

A REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING OF THE LEWISTOWN CITY COMMISSION ON JUNE 1, 2026 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: Bowser, Day, Hewitt, Robertson, Shaver, and Warren. Commissioner Buehler was absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Day stated that without objection and based on the corrections the minutes for May 1, 2026 and May 18, 2026 are approved.

COURTESIES

There were none.

PROCLAMATIONS

There were none.

BOARD AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner Bowser reported that the Ordinance Committee met on May 20th and discussed the upcoming zoning changes and would like to see working meetings with Commissioners. The Commission has seen the consequences of not having zoning or not giving it more thought prior to approving zoning. Commissioner Bowser commented civic infractions was discussed due to the complaints being received regarding blight, parking and dogs.

Commissioner Bowser attended the Library Board meeting on May 20th. The Library has hired a cleaner for \$900 a month and a handyman was hired. The Summer Reading Program may be more expensive than anticipated and if there is an overrun it was suggested that the Friends of the Library could help with expenses. The Library Director job description was amended for redundancies.

Commissioner Robertson reported he attended a TIF board meeting and there was discussion on the potential parking lot on the corner of Janeaux and 4th Ave.

Commissioner Hewitt reported there will be an Airport Board meeting this Wednesday, June 3rd.

Commissioner Day reported that the Park and Recreation Board met on May 27th. There was a meeting on May 5th for all Farmers Market vendors to discuss a location change. The Park and Recreation Director did attend the meeting. The vendors decided with a majority vote they would like to remain at Symmes Park.

Some of the proposed solutions were to fill lawn holes, recruit cross walk guards to help with street crossings. Commissioner Day reported it was noted that the Farmers Market has 47 to 52 vendors weekly. Commissioner Day further reported that the vendors requested the City provide equipment for safety crossings, grass seed, fill dirt, porta potties and the sprinklers be turned off Friday evening. The Farmer's Market does not have a formal agreement or a memorandum of understanding with the City nor do they have insurance or pay any fees for park usage. Commissioner Day reported the pros and cons received from the vendors regarding moving to the Creekside location. The vendors have planned for 13 Saturdays for the Farmers Market. The Park and Recreation Board approved the vendors to remain at Symmes Park for another year with the condition of vendors assisting with lawn care, providing a crossing guard, and having the state repaint the crosswalks. It was added that a 2026 formal agreement would be in place. Commissioner Day reported the other items of discussion at the Park and Recreation Board meeting were that more lifeguards are needed. A new Trails Specialist was hired. The Friends of the Pool purchased diving boards, lounge chairs for the pool and tables and chairs for the new multipurpose building.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

City Manger Holly Phelps reported on the following items:

The City of Lewistown has a request for proposals for the Downtown Master Plan. More information can be obtained by emailing cityoffice@ci.lewistown.mt.us. Proposals are due June 15th and will be advertised online and in print. Interested firms can reach out to the City Manager for more information.

The City is looking to fill the open Police Commission. Information regarding the Police Commission can be found on the City's Facebook Page. The opening was also advertised in the newspaper.

The Library's Facility Masterplan is slated to begin later this week. The committee met with the architect that will complete the masterplan and architectural report.

The Library's Summer Reading Program begins June 2nd. This year's theme is "Unearth A Story" and there will be both youth and adult programs running through July 21st. More information is available on the Library's website and Facebook page.

The Lewistown Soccer club will be hosting a portion of the State Soccer tournament at Lewistown Soccer Park on June 13th and 14th.

This year's pool season has been pushed back a couple of days due to a boiler issue. The parts are supposed to arrive later this week and then they will be able to complete the Lifeguard training. The pool will open to the public at 1:15 pm on June 8th. The sign ups for swimming lessons and pool passes were done the end of May. If you still need to register for swimming lessons or to purchase passes stop by the pool beginning Wednesday, June 3rd.

The biosolids project continues to move forward. The engineer is completing a State Revolving Fund Loan application for that project. Last meeting it was discussed that the engineer has the final designs and are working to obtain approval from DEQ.

DEQ is not requesting any additional information regarding the recent inspections on both the stormwater, and the wastewater permits currently.

The Planning Commission will meet in June and the draft bylaws will be presented at that meeting.

As a reminder the monthly committees are as follows: Public Works Committee is 9 am on June 12th, Ordinance Committee is 11 am on June 17th and Audit Committee is 12 pm on June 18th.

PUBLIC COMMENT – non agenda items

There were none.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Bowser 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 May 15, 2026 to May 31, 2026 for a total of \$100,528.02

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

1. Discussion and action on the Park and Recreation Board's decision on Farmers Market location

City Manager Phelps reported that recently the Park and Recreation Board had a meeting and heard from the Farmers Market group. The recommendation from the Park and Recreation Board was to allow the Farmers Market group to stay at Symmes Park for this year and work to get a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in place for the current season and then move to Creekside next season. Ms. Kathy Walter, representing the Farmers Market, stated they would love to stay at Symmes Park but understand if there is a problem with that. The Farmers Market Group are willing to do some work to smooth out the area of concern. Ms. Walter asked if there is a scheduled event at Creekside, where the Farmers Market would end up going.

Ms. Michelle Rainey commented that she is in favor of leaving the Farmers Market at Symmes Park.

Mr. Josh Negard, Negaard's Produce, stated he was curious if there was an answer for where the Farmers Market would be moved to if there is an event at Creekside. Commissioner Day explained that questions will be discussed during the Commission discussion this evening.

Mr. Josh Stoychoff, 809 3rd Ave S, made his public comment as to how many of the vendors at the Farmers Market are citizens of the City of Lewistown.

Drew, 128 C Street, stated he is a vendor at the Farmers Market and represents several businesses with their signed consent on a petition. These businesses do not want the Farmers Market at Creekside, because they feel it will hurt their business. Those businesses support the Farmers Market to stay at Symmes Park.

Ms. Leslie Long, 97 Trails End Lane, stated she does not live in the City limits, but does live in the community, which she feels is a huge part of the Farmers Market. Ms. Long stated she would definitely vote for it to stay at Symmes Park.

Ms. Tiffany Knopp, who was participating virtually, commented that as a general visitor to the market she thinks it is odd that the booths are right on the curb. Ms. Knopp further commented that this is dangerous for kids and strollers. Ms. Knopp stated she has sold at markets before and there was an application process and wondered if an application process can be looked into. Ms. Knopp further stated that using an application process and limiting vendors can bring a quality market but understand there can be some pushbacks.

Commissioner Day read the following letter:

Dear City Commission Members, I am writing to respectfully request that the following item be placed on an upcoming City Commission agenda for consideration and action. The request is that the City of Lewistown allows the Festival Committee of CineFest to reserve the Creekside Marketplace and Pavilion exclusively for the CineFest Music Festival on the first Saturday in August each year beginning in 2026 and continuing until further notice. Details of request include the reservation which would apply specifically to the first Saturday in August annually. The entire Creekside Marketplace and Pavilion would be reserved exclusively for Centerfest Music Festival use on that date. This would be a standing reservation that remains in effect from year to year unless formally rescinded by the City Commission at a future date. This recurring reservation will provide stability and predictability for the Centerfest Music Festival, allowing organizers to plan effectively, secure vendors, artists and sponsors, and continue growing this important community event that has won two awards so far and has brought in visitors from over 23 states and two different countries, in addition to the community and internationally acclaimed artists. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your response regarding placement of this item on the agenda. Sincerely, Renee.

Commissioner Bowser confirmed that currently there is no MOU and then asked about liability insurance. City Manager Phelps answered there is no MOU and no liability insurance.

Commissioner Robertson expressed his concerns about the location where the Farmers Market is currently located. Commissioner Robertson recalled that when Creekside was developed it was promoted to the community as a place for concerts, farmers markets and other community events. Commissioner Robertson asked what the benefit of delaying the decision to relocate the Farmers Market another year and what conditions would change. Commissioner Robertson commented that Creekside is well suited for the Farmers Market but would suggest exploring a well-organized site layout and traffic flow.

Park and Recreation Director Kelly Henderson commented that the Park and Recreation Board believes there are still some questions, which would include how the Chokecherry Festival and Centerfest weekends would be accommodated. As a result, the Park and Recreation Board recommended allowing the Farmers Market to continue using Symmes Park this year. There was a brief discussion of the linear feet of the area at Creekside and across the street at the Yogo Inn around the fish statue.

Drew reported he has talked with the Montana Department of Transportation, and they are willing to repaint the highway in front of Symmes Park and are willing to look at an easement in the same area for flashing lights at the crosswalk.

Ms. Michelle Barcomb, 311 W Main in the Crowley Flats apartments, explained she is a vendor at farmers market and asked if the vendors use the parking lot at Creekside, where would the customers park? Ms. Barcomb stated she thinks it will be the same situation where people are parking on main street and crossing the highway.

Mr. Josh Negard commented he does not think there is a difference in location because both Symmes Park and Creekside are located along the State Highway. Park and Recreation Director Henderson answered she thinks the difference is the vendors set up along highway at Symmes Park and the vendors will not be set up along the highway at Creekside.

Mr. Douglas Day commented that he pays a lot of taxes in the town with the different buildings he owns. Mr. Day is surprised there is no MOU or liability insurance.

Commissioner Robertson made the motion to follow the Park and Recreation Board recommendation to allow the Farmers Market to remain at Symmes Park this summer and Farmers Market to be planning to move Creekside next year and there is to be an insurance policy in place this year with an organization that

represents all of the vendors and a MOU between the City and Farmers Market group and Commissioner Warren seconded the motion. Commissioner Day asked for comments from the audience and Commission. There being none, the question was called for and those voting in favor of the motion were Bowser, Day, Hewitt, Robertson and Warren. Commissioner Shaver voted against it and Commissioner Buehler was absent.

2. Discussion and action on approving the 2026 – 2029 Park Maintenance Contract

City Manager Phelps stated that included in the Commission packets is the one bid the City received for the Park Maintenance Contract and the agreement. City Manager Phelps explained the City has for many years contracted a private contract to mow the City parks and help maintain other recreational areas. The bid received is from the current contractor and there is an option to continue the contract for two additional years. The current contractor is Rick Sandor and the bid for 2026-2027 is \$55,000, the bid for 2027-2029 is \$57,000 and the bid for 2028-2029 is \$59,000. City Manager Phelps explained the proposed bid is \$3,000 more than last year's bid and you can see there is an increase of \$2,000 for the additional two years. Commissioner Hewitt asked why Creekside Park is being declined by the contractor. City Manager Phelps answered it was included in error, and the reason is City staff maintains the area, with regular cleaning and mowing. Commissioner Bowser made the motion to approve the 2026-2029 Park Maintenance Contract and Commissioner Robertson seconded the motion. Commissioner Day asked for comments from the audience and Commission. There being none, the question was called for and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Discussion and action on selecting an agency to enter into a contract for Workers Compensation coverage

City Manager Phelps explained as previously discussed Montana Municipal Interlocal Authority (MMIA) is no longer going to provide Workers Comp coverage. The City continued to work with MMIA to help with the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process to select a new work comp coverage provider for the City of Lewistown. MMIA also provided us with the detailed information needed to provide for the RFQ process. There were several interested parties, and the City received five proposals. City Manager Phelps explained that several of the RFQs received were very qualified and would like to recommend Marsh and McLennan Agency out of Helena. City Manager Phelps further explained the company was formerly Payne West and provided a very thorough proposal, the company has worked in the work comp realm for an exceptionally long time and provides workers comp coverage to a lot of other municipalities of various sizes. Commissioner Day asked if the costs were comparable. City Manager Phelps answered this is a request for qualifications not cost. Once the recommendation is approved, the City will move forward with getting a contract in place and through that process we will get the cost of workers comp. Commissioner Robertson made the motion to accept the City Manager's recommendation to contract with March and McLennan Agency to provide Workers Compensation for the City of Lewistown and Commissioner Bowser seconded the motion. Commissioner Day asked for comments from the audience and Commission. There being none, the question was called for and the motion passed unanimously.

4. Discussion and action on approving a business license for Weststate Electric

City Manager Phelps explained the City is in receipt of a business license application for an electrical contractor that plans to do business in Lewistown. The contractor is based out of Billings but has projects located in Lewistown. Commissioner Bowser made the motion to approve the business license for Weststate Electric and Commissioner Warren seconded the motion. Commissioner Day asked for comments from the audience and Commission. There being none, the question was called for and the motion passed unanimously.

CITIZENS' REQUESTS

Mr. Nathan Blackadar, 916 5th Ave S, commented he loves the Farmers Market and does not feel right to have the Farmers Market located at Veterans Park. Commissioner Day thanked Mr. Blackadar for bringing that to the attention of the Commission. City Manager Phelps explained that area discussed for Farmers Market is on the other side of the creek, on the east side and the flat area.

COMMISSIONER'S MINUTE

Commissioner Hewitt reminded everyone of the Airport Board meeting this Thursday and the working on the runways up at the Airport.

Commissioner Warren reported the Public Works Committee will meet next Friday at 9 am.

Commissioner Robertson reported he has been contacted by a constituent and wants to know what we are going to do about the cats running at large. Commissioner Robertson commented that domestic animal license has been discussed with the Commission. Commissioner Robertson would like to see the topic brought back to the Commission for discussion.

Commissioner Robertson reported some constituents are asking for traffic control at the intersection of Carroll Trail and Agate. This has been discussed a little bit at the Public Works Committee meetings. Commissioner Robertson stated this is a residential neighborhood and it gets a huge amount of traffic.

Commissioner Robertson thanked Mr. Blackadar for his comments with respect to Veterans Park.

Commissioner Bowser reported she has received a few comments regarding speeding on Boulevard. Commissioner Bowser thanked everyone for attending the meeting tonight. Commissioner Bowser stated she has almost fallen at the Farmers Market and hopes something can be worked out because she loves the Farmers Market.

Commissioner Shaver commented he talked with a new business owner recently and was told the City is the easiest organization to work with.

Commissioner Day thanked everyone for attending. Commissioner Day commented she hopes everyone will reach out to the Park and Recreation Director to work out all the issues for the Farmers Market.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Day adjourned the meeting.

Dated the 1st day of June 2026.

Loraine Day, Commission Chairman

ATTEST:

Nikki Brummond, City Clerk