, the question was called for and the City Clerk took a roll call vote with all being in favor of the motion.

4. Discussion on declaring a local emergency or disaster.

Commissioner Terry explained that at a previous Commission meeting the Commission discussed declaring an emergency due to the snow storm in January. Commissioner Terry stated that since that time she has talked with the Disaster and Emergency Coordinator Steve Fanning and he had some more information from the State. Commissioner Terry commented that this is a good opportunity for us to look at the process. However, at this time we probably won't get any money from the state and there are two reasons. One reason is that Governor Gianforte did say there was no loss of life or

property damage, like infrastructure. The second reason is the City of Lewistown was not a part of the incident command system at the time of the storm. City Manager Phelps explained that upon reviewing the guidance from Disaster and Emergency Services (DES) states that by declaring an emergency, we also did not anticipate expending the funds and didn't have an appropriation up to the amount spent. City Manager Phelps stated that was not the case for the City because we have gas tax appropriated for snow removal. City Manager Phelps reviewed what gas tax funding can be used for and snow removal fits in the category. Commissioner Robertson made the motion to not declare a local emergency related to the winter storms of January 10, 2025 and Commissioner Buehler seconded the motion. Commissioner Terry asked for comments from the public and Commission. There being none, the question was called for and the City Clerk took a roll call vote with all being in favor of the motion.

### **CITIZENS' REQUESTS**

There were none.

### **COMMISSIONER'S MINUTE**

Commissioner Day asked for some clarification regarding an item from the last Commission meeting. The item was the variance for the Potts to have a small animal clinic on 1<sup>st</sup> Ave N and it is Commissioner Day's understanding that it is not going to happen. City Manager Phelps answered that she had heard there were issues with the sale, and in the end, they may not be moving there. That variance follows the property and not the person.

Commissioner Day thanked the community for all of the support for the Grand Opening of Main Street Treats.

Commissioner Hrubes apologized for missing the snow meeting. Commissioner Hrubes will work on checking his email more often.

Commissioner Terry reported that she will be gone April 21<sup>st</sup> for the Commission meeting and Commissioner Day will be gone for the April 7<sup>th</sup> meeting.

There was discussion regarding the upcoming ordinance committee. There was also some conversation regarding parking tickets and the issues of enforcing tickets.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Terry adjourned the meeting.

Dated this 17<sup>th</sup> day of March 2025.

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KellyAnne Terry, Commission Chairman

ATTEST:

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Nikki Brummond, City Clerk