

**THE COMMON COUNCIL  
CITY of HARDIN, MONTANA**

**COUNCIL MEETING: The Regular Council Meeting for January 7, 2025 was called to order at 6:30 p.m. with Mayor Joe Purcell presiding by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.**

The following Aldermen were present: Clayton Greer, Chris Sharpe, Rock Massine, Antonio Espinoza, and Jeremy Krebs. Steven Hopes was excused.

Also present: Finance Officer/City Clerk Andrew Lehr, Public Works Director Michael Hurff, Jr., Deputy City Clerk Angela Zimmer, City Attorney Jordan Knudsen, and Economic Development Director Tina Toyne.

Also present physically: Members of the Public  
There was not anyone present by Virtual Meeting.

**MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS & CLAIMS:** Sharpe made the motion to approve the Council minutes as written for December 17, 2024. Motion seconded by Greer. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Greer made a motion to approve the claims for January 7, 2025.

	CLAIM No.	Monthly Total
December, 2024	31814-31821, 31823-31839, 31863-31891	\$ 77,999.14
January, 2025	31840-31862	\$ 10,789.19
<b>TOTAL Submitted</b>		<b>\$ 88,788.33</b>

Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote, the motion was unanimously approved.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Jose Funke, resident, listed reasons why he would like more patrols through his residential area and voiced his recommendations for snow removal. Mayor Purcell asked if he has reported this to the police department. Funke reported he will be sending more information to the Chief.

**MAYOR:**

Mayor Purcell voiced “Happy New Year” and noted the City has a list of projects and grants coming up ahead.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Personnel Policy/City Policy:**

Mayor Purcell reported the City will be holding interviews this week and the next week for open positions. The City currently has open positions for a full-time Police Officer, Terminal Agency Coordination/Administrative Assistant (TAC) and the Police Service Aide. Part-time positions are open for Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Apprentice and Janitor/Facilities Maintenance. All positions are open until filled.

**Sewer & Water:**

Massine reported the bid opening for the Waste Water Treatment Plant Upgrade is scheduled for January 9, 2025. (It was noted later in the meeting the bid opening has been rescheduled for January 16, 2025.)

**Law Enforcement:**

**Streets & Alleys:**

Espinoza voiced the City is doing a good job plowing roads.

**Parks & Playgrounds:**

**Finance/Landfill:**

Greer reported the City is waiting for information from Barry Damschen about the Landfill Canister Site.

**Resolutions & Ordinances:**

**SPECIAL COMMITTEES:**

**PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS:**

The City received the Winter Newsletter from the Montana Department of Transportation.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS: N/A**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Mayor Purcell reported The Hardin Chamber of Commerce submitted a letter requesting rent forgiveness and also asked to have the option to pay rent on a monthly basis, instead of by an annual lump sum. He noted there is no problem with changing the rent to be paid monthly; the rent forgiveness is being brought before Council. Mayor Purcell reported the request for rent forgiveness is for the years 2022, 2023, 2024; in the amount of just over \$5,400. Massine asked what they are paying now for the year; it was noted \$2,248 a year. Mayor Purcell noted that amount is to lease the building and the Chamber pays utilities, insurance, etc. He voiced during covid they didn't have many events and there is a new board in place. Krebs voiced the Chamber does a lot for the community and motioned to approve the request. Greer seconded. Mayor Purcell noted it has been moved and seconded to grant the request to the Chamber to forgive the unpaid rent for the years 2022, 2023, and through December 2024 and they will move forward with monthly installments for the upcoming leases. Kim Caprata, a 3-year member of the Chamber Board, and Alexandria Edwards, new member, both extended a "Thank You" to Council. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

**STAFF REPORTS:**

**Public Works:**

**Finance:**

Lehr reported the application for the Pilot Grant was submitted on December 31<sup>st</sup>; the City will know something in March. Other grants include the Coal Board Grant for the Garbage Truck and the Land Water Conservation Fund grant for the South Park Project. The bid opening for the Wastewater Treatment Plant has been rescheduled for January 16<sup>th</sup>. Lehr reported Stahly has been holding back HDR invoices to the City for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade until it goes out to bid; once the bid is awarded the invoices will be paid with the State Revolving Fund (SRF) and Rural Development Loans. Lehr noted a City police vehicle that was wrecked was submitted to the City insurance, Montana Municipal Interlocal Authority (MMIA). Currently they are looking to repair the vehicle; if it cannot be repaired, they will total it.

**Police:**

Mayor Purcell reported interviews are scheduled for the end of this week for positions open at the Police Department.

**Legal:**

**Economic Development:**

Toyne reported there was a kick off meeting with Ayers Associates for the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy; Mike Scholl, with Ayers, and Gaurav Thakur, with Beartooth RC&D, traveled to Hardin to work with her on the strategy and the Housing Needs Assessment for Big Horn County; and they attended a bazaar in Crow Agency, sponsored by Plenty Doors, to encourage members of the community to fill out the surveys for the assessment.

Toyne reported she will be meeting with Lawrence Killsback, Economic Development Director for Big Horn County, adding she is looking forward to having someone to work with collaboratively; she has been working on current information about the Industrial Park Area to provide to companies to look at; she continues to work

with Montana Business Attraction; and she, Lehr, and two other firms did a walk through the Hotel Becker property. Toyne provided information about the Pilot Tourism Grant; reported she attended the Visit South East Montana meeting; and noted the City received the first proposal for the Infill and Redevelopment for Housing.

Lawrence KILLSBACK reported he and Toyne will be meeting to work together on shared goals. He reported he was brought on at the County to focus on the housing piece and community development.

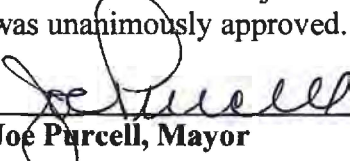
**RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Mayor Purcell Sealed Bids for the Invitation to Bid for the Wastewater Treatment Plant has been rescheduled to January 16, 2025 at 2:00 p.m.; Request for Qualifications for the Preliminary Architectural Feasibility Plan for Hotel Becker are due by 3:00 p.m. Wednesday, January 15, 2025; City Offices will be closed Monday, January 20, 2025 for Martin Luther King Day; and Business and Pet Licenses are due by February 1, 2025.

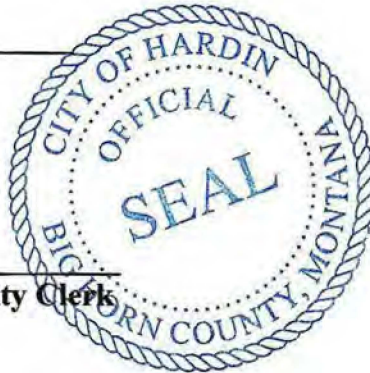
The City of Hardin has the following Job Openings: Full-time positions: Police Officer, Police Service Aide (PSA), and Terminal Agency Coordinator (TAC) / Administrative Assistant I-IV. Part-time position: Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Apprentice and Janitor/Facilities Maintenance. Positions are open until filled.

Greer motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:51 p.m. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

  
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Joe Purcell, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Andrew Lehr, Finance Officer/City Clerk



**THE COMMON COUNCIL  
CITY of HARDIN, MONTANA**

**COUNCIL MEETING: The Regular Council Meeting for January 21, 2025 was called to order at 6:30 p.m. with Mayor Joe Purcell presiding by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.**

The following Aldermen were present: Steven Hopes, Clayton Greer, Chris Sharpe, Rock Massine, and Antonio Espinoza. Jeremy Krebs was excused.

Also present: Finance Officer/City Clerk Andrew Lehr, Public Works Director Michael Hurff, Jr., Deputy City Clerk Angela Zimmer, City Attorney Jordan Knudsen, and Economic Development Director Tina Toyne.

Also present physically and by Virtual Meeting: Members of the Public

**MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS & CLAIMS:** Greer made the motion to approve the Council minutes as written for January 7, 2025. Motion seconded by Hopes. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved. Greer made the motion to approve the Special Council minutes as written for December 30, 2024. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Greer made a motion to approve the claims for January 21, 2025.

	CLAIM No.	Monthly Total
November, 2024	31892, 31896	\$ 2,841.99
December, 2024	31894, 31898-31908, 31910-31915, 31923	\$ 58,346.14
January, 2025	31895, 31897, 31909, 31916-31922, 31924-31942, 31944	\$ 6,627.71
<b>Claims Total (Expenditures)</b>		<b>\$ 67,815.84</b>
<b>December 2024</b>		<b>\$ 247,662.13</b>
<b>TOTAL Submitted</b>		<b>\$ 315,477.97</b>

Hopes seconded. On a voice vote, the motion was unanimously approved.

**PUBLIC COMMENT: N/A**

**MAYOR:**

Mayor Purcell reported there has been a few meetings for the Hotel Becker and there is a meeting scheduled tomorrow for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade Project.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Personnel Policy/City Policy:**

Mayor Purcell reported the City held interviews last week for open positions. The City currently has open positions for a full-time Police Officer, Terminal Agency Coordination/Administrative Assistant (TAC) and the Police Service Aide. Part-time positions are open for Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Apprentice and Janitor/Facilities Maintenance. All positions are open until filled.

**Sewer & Water:**

Massine reported the bid opening was held for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project.

**Law Enforcement:**

**Streets & Alleys:**

**Parks & Playgrounds:**

**Finance/Landfill:**

**Resolutions & Ordinances:**

**SPECIAL COMMITTEES:**



**PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS:**

The City received information from the Montana Department of Transportation providing an update on the Hardin Rest Area Restoration.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** N/A

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Dax Simek, of Stahly Engineering, reported Robie Culver, Grant Specialist of Stahly Engineering, had sent a summary of information about the Montana Department of Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program. He provided an overview of projects that qualify for funding through the program. Mayor Purcell asked if the safe route to schools included sidewalks; Simek voiced it does. Greer voiced it could probably be used to incorporate walking paths.

Simek reported the bid opening for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project was held last Thursday. Simek noted there is available funding of approximately \$9.7 million; which included roughly \$2.4 million in contingency. The total bid amount from Northcon, Inc. for all schedules was \$13,417,486. The bid takes in account about \$650,000 for a couple of deducted bid alternates for removing the admin building improvements and the positive pressurization unit for the headworks facility. He noted he forwarded the bid results to the funding agencies; there is a call scheduled with all of them tomorrow to see if there are more funding options available. He will contact the City after the call to discuss steps to take to move forward.

Simek reviewed a memo for a Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating - (PASER) Analysis and Street Management Study. The PASER Analysis uses a rating system to focus on lower priority items; preventative maintenance of roads that can extend the lifecycle of asphalt and reduce maintenance costs for municipalities over time. Mayor Purcell asked if there any grant funding for this. Simek voiced he will talk with Culver to see if there is anything available to help with those costs. Simek provided a ball park estimate of around \$40,000, give or take.

Mayor Purcell reported the City received a repair quote from Jackson Group Peterbilt in the amount of \$9,448.06. Hurff reported the quote is to change out the front main seal on the 2016 Peterbilt. Massine motioned to accept the quote. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Lehr reported the City has three CD's at Little Horn State Bank that are renewing this month. He requested approval to allow him to renew the CD's at the highest rate possible. Hopes motioned to approve the request. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

The City of Hardin was previously awarded a \$45,000 grant from Montana Main Street in support of the Hotel Becker for renovation and reuse. Mayor Purcell reported proposals from two companies were received for the Request for Proposals for the Becker Hotel Architectural Report. He referenced the scoring sheet noting High Plains Architects scored the highest. The recommendation is to go forward and award the project to High Plains Architects. Hopes motioned to go with High Plains Architects. Greer seconded. Lehr voiced both proposals came in under budget. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

**STAFF REPORTS:**

**Public Works:**

**Finance:**

Lehr reported the quarterly report was submitted to the American Rescue Plan for the Lodge Grass Project; there were no invoices that came in, but there is a request that was submitted for payroll for the City of Hardin. The quarterly report for the minimum allocation grant through ARPA for the City was turned in; there were not any expenses this quarter.

Lehr reported the City has two projects under House Bill 355; the mixers and the lining for the concrete water tank. The contract for the mixers has been signed and the City is waiting to receive the contract for the lining. The first mixer was faulty; once a new one is installed he will request reimbursement through House Bill 355.

Lehr reported the Quarterly Investment Report will be brought to Council at the next scheduled meeting and interviews were held for the janitor position.

**Police:**

Police Chief Paul George reviewed calls for service. He reported interviews were held; offers were extended for two police officer positions and he is looking to extend an offer for the Terminal Agency Coordinator position soon.

**Legal:**

**Economic Development:**

**RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Mayor Purcell reported Business and Pet Licenses are due by February 1, 2025.

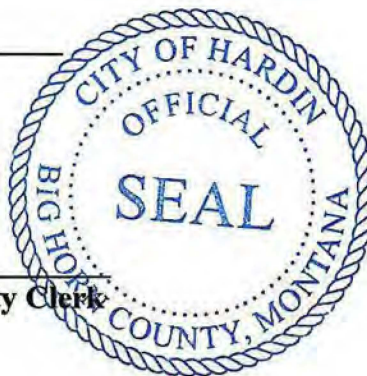
The City of Hardin has the following Job Openings: Full-time positions: Police Officer, Police Service Aide (PSA), and Terminal Agency Coordinator (TAC) / Administrative Assistant I-IV. Part-time position: Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Apprentice and Janitor/Facilities Maintenance. Positions are open until filled.

Greer motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:52 p.m. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

  
Joe Purcell, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

  
Andrew Lehr, Finance Officer/City Clerk



**THE COMMON COUNCIL  
CITY of HARDIN, MONTANA**

**COUNCIL MEETING:** The Regular Council Meeting for February 4, 2025 was called to order at 6:30 p.m. with Mayor Joe Purcell presiding by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

The following Aldermen were present: Steven Hopes, Clayton Greer, Chris Sharpe, Rock Massine, Antonio Espinoza and Jeremy Krebs.

Also present: Finance Officer/City Clerk Andrew Lehr, Public Works Director Michael Hurff, Jr., Deputy City Clerk Angela Zimmer, City Attorney Jordan Knudsen, and Economic Development Director Tina Toyne.

Also present physically and by Virtual Meeting: Members of the Public

**MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS & CLAIMS:** Hopes made the motion to approve the Council minutes as written for January 21, 2025. Motion seconded by Greer. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Greer made a motion to approve the claims for February 4, 2025.

	CLAIM No.	Monthly Total
December, 2024	31945, 31947, 31973-31975	\$ 22,433.33
January, 2025	31946, 31948-31951, 31972, 31976-31999, 32002-32005	\$ 118,594.81
February, 2025	31952-31971, 32000-32001	\$ <u>2,537.47</u>
<b>TOTAL Submitted</b>		<b>\$ 143,565.61</b>

Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote, the motion was unanimously approved.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Jose Funke voiced his concerns about drug activity in the City; about snow removal; and about changes he feels need to be made regarding the process of the pick-up and drop-off lane at the primary school.

**MAYOR:**

Mayor Purcell reported he has been appointed to the National League of Cities' Small Cities Council. He will represent small cities across Montana and the United States at National Meetings.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Personnel Policy/City Policy:**

**Sewer & Water:**

Massine reported Dax Simek, Stahly Engineering, will provide an update on the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project.

**Law Enforcement:**

**Streets & Alleys:**

Espinoza voiced the City is doing what they can with the snow; we got a lot of snow out there.

Krebs asked if the City has heard anything from the state about the signage, parking on Center street with Customer Parking Only signs. Mayor Purcell noted it will be followed up on.

**Parks & Playgrounds:**

**Finance/Landfill:**

**Resolutions & Ordinances:**

**SPECIAL COMMITTEES:**

**PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS:**

The City received a notice from the National League of Cities announcing the appointment of Mayor Purcell to the National League of Cities (NLC) 2025 Small Cities Council.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS: N/A**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Dax Simek, of Stahly Engineering, reported there was a meeting last week with representatives from Department of Environmental Quality and Rural Development to discuss options whether they are in favor of splitting the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project into phases or to secure additional funding and do the entire project. He voiced their preference was to secure additional funding; breaking the project into several phases would not be any cheaper. The preference of Rural Development is to seek \$5.1 million in additional funding; this would get to the Northcon, Inc. bid of \$13 million and provide the 10% contingency. He noted the estimated rate increase would be about \$8.60 per month per user beyond what was originally anticipated; adding the number will be revised once final funding numbers are known. Simek reviewed options where money could be saved on the project; noting there is not a lot that can be trimmed from it. He reported the bid would need to be awarded within sixty days of the bid opening; they would need to take-action by March 17<sup>th</sup> to avoid having to go out and re-bid the project.

Police Chief Paul George, Jr. reported a police vehicle was damaged in a pursuit; the insurance company has totaled the vehicle and the City received almost \$30,000 for a replacement vehicle. The one vehicle will be replaced by two used police vehicles; 2016 and 2018 Ford Explorers. They are equipped and will only need radios, laptop mounts, and striping added. It was noted they will be shipped to Hardin. Chief George reported one of the vehicles has a K-9 partition. He will test drive the vehicles before the purchase order is signed and they are shipped. Massine motioned to go forward with the purchase of both of the vehicles. Espinoza seconded. There was discussion of how many vehicles the department currently has and also about removing the equipment from the totaled vehicle. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

**STAFF REPORTS:**

**Public Works:**

Hurff provided updates of repairs and maintenance at the **Wastewater Treatment Plant; Water Transmission and Distribution:** Joe Johnson Equipment provided an update reporting they are looking at early September for the delivery of the Vactor truck; one curb stop was replaced in December and the total of twenty-seven curb stops were repaired in 2024; **Landfill:** The signal light on the scale at the Landfill has been repaired; and Damschen Engineering has updated the Operation and Maintenance Manual and will provide the final draft to the City. Barry Damschen, landfill engineer, and Zimmer have been working on the Landfill Canister Site Bid process with a Bid opening date of March 5, 2025. **Streets:** He and Kois Bros. are working on a specification sheet for a mechanics truck and Kois Bros. is having a two- day rapid rail garbage truck class for mechanics. The new garbage truck is scheduled to be delivered in June, the sander has been repaired, and the Peterbilt garbage truck has been repaired and is ready for pick up. **Parks:** Rick Funk from SplashPads USA noted the next step is to schedule a site visit. **Water Treatment Plant:** One mixer has been installed in one of the hill tanks; the other mixer was faulty and the replacement has been received, but hasn't been installed yet. Carr Coatings will be installing the liner in the concrete hill tank in March. He is working with engineers about the building design of the intake screens at the water plant.

Greer extended a compliment to the city crew on the snow removal; they are doing a good job.

**Finance:**

Lehr reviewed the Quarterly Investment Report for the First Interstate Bank Investment Account.

Lehr reviewed the Cash Pledge Report. Greer motioned to approve the report. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Lehr reported he turned in the Quarterly COPS Grant report; currently the City has used \$256,474 of the grant and there is \$118,526 remaining. The two CD's, at Little Horn State Bank, that matured in January have been combined with an interest rate at 4.25%. The Pay Application for Askin Construction, 1<sup>st</sup> Street and Gable Boulevard Project, has been paid.

**Police:**

Police Chief Paul George, Jr. reviewed calls for service. He provided an update on the Axon License Plate Reader System, reporting the system as resulted in arrests and vehicles being returned to proper owners undamaged. He added the department is already seeing a return on the system. Chief George reported Officer Tyler Nedens completed his ride along with him tonight along with his twelve-week Field Officer Training with Officer Smells; he is officially solo.

**Legal:**

Knudsen reported the County passed a resolution, here in 2025, notifying the City of their intent not to renew the Farm to Market Road agreement. He reviewed the terms of the agreement. Knudsen noted that after 2026, all the streets will become the City's sole responsibility.

Krebs reported he had a constituent approach him about concerns of campers in town being lived in. Knudsen voiced he will have to review it.

**Economic Development:**

Toyne reported the City is waiting to hear about the results of the Pilot Tourism Grant at the beginning of March and Ayres Associates is near completion of the Housing Needs Assessment for Big Horn County. The City has received one proposal for the Infill and Redevelopment for Housing Request for Proposals and is expecting another one by the end of the week. There will be a meeting with Ayres Associates to discuss the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) when they come to present the Housing Assessment Report to the County. They are also interested in meeting with Council Members and local stakeholders; invitations will be sent out. The City is waiting for the contract from High Plains to begin work on the Preliminary Architectural Report (PAR) for the Hotel Becker Project.

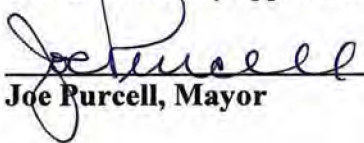
**RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Mayor Purcell reported Business and Pet Licenses were due by February 1, 2025; the Hardin Community Blood Drive is scheduled for Thursday, February 13, 2025 from 12:15 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. at First Alliance Church; City of Hardin Offices will be closed Monday, February 17, 2025 for Presidents' Day; and the Request for Qualifications for the Hardin Master Service Agreement are due Tuesday, February 11, 2025 by 3:00 p.m.

The City of Hardin has the following Job Openings: Full-time positions: Police Officer, Police Service Aide (PSA), and Terminal Agency Coordinator (TAC) / Administrative Assistant I-IV. Part-time position: Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Apprentice and Janitor/Facilities Maintenance. Positions are open until filled.

Greer motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:13 p.m. Krebs seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

  
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Joe Purcell, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

  
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Andrew Lehr, Finance Officer/City Clerk



**THE COMMON COUNCIL  
CITY of HARDIN, MONTANA**

**COUNCIL MEETING: The Regular Council Meeting for February 18, 2025 was called to order at 6:31 p.m. with Mayor Joe Purcell presiding by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.**

The following Aldermen were present: Steven Hopes, Clayton Greer, Chris Sharpe, Rock Massine, Antonio Espinoza and Jeremy Krebs.

Also present: Finance Officer/City Clerk Andrew Lehr, Public Works Director Michael Hurff, Jr., Deputy City Clerk Angela Zimmer, City Attorney Jordan Knudsen, and Police Chief Paul George, Jr.

Also present physically and by Virtual Meeting: Members of the Public

**MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS & CLAIMS:** Greer made the motion to approve the Council minutes as written for February 4, 2025. Motion seconded by Hopes. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Greer made a motion to approve the claims for February 18, 2025.

	CLAIM No.	Monthly Total
December, 2024	32020, 32026	\$ 19,249.24
January, 2025	32006-32016, 32018-32019, 32021, 32023-32024, 32028-32033	\$ 55,547.10
February, 2025	32017, 32025,32027	\$ 38,182.01
<b>TOTAL Submitted</b>		<b>\$ 112,978.35</b>

Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote, the motion was unanimously approved.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Jose Funke voiced his concerns about vehicles parked by his area that have been sitting there for months; this doesn't allow the area to be plowed.

**MAYOR:**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:  
Personnel Policy/City Policy:**

**Sewer & Water:**

**Law Enforcement:**

**Streets & Alleys:**

Espinoza voiced the City is moving as fast as they can plowing snow.

Krebs added that the crew is doing a great job; he is impressed about the amount of snow they are moving.

**Parks & Playgrounds:**

**Finance/Landfill:**

Greer reported he, Hurff, and Barry Damschen met this morning for the Landfill Container Site Project pre-bid meeting.

**Resolutions & Ordinances:**

**SPECIAL COMMITTEES:**

**PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS:**



**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

Lehr reported the Infill and Redevelopment project is for a strategy to redevelop current housing and empty lots in town; properties that need to be redeveloped. The funding came from the Montana Community Reinvestment Program (MCR) grant through HB 819 in the amount \$30,000. He reviewed scoring from the two bids that were submitted by Cushing Terrell (CTA) and Ayres Associates Inc.; noting CTA scored higher. Randy Rhoads and Amanda Jungles were present by Zoom for questions. Sharpe motioned to approve (CTA) Cushing Terrell. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Knudsen reviewed the Memorandum of Understanding for Lodge Grass to submit a Coal Board application for a backhoe. He reported the City will apply for and administer the grant; the City is not accepting any responsibility. Hopes motioned to approve the Interlocal Agreement. Greer seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Purcell reported the City received three bids for the Master Services Agreement Request For Qualifications; he noted the three companies, IMEG, Interstate Engineering, and WWC Engineering tied in the scoring. The Master Services Agreement is to have an engineering firm to go to with for smaller projects that fall out of the realm of Stahly Engineering. Kolten Knatterud, with IMEG in Billings, MT, introduced Solomon Bull Shows adding he is local with the Hardin location. Knatterud noted all firms are highly qualified, pointing out that what differentiates them from the others is they are local with national expertise. Rachel Laqua, with Interstate Engineering, (present by Zoom) noted they have worked on projects with the City, to include the Growth Policy and Wayfinding Plan; adding they are a team of planners good at planning and grant finding. Hopes voiced he would like to have someone local, Massine agreed. Massine motioned to go with IMEG. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Greer motioned to approve the High Plains Contract for the Becker Hotel. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Purcell reported the City received an Application for a Mobile Home Inspection (1981 Camelot). Brad Rymer, new owner of Willow Springs and Alpine Village Mobile Home Parks, voiced he wants to bring a new home in; bring new units here. Krebs voiced the water heater cannot be in there; is not a mobile home water heater. Rymer noted a certified contractor will remove the water heater. Mayor Purcell referenced the letter of recommendation from Joe Connelly, Building Inspector, that his opinion is the mobile home would be an acceptable candidate to move into Hardin. It was noted the home will be moved into Alpine Village. Hopes motioned to approve the inspection. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion passed. (5/1) Krebs voting Nay.

Police Chief Paul George, Jr. provided an overview of the records management system CentralSquare. The City currently has 10-8 Systems; he noted this program does not fit Police Department needs and doesn't automatically transfer NIBRS reports to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) as Central Square does. Chief George reviewed how the new system will work more efficiently for the department. He reported Big Horn County has signed a contract with CentralSquare; they are in the building stage; and the City joining now would save the City a lot of money. The contract requires \$20,630 to be paid initially to have the program built with the annual software fee of \$16,776.91; he has spoken with the company about the current available budget and they have agreed for the City to pay the \$16,776.91 upfront followed by the \$20,630 when the department goes live with the program around September. He added the City will be able to communicate with the County and it will make it easier for dispatchers. Krebs motioned to approve the software. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Lehr reported there was a meeting last Friday he attended with Stahly Engineering and some State Representatives regarding the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project. The City is about \$5.1 million short on funding for the project. The amortization schedules



do not have to do with the additional money the City is requesting from Rural Development; this has to do with the State Revolving Fund (SRF) money the City has already requested and received. Their question for the City relates to the amount the City will have to charge for sewer rates. Lehr reviewed Twenty Year (20) and Thirty Year (30) Amortization Schedules; providing calculations of the interest on the loans and approximate sewer rate increases. **20-Year Schedule:** Interest of \$723,146 with the sewer rate at approximately \$65.66 **30-Year Schedule:** Interest of \$1,108,983 with the sewer rate at approximately \$64.26 per month. There was a consensus to save the additional interest of about \$386,000. Lehr reported \$44.67 is the current sewer rate and \$85.83 would be the estimated combined water and sewer bill with the 20 Year Schedule. He noted Rural Development is willing to give \$2.5 million more in grant funds to help with the project with the total of almost \$7.7 million for the project. Krebs motioned to go with the Twenty-Year Amortization Schedule. Espinoza seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

**STAFF REPORTS:**

**Public Works:**

**Finance:**

Lehr reported the City received \$15,760 from Montana Municipal Interlocal Authority to repair one of the 2021 Ford Interceptors. He reviewed the Landfill Closure and Post Closure Report that was received from Barry Damschen, Landfill Engineer; the report will be on the next Council agenda.

Lehr reviewed the Quarterly Financial Report for the Second Quarter Fiscal Year 2025. Greer motioned to approve the report. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

**Police:**

Police Chief Paul George, Jr. reviewed calls for service. He reported the two police vehicles that were previously approved for purchase are here; the equipment was pulled from the other vehicles. Chief George voiced there was another hit from the ALPR system, they were able to recover a stolen vehicle.

**Legal:**

**Economic Development:**

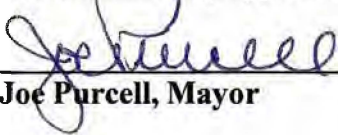
**RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Mayor Purcell announced the following employee anniversaries: Rennie Imasa, 2 years; Trevor Lutt, 13 years; and Drew Lehr, 5 years; Business and Pet Licenses were due by February 1, 2025; a Pre-Bid Meeting for the Landfill Container Site Project was held today and Bids are due on or before March 5, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. and will be publicly opened and read aloud at 2:30 p.m. on that same day; and Letters of Interest to serve on the City-County Planning Board are due by March 6, 2025.

The City of Hardin has the following Job Openings: Full-time positions: Police Officer, Police Service Aide (PSA), and Terminal Agency Coordinator (TAC) / Administrative Assistant I-IV. Part-time position: Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Apprentice and Janitor/Facilities Maintenance. Positions are open until filled.

Greer motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:33 p.m. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joe Purcell, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Andrew Lehr, Finance Officer/City Clerk



**THE COMMON COUNCIL  
CITY of HARDIN, MONTANA**

**COUNCIL MEETING: The Regular Council Meeting for March 4, 2025 was called to order at 6:31 p.m. with Mayor Joe Purcell presiding by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.**

The following Aldermen were present: Steven Hopes, Clayton Greer, Chris Sharpe, Rock Massine, Antonio Espinoza and Jeremy Krebs.

Also present: Finance Officer/City Clerk Andrew Lehr, Public Works Director Michael Hurff, Jr., Deputy City Clerk Angela Zimmer, City Attorney Jordan Knudsen, and Police Chief Paul George, Jr. (6:57 p.m.)

Also present physically: Members of the Public  
There was not anyone present by Virtual Meeting.

**MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS & CLAIMS:** Hopes made the motion to approve the Council minutes as written for February 18, 2025. Motion seconded by Greer. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Greer made a motion to approve the claims for March 4, 2025.

	CLAIM No.	Monthly Total
January, 2025	32074	\$ 2,775.00
February, 2025	32054-32064, 32067-32073, 32075-32086, 32088-32100	\$ 138,702.93
March, 2025	32034-32053, 32065-32066	\$ 2,537.47
<b>TOTAL Submitted</b>		<b>\$ 144,015.40</b>

Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote, the motion was unanimously approved.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Jose Funke voiced his concerns about community safety and enforcement of vehicles parked on the grass. He noted the vehicles that were parked on the street, that didn't allow the area to be plowed, were moved after they were tagged by the City Police Department.

Francisca Funke addressed Council seeking support to attend a National Medical Academy of future scientists and physicians; adding this experience should be a lifetime opportunity for her and any support would be appreciated.

Laurie Tschetter voiced she was less than happy and voiced her concerns about a trailer that was approved to go into Alpine Meadows.

**MAYOR:**

Mayor Purcell reported the City was awarded the Pilot Tourism Grant. The Steering Committee for the grant met today to discuss the next steps of finalizing the budget for the next two years and the scope of the project; they will attend a kickoff event and training in Helena on April 10, 2025; following that event the City can begin planning and implementation and move forward on the project. The Collective Bargaining Agreement for the Police Department remains in discussion. Mayor Purcell reported the Economic Development Strategy planning is underway; there is a QR code at the bottom of the agenda that will take you to the Storymap that will provide information on events and the planned timeline of completion for the project.

Mayor Purcell reported he will be attending the National League Congressional Conference in Washington, D.C. next week; adding he will also be attending and participating in the National League of Cities' Small Cities Council that he was recently appointed to.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Personnel Policy/City Policy:**

Mayor Purcell reported Joe Connelly is leaving the City as the Building Inspector and Code



Enforcement. The city will be opening the position as a full-time position; not as a part-time apprentice position.

**Sewer & Water:**

**Law Enforcement:**

**Streets & Alleys:**

**Parks & Playgrounds:**

**Finance/Landfill:**

Greer reported he, Hurff, and Barry Damschen met this morning for the Landfill Container Site Project pre-bid meeting.

**Resolutions & Ordinances:**

**SPECIAL COMMITTEES:**

**PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS:**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

Mayor Purcell recommended Karla Roods as the Mayor appointment to the City-County Planning Board. Krebs motioned to approve the recommendation. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Purcell reported the agreement is for the Infill & Redevelopment Project that was awarded to Cushing Terrell (CTA). Sharpe motioned to approve the agreement. Espinoza seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Mayor Purcell reported Barry Damschen was unable to attend the meeting and has requested for the Landfill engineering Consulting Services Contract with Barry Damschen Consulting, LLC (Amendment No. 31) and for Adopting the Landfill Operations and Maintenance (O&M) to be moved forward to the meeting of March 18, 2025. contract and the Landfill Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Lehr reviewed the Landfill Closure and Post Closure Estimates, provided by Barry Damschen Consulting, LLC. Massine motioned to approve. Greer seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

**STAFF REPORTS:**

**Public Works:**

**Finance:**

Lehr reviewed the Continuing Disclosures and Event Notice for the Tax Industrial Development Revenue Bonds (TIFD).

Lehr reported the United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development will help the City fund the rest of the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project with a funding package of \$2,562,000 in additional loan funds and \$2,199,000 in additional grant funding. The remaining \$340,000 will come from the City. Rural Development has asked for the portion that is due from the City to be paid at the end after all grants and funding have been used. He reported the amount from the City will cover are additional costs that include the substantial completion certification form at the end of the project and the single audit. Lehr reviewed funds that would need to be held in reserves. He added the new funding is subject to the Build America Act; anything that goes into the project has to be made in America. Lehr noted the Notice of Award has to be provided to Northcon, Inc. by the 17<sup>th</sup> of March. Rural Development will provide the City with the Notice to Proceed and the City will provide Northcon, Inc. with a Notice to Proceed; there may be a special meeting to approve the contract with Northcon, Inc. Lehr proposed an option, that will be brought to Council at a future meeting, to put money in reserves noting it is a requirement of Rural Development. He added that once the money is put into the reserve account, it cannot be taken out.



Lehr reported the City will submit two quotes to the Montana Municipal Interlocal Authority (MMIA) to replace the water truck at the landfill that burned; Lodge Grass, MT should have their wastewater treatment plant project under contract this week; and he will bring the request before Council to create a new accounting fund for the Pilot Tourism Grant. Mayor Purcell reported the Coal Board Grant Application the City helped sponsor for Lodge Grass, for a new backhoe, was denied.

**Police:**

Police Chief Paul George, Jr. reviewed calls for service. He reported background checks are pending for the Terminal Agency Coordinator and the uncertified Police Officer positions.

**Legal:**

**Economic Development:**

Toyne expressed her excitement about the City receiving the Pilot Tourism Grant. She reported Michael Scholl and Karlyn Vasan with Ayres Associates, Inc. will be here for kickoff meetings for the Economic Development Strategy. The meetings are open to the public and are scheduled for 1:00 and 3:00 p.m. at the Depot and 5:30 p.m. at Outlaws Café. Scholl will be giving a final report to the Big Horn County Commission Thursday for the Housing Needs Assessment. She is also looking forward to kickoff meetings for the Infill and Redevelopment for Housing and the Master Service Agreement.

**RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:**

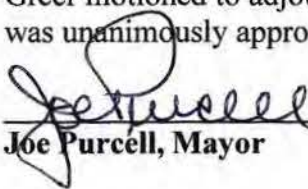
**Resolution NO. 2396 – Authorizing Submission of Applications for USDA Rural Development Grants and Loans to Assist with the Waste Water Treatment Improvements.** Greer motioned to approve the resolution. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Mayor Purcell reported bids for the Landfill Container Site Project are due on or before March 5, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. and will be publicly opened and read aloud at 2:30 p.m. on that same day; and Local Government Review Study Commission Meetings are held at City Council Chambers on the third Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m.

The City of Hardin has the following Job Openings: Full-time positions: Police Officer, Police Service Aide (PSA), and Terminal Agency Coordinator (TAC) / Administrative Assistant I-IV. Part-time position: Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Apprentice and Janitor/Facilities Maintenance. Positions are open until filled.

Greer motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:03 p.m. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

  
Joe Purcell, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

  
Andrew Lehr, Finance Officer/City Clerk



**THE COMMON COUNCIL  
CITY of HARDIN, MONTANA**

**COUNCIL MEETING:** The Regular Council Meeting for March 18, 2025 was called to order at 6:30 p.m. with Jeremy Krebs presiding by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

The following Aldermen were present: Steven Hopes, Clayton Greer, Rock Massine, and Jeremy Krebs. Chris Sharpe and Antonio Espinoza were excused. Mayor Joe Purcell was absent and Jeremy Krebs acted as the presiding officer.

Also present: Finance Officer/City Clerk Andrew Lehr, Public Works Director Michael Hurff, Jr., Deputy City Clerk Angela Zimmer, City Attorney Jordan Knudsen, and Police Chief Paul George, Jr. (6:38 p.m.)

Also present physically and by Virtual Meeting: Members of the Public

**MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS & CLAIMS:** Greer made the motion to approve the Council minutes as written for March 4, 2025. Motion seconded by Hopes. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Greer made a motion to approve the claims for March 18, 2025.

	CLAIM No.	Monthly Total
January, 2025	32074, 32101	\$ 2,965.46
February, 2025	32110-32123, 32127,	\$ 65,470.22
March, 2025	32103-32109, 32124-32126, 32128-32134	\$ 1,279,797.04
<b>TOTAL Submitted</b>		<b>\$ 1,348,232.72</b>

Hopes seconded. On a voice vote, the motion was unanimously approved.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Laurie Tschetter voiced her concern about a trailer that was approved to be brought into the City, questioned why she wasn't on the agenda, and asked why her business was not being used by the Police Department to tow vehicles. Knudsen suggested for Tschetter to make a request in writing to the Mayor's office or to the City to be on the agenda. (Police Chief Paul George, Jr. entered the meeting). There was further discussion about the trailer and towing.

**MAYOR:**

Krebs reported Candidate filing for Alderman or Mayor opens April 17, 2025 and closes June 16, 2025.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Personnel Policy/City Policy:**

**Sewer & Water:**

**Law Enforcement:**

**Streets & Alleys:**

**Parks & Playgrounds:**

Krebs reported the City will advertise for summer help and reviewed age requirements for working in the park and street departments. He received a report there were kids climbing on the restroom roof at Heimat Park; there was discussion on preventative measures that could be taken. Krebs noted the company that will be installing the splash pad will be here soon to look at the project site at South Park adding the South Park Project will be starting in the next couple of months.

**Finance/Landfill:**

**Resolutions & Ordinances:**

**SPECIAL COMMITTEES:**

**PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS:**



**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

Barry Damschen, Landfill Engineer, (present by virtual meeting) reviewed Amendment #31 for the City of Hardin Landfill Engineering Consulting Services in the amount of \$7,500. He provided information about the scope of work he provides under the contract. Greer motioned to approve Amendment #31. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Damschen reported the Landfill Operation and Maintenance Plan Update is required by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to be updated by clients every five to ten years. Greer motioned to adopt the Landfill Operation and Maintenance Plan Update (O&M). Massine Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Damschen reported last summer the City went out to bid for the Landfill Container Site; Council denied the bids. Damschen noted a re-design was done for another site at the Landfill and the City recently went out to bid. His recommendation is to award the bid to Yochum Contracting, Inc. (YCI) in the amount of \$204,610. There was discussion about the amount budgeted for the whole project to include engineering costs. Greer motioned to accept the Landfill Container Site bid awarded to YCI. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion passed. (3/1) Krebs voting Nay.

Hurff reviewed a quote from Trojan Technologies, in the amount of \$21,215.07 for a new UV System for the Wastewater Treatment Plant; adding the amount includes freight and that this will be a backup system to the new system once it is installed. Hopes motioned to approve the purchase. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Police Chief Paul George, Jr. reported the 911iNET, LLC contract, in the amount of \$55,000, is a renewal for an additional year; noting the only change is they are now CJIS compliant. Knudsen noted CJIS is Criminal Justice Information Services and noted this is an expansion of their duties and capabilities at 911iNET, LLC. Greer motioned to approve the contract. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Lehr requested to create special revenue fund 2886 to account for any revenues or expenses related to the Pilot Tourism Grant. Greer motioned to approve the request. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

**STAFF REPORTS:**

**Public Works:**

Hurff pointed out the water pipe on the table and explained the condition of it; the pipe is from the water main that recently broke next to the hospital that has been repaired. Hurff reported the crew will be out soon filling potholes with hot-mix when it becomes available.

**Finance:**

Lehr reported reimbursement was received from the Montana Main Street Wayfinding Plan in the amount of \$33,333 and the City received reimbursement from the contract with the School District, from July 2024 to March 2025, for the School Resource Officer position.

Lehr reviewed House Bill 6, pending in the Montana Legislature, noting the new section discusses requirements for funds to be awarded to local governments. If this bill passes as currently constituted, the City will be required to set up a Capital Reserve account for the water and sewer funds. He provided an overview of how much would need to be placed into those reserve accounts. Lehr initiated discussion with Council about putting away some of the positive cashflow into reserve accounts for enterprise funds water, sewer, garbage, and landfill to pay for future capital expenses and to prove to the state, if the City needs to request more funding, the process has already been started.

Dax Simek, Stahly Engineering, provided information on the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project noting there is a resolution before Council to increase the waste-

water rates due to the second round of funding for the project. He reviewed the proposed increase amount, noting currently sewer rates are approximately Forty-four dollars a month and with the second round of funding it is expected to go up to about Eighty-Eight dollars a month with a combined rate of about One Hundred and Eight dollars a month. Simek noted funding agencies are more favorable in granting funds if the combined target rates are already met. The contractor, Northcon, Inc. has agreed to hold their bid through the end of the month to allow the last steps to be completed with Rural Development. He reported Stahly Engineering is working on the Notice to Award and a Change Order for the project noting the closing of the second round of loans will be May 22<sup>nd</sup>; the contractor will not be able to start the project until that date. Lehr noted this is a projected increase, not necessarily the final. There was further discussion of the amount of the increase and how the rates were calculated. Krebs voiced nobody wants to raise rates; the sewer system needs upgrades. Tschetter expressed her concern for individuals on fixed incomes. Lehr reported Resolution NO. 2397 is an acknowledgement; the next meeting there will be a resolution for the notice of intent and then the Public Hearing to increase the rates would follow at a future meeting.

**Police:**

Police Chief Paul George, Jr. reviewed calls for service and reported the department received another hit from the License Plate Reader System. They received the demo radios from Motorola; they will be transitioning to them and over the next 60 days testing them to make sure they will fulfill their needs to allow interoperability with the County and the rest of the State.

**Legal:**

**Economic Development:**

**RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:**

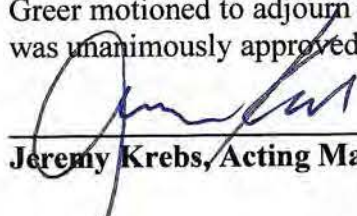
**Resolution NO. 2397– Relating to the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project.** Greer motioned to approve the resolution. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Krebs announced the following employee anniversaries: Merle Johns, 8 years; Ross Miller, 6 years; Michael Stimpson, 27 years; and Ishmael Perin, 1 year; Local Government Review Study Commission Meetings are held at City Council Chambers on the third Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m.; Alley Clean-Up is scheduled for Monday, March 31, 2025 - Hurff reported items should be put out over the weekend to be picked up the 31<sup>st</sup>; Sump Pump reminder has been noticed; Weed Mowing Bids are due April 8, 2025, and Letters of Interest to serve on the Police Commission are due April 17, 2025.

The City of Hardin has the following Job Openings: Full-time positions: Police Officer, Police Service Aide (PSA), Terminal Agency Coordinator (TAC) / Administrative Assistant I-IV and Building Inspector/Code Enforcement/Floodplain Coordinator. Positions are open until filled.

Greer motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p.m. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

  
Jeremy Krebs, Acting Mayor

ATTEST:

  
Andrew Lehr, Finance Officer/City Clerk





**THE COMMON COUNCIL  
CITY of HARDIN, MONTANA**

**COUNCIL MEETING: The Regular Council Meeting for April 1, 2025 was called to order at 6:30 p.m. with Mayor Joe Purcell presiding by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.**

The following Aldermen were present: Steven Hopes, Clayton Greer, Chris Sharpe, Rock Massine, Antonio Espinoza, and Jeremy Krebs.

Also present: Finance Officer/City Clerk Andrew Lehr, Public Works Director Michael Hurff, Jr., Deputy City Clerk Angela Zimmer, and City Attorney Jordan Knudsen. Police Chief Paul George, Jr. was present by virtual meeting.

Also present physically and by Virtual Meeting: Members of the Public

**MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS & CLAIMS:** Greer made the motion to approve the Council minutes as written for March 18, 2025. Motion seconded by Espinoza. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Greer made a motion to approve the claims for April 1, 2025.

	CLAIM No.	Monthly Total
December, 2024	32164	\$ 231.00
March, 2025	32155-32163, 32165-32179, 32181, 32185-32204	148,252.22
April, 2025	32135-32154, 32182-32184	<u>10,789.21</u>
<b>Claims Total (Expenditures)</b>		<b>\$ 159,272.43</b>
<b>February 2025</b>		<b><u>228,624.72</u></b>
<b>TOTAL Submitted</b>		<b>\$ 387,897.15</b>

Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote, the motion was unanimously approved.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Jose Funke had questions about the police department. Mayor Purcell recommended for Funke to set up a meeting with him to go through his concerns.

Cory Kenney referenced the increase in rates asking if this would cover the project. Mayor Purcell reported the intent to increase rates is based off of the funding that has been received in loans and grants.

Laurie Tschetter voiced her concerns about the intent to increase rates. There was discussion about the cost increase of the project since the process began.

**MAYOR:**

- COMMITTEE REPORTS:**  
**Personnel Policy/City Policy:**  
**Sewer & Water:**  
**Law Enforcement:**  
**Streets & Alleys:**

**Parks & Playgrounds:**

Krebs reported SplashPads USA will be here in the near future to look at the site plan for the splash pad at South Park. He added he will visit with Lehr and Hurff to see what needs be ordered for the South Park Project.

**Finance/Landfill:**

Greer reported there was discussion about property tax deed sales and the consensus of the Committee is to have the Mayor move forward with discussions with the Big Horn County.

**Resolutions & Ordinances:**

**SPECIAL COMMITTEES:**

**PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS:**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Dax Simek, Stahly Engineering, referenced the letter of recommendation to award the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project to Northcon, Inc. in the amount of \$13,417,486. He noted the additional funding that was received is subject to Build America Buy America (BABA) requirements. Stahly asked the contractor to price what that impact might be; they came back with \$453,000 not to exceed (referring to the Change Order). Simek noted a lot of the electrical suppliers haven't been able to determine if a waiver would apply to their products. Simek noted the contractor said it will not exceed that amount; adding it is hopeful it will go down. Tschetter asked about the amount of the bid, asking if it could be higher than bid. Simek noted that with the first round of funding, BABA did not apply to that, it does apply to the second round of funding received. Larry Vandersloot asked what the contingency was on the project; it was noted ten percent. Sharpe motioned to approve the award to Northcon, Inc. with the Change Order. Greer seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Tricia Martin, with American Covenant Senior Housing Foundation, reported they are working on acquisition rehab of the Rangeview Apartments. They are applying for tax credits with the Montana Board of Housing to come along and preserve the affordable housing by providing major improvement of the site. She voiced they are requesting a letter of support from the Mayor and City Council that they can present to the Montana Board of Housing. Mayor Purcell reported they have applied in the past and did not receive the grant. Krebs asked if there have been any modifications, improvements, repairs made since they were here last. Martin reported there have not; if anything just general maintenance by current management. Hopes motioned to provide a letter supporting the project. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Purcell reported the City received a letter from Tetra Tech, Inc. requesting disposal of contaminated soil, from Ashland, at the City of Hardin Landfill. He reported Hurff is waiting for soil samples to come in; a motion to approve would be pending the soil samples meet our standards. Vandersloot voiced he would not do it; once you take it into the landfill its yours forever. Upon further discussion, Sharpe motioned to table the request until the City receives the soil samples. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Lehr reported the original Wastewater Treatment Plant Bond Counsel Engagement Letter was for the original funding that was received in 2019-2020 from Rural Development and the State Revolving fund. The new letter updates that for full amount of funding and loan issuance that is needed to complete the project. Greer motioned to approve the letter as written. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

**STAFF REPORTS:**

**Public Works:**

**Finance:**

Lehr reported the janitorial/facilities maintenance position has been filled and noted the City was randomly chosen by the Department of Justice for an audit of the COPS grant. He continues to follow House Bill 6; the portion of the bill that requires governments to establish a capital reserve fund has been removed, as currently constituted and could be added back. Lehr reported there was discussion at the last meeting about setting up a policy to create a reserve fund(s). He would like to set up a committee meeting for open discussion to determine what the City wants to do; adding setting up the funds would provide better scoring for future projects to receive grant funds rather than loan funding. Lehr reported he is also tracking House Bill 887, recently introduced, that will remove about two million dollars from the Montana Department of Commerce, specifically the Montana Main Street Project and the Pilot Tourism Grant.



He will continue to follow the bill to see how it will affect the Pilot Tourism Grant that was recently awarded the City.

**Police:**

Police Chief Paul George, Jr. reviewed calls for service and noted they have conducted several interviews for Police Officer and Police Service Aide positions; there have been offers extended for those positions. He is talking with three certified officers from outside to bring in as supervisors/investigators. He, the School Resource Officer Laurie Welch, and Officer Sean Beasley were at the High School last Monday and the previous Friday speaking to the Street Law students about law enforcement topics that included keeping themselves safe and issues that affect their community and communities across the state, and the department also provided a K-9 demonstration and meet and greet with Thundra. Chief George addressed questions that were previously asked by Funke.

**Legal:**

**Economic Development:**

Toyne reported a kick-off meeting for the Pilot Tourism Grant is scheduled for next week; Ayers Associates presented their findings for the Community Needs Assessment to the County Commissioners on March 6<sup>th</sup> and they are expecting to submit the final assessment tomorrow. There have been meetings with Cushing Terrell for the Infill and Redevelopment Project for Housing; they are in the process of collecting data and conducting research. Last month the City hosted Mike Scholl and Karlyn Vasan, with Ayers Associates, for the Economic Development Strategy; together they attended three public engagement sessions, attended a tour of the Hotel Becker, and met with the Main Street coordinator. Last month there was a kick-off meeting with High Plains Architects regarding the Hotel Becker Project; there was a follow-up meeting and walk through evaluation of the property. Last week she attended two days of training, via zoom, with the International Economic Development Corporation; Workforce Development Strategy as the topic.

**RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:**

**Resolution NO. 2398 – Intent to Increase Rates and Charges for the Users of the Sewer System.** Greer motioned to approve the resolution. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

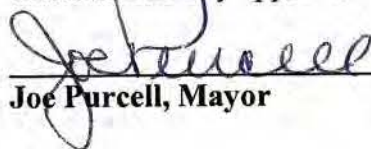
**Resolution NO. 2399 – Intent to Increase Rates and Charges for the Users of the Water System.** Greer motioned to approve the resolution. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Mayor Purcell reported the Local Government Review Study Commission Meetings are held at City Council Chambers on the third Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m.; Sump Pump reminder has been noticed; Weed Mowing Bids are due April 8, 2025; the Hardin Community Blood Drive is scheduled for Thursday, April 10, 2025 from 12:15 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. at the Fellowship Hall located at 934 1<sup>st</sup> Street West; and Letters of Interest to serve on the Police Commission are due April 17, 2025. A Public Hearing for Water and Sewer Rate Increase is scheduled for Tuesday, May 6, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

The City of Hardin has the following Job Openings: Full-time positions: Police Officer, Police Service Aide (PSA), and Terminal Agency Coordinator (TAC) / Administrative Assistant I-IV. Mayor Purcell reported the Building Inspector/Code Enforcement/Floodplain Coordinator position is being reviewed. Positions are open until filled.

Greer motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

  
Joe Purcell, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
Andrew Lehr, Finance Officer/City Clerk





**THE COMMON COUNCIL  
CITY of HARDIN, MONTANA**

**COUNCIL MEETING: The Regular Council Meeting for April 15, 2025 was called to order at 6:30 p.m. with Mayor Joe Purcell presiding by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.**

The following Aldermen were present: Clayton Greer, Chris Sharpe, Rock Massine, and Jeremy Krebs. Steven Hopes was excused. Antonio Espinoza was absent.

Also present: Finance Officer/City Clerk Andrew Lehr, Public Works Director Michael Hurff, Jr., Deputy City Clerk Angela Zimmer, and City Attorney Jordan Knudsen. Police Chief Paul George, Jr.

Also present physically: Members of the Public  
There was not anyone present by Virtual Meeting.

**MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS & CLAIMS:** Greer made the motion to approve the Council minutes as written for April 1, 2025. Motion seconded by Sharpe. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved. Greer motioned to approve the Finance Committee minutes as written for April 1, 2025. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Greer made a motion to approve the claims for April 15, 2025.

	CLAIM No.	Monthly Total
January, 2025	32226	\$ 30.00
March, 2025	32205, 32209-32222, 32227-32231, 32233-32234	83,710.87
April, 2025	32206-32208, 32223-32225, 32232	<u>1,128.75</u>
<b>Claims Total (Expenditures)</b>		<b>\$ 84,869.62</b>
<b>March 2025</b>		<b><u>235,837.63</u></b>
<b>TOTAL Submitted</b>		<b>\$ 320,707.25</b>

Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote, the motion was unanimously approved.

**PUBLIC COMMENT: N/A**

**MAYOR:**

Mayor Purcell reported he met with Big Horn County Commissioners last week regarding the property tax sale scheduled for this fall. There are eight properties listed in the City. Four are occupied homes; he noted he told them the City would not be interested in taking those properties. The City will be open to take properties that are unoccupied, ready to be demolished homes or empty lots. Two of them need to be demolished. The sale is on October 22, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.; if they don't sell, there was discussion if those properties will have to go before a second sale. If not, the County can turn them back over to the City. There will be more information after the October sale.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Personnel Policy/City Policy:**

**Sewer & Water:**

**Law Enforcement:**

**Streets & Alleys:**

**Parks & Playgrounds:**

Krebs reported park restrooms will open Mother's Day weekend; there has not been any new updates on the South Park Project; and a representative from the company installing the splash pad park is expected to come and look at the site plan. Mayor Purcell reported a letter about the South Park Project was mailed with the rate increase information; adding there is no cost to the City for the project.

**Finance/Landfill:**

Greer reported there was a committee meeting to discuss reserve accounts. The consensus of the committee is to have a resolution drafted.

**Resolutions & Ordinances:**

**SPECIAL COMMITTEES:**

**PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS:**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS: N/A**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Mayor Purcell reported two bids were received for Weed Mowing. Greer noted one bid gave a singular price per lot and the other provided a per hour charge. There was discussion about lot sizes and hourly rates. Krebs motioned to go back out to bid with a per lot price. Greer seconded. Mayor Purcell voiced it has been moved and seconded to have the weed mowing bids re-bid for a flat rate per lot price and identify lot sizes. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Purcell welcomed Cyndy Maxwell, representative of Joint Powers Trust (JPT). She provided a review of the contract renewal for the City health policy. There was further discussion about the Traditional and High Deductible plans. Greer motioned to approve the JPT renewal for Fiscal Year 2026. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Hurff reported he received three bids to replace the culvert on the irrigation ditch that runs on the South side of Town Pump and underneath Mitchell Avenue. He noted the City is looking at extending the culvert to eighty foot. Hurff reviewed the portion of the work that would be done by the City and the work that would be completed by a contractor. Sharpe motioned to approve JMG Construction in the amount of \$16,300. Massine seconded. There was further discussion about the time estimate for the completion of the project. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Lehr reviewed the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Loan Resolution RUS Bulletin 1780-27, for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project, that has to be passed to receive the new round of funding from Rural Development in the amount of \$2,562,000. Greer motioned to approve the USDA Grant Loan Resolution. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Lehr reviewed the USDA Grant Agreement, for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project, granting the City the amount of \$7,430,000 of Rural Development funding. Sharpe motioned to approve the USDA Grant Agreement. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Krebs reported he has been doing utility locates and he is concerned about the condition of the streets and alleys from the project that came through last year (phase 1 – phase 3 of Visionary Broadband). He provided a description of the conditions of the alleys; reporting there was no compaction. He voiced his opinion is that if they are already running the service lines, they should already have everything from phase one completely tied up and back to normal. Mayor Purcell reported he and Knudsen had a discussion and he provided information of the steps that will be taken moving forward. Krebs would like for them to not be able to do more work until repairs are made. Mayor Purcell noted there will be a meeting to put information together.

**STAFF REPORTS:**

**Public Works:**

Hurff provided a report of trainings for certifications he and the wastewater treatment plant employees recently attended. He reported he has received pricing from CAT to replace the compactor at the landfill; options are being looked into for either rebuilding or replacing the equipment.

**Finance:**

Lehr reported the first quarter request for the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding for the Lodge Grass project was submitted; he and Stahly Engineering are working on the reimbursement for the City minimum allocation



ARPA grant from the state; included with the notice of intent to increase water and sewer rates is information about the South Park Project, information about the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project, and a comparison of rates of other municipalities in close population to the City of Hardin; and he is working on the program audit for the COPS grant that is due by the end of this week. Lehr reviewed House Bill 6; the portion of the bill that would require governments to establish a capital reserve fund was removed and is on the Governors' desk to be passed formally. Lehr reported he will be doing more research on House Bill 37 that addresses property taxes; this bill was signed by the Governor. Senate Bill 117 is still going through committees; it would change the calculation of the annual mill levy by changing it to the average of the past three years but could not exceed a 4% increase. He received a notification the current inflation ratio for the budget for this upcoming year would be 2.11%.

**Police:**

Police Chief Paul George, Jr. reviewed calls for service. He reported the department will be playing Easter bunny by hiding eggs at family homes on Saturday evening and he provided information about how a family can participate.

Krebs reported a lot of vehicles have been stolen in the area. He asked if the Code Red could be utilized to get the information out. Police Chief Paul George, Jr. reported it cannot be sent out as an emergency, but it can be sent out as a routine message; adding there is not as many signed up for the routine non-emergency alerts as there are for the emergency alerts. He provided information of how to get signed up for the service.

**Legal:**

**Economic Development:**

**RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:**

**Resolution NO. 2400 – Authorizing Final Execution of a USDA Rural Development Grant.** Greer motioned to approve the resolution. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

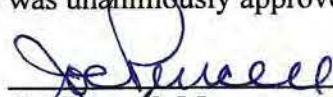
**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Mayor Purcell announced the following employee anniversaries: Richard Jefferson, 4 years and Kristi Wedel, 19 years. The Local Government Review Study Commission Meetings are held at City Council Chambers on the third Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m.; Sump Pump reminder has been noticed; Letters of Interest to serve on the Police Commission are due April 17, 2025; and the Public Hearing for the Intent to Increase Water and Sewer Rates is scheduled for Tuesday, May 6, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

The City of Hardin has the following Job Openings: Full-time positions: Police Officer, Police Service Aide (PSA), and Terminal Agency Coordinator (TAC) / Administrative Assistant I-IV. Positions are open until filled.

Mayor Purcell reported the job description for a Building Inspector/Code Enforcement/Floodplain Coordinator position is in review.

Greer motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:34 p.m. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

  
Joe Purcell, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
Andrew Lehr, Finance Officer/City Clerk



**THE COMMON COUNCIL  
CITY of HARDIN, MONTANA**

**PUBLIC HEARING:** The Public Hearing To Increase Rates and Charges for the Users of the Water and Sewer Systems was opened at 6:01 p.m. by Mayor Joe Purcell:

Present at the hearing were:

Council Members: Steven Hopes, Clayton Greer, Chris Sharpe, Rock Massine, Antonio Espinoza, and Jeremy Krebs

City Staff: Finance Officer/City Clerk Andrew Lehr, Public Works Director Michael Hurff, Jr., Deputy City Clerk Angela Zimmer, and Police Chief Paul George, Jr. City Attorney Jordan was present by virtual Meeting.

Also present physically and by virtual meeting: Several members of the public

Mayor Purcell opened the meeting with Public Comment.

**Public Comment:**

Michelle Dyckman, expressed concerns about the rate increase She noted a lot of other towns have different rate structures than what we have for the sewer rates and asked if it had been considered to have a different rate structure like other towns; establishing the same minimum for sewer as the water minimum and anything above that would be extra. She added it would be more fair those that are using more would be paying more.

Laurie Tschetter voiced her concerns about the increase as a seasonal business that has to set her rates. She asked with the water also going up, how can we afford a squirt park; who is going to pay for that water; and this being a burden on the senior citizens in the town.

Kenny Kepp voiced he can see the water rate increase, but the sewer is ridiculous. He referred to the loans for the project and noted you can only afford what you can afford; you have to put one or two structures in at a time. There are too many people on social security to increase the sewer \$40.00 a month. Kelly Koyama voiced just those on a limited budget.

Lorie Herbel asked if it was put out for a bid. Mayor Purcell reported when the project first went out, pre-covid, for bid it was lower. The project went out to bid, last year, and the City came out \$5 million short. The City went back to Rural Development and they were gracious to give another loan to make up the difference. The total project is \$16 million, the City has to come up with \$7 million of that. With the price increase and change that happened with the last bid is when the City had to bump it up to a larger amount than had planned. He reported the water increase is due to the City looking at doing a Request for Proposals to look at improvements that need to be done at the water treatment plant; start with gradual increases. Mayor Purcell noted there has been many factors that increased the cost of the entire project. The City did not anticipate this last big jump. The City did not set these rates, they were set by the State Revolving Fund and grantors of loans. They are predetermined for us. He added the City does not have to do the loans, grants, etc., then it comes down to what will have to the plant. The City has to stay in compliance.

Grace Kluding asked why didn't this start years back when it was a lot less. Mayor Purcell noted it was started 8 years ago. With the re-bid the price jumped up \$5 million; he reviewed factors that went into the project costing more. She added this is a small community and there are a lot of people on social security etc.

Krebs noted the original price they quoted was around \$85-\$86, this January when they gave a presentation they quoted around \$96, we were shell-shocked then, and now \$105.

Lorie Herbel asked how long it will take to complete the project; Lehr noted twenty-one months. She asked how long it will be until it is paid off and is there a way of lowering these after it is paid off. Lehr reported Rural Development is forty years and the State Revolving Fund Loan (SRF) is thirty years. Kepp asked how much of the project would have to be done to meet the Environmental Protection Agency rules, etc.; can it be divided up? Mayor Purcell voiced it has been looked at and the actual costs are higher to do it in two phases.

Shawn Riley asked who is "they" Enforcing the price increase policies and loans. Mayor Purcell noted the enforcement of the price increase the cost of the project and the stipulations and



guidelines with loans that have been received for the project. The rates have to be set at a certain rate determined by the state and some of the federal money as well.

Corrina Kirschenmann-Kuntz asked if money from CD's can be used for this so that it doesn't affect all of the people and asked about taking some of the budgets and cutting back in areas of the budget. She added there are a lot of elders in this area; they are on a tight budget.

Jose Funke asked what is Council going to do if people can't pay their bill; seniors only get so much a month. He referenced to what Kepp had said and asked if the City can buy what can be done to follow the guidelines and then when they come up with more money to finish what needs to be finished with the project.

Dave Matthew voiced he is on SSI and doesn't know where the other \$40 can come from. He asked if there was a plan that can help offset some of these costs.

Greer provided an overview of components that need repair and noted originally there was discussion about trying to do the project in increments to keep the budget down. Tschetter asked what other areas have been slashed during budget. Krebs voiced when they do budgets they sharpen their pencils to try to keep as low as they can. He voiced he doesn't want to pay \$105 a month, he has five kids, it will affect him and he understands it will affect ladies and gentleman that are retired and we don't want to do that, adding it is something they have to do unfortunately.

Kepp asked if it is a matching grant. Lehr reported yes, Rural Development gives a certain percentage based off of the median household income; the city received about half grant and half loan. There was discussion about the matching grant and if part of the project was done, would the city lose funding.

Mayor Purcell referenced a map, Average Monthly Wastewater Rates by Median Household Income 2023, that shows sewer rates of other cities and towns. Lehr reported the City of Hardin is the lowest per month out of communities; he used communities that are like size for a comparison. The average is \$105.62 for water and sewer together, Hardin is the lowest. Lehr noted he helped the price go down; lower the original price they quoted after the cost overrun was close to \$90 for sewer, he convinced them to lower it. Mayor Purcell voiced a lot of work and time has gone into this, they have done everything they can to keep the costs as low as possible; Drew negotiated to get the price down. We are trying to do the best for the community and the citizens.

Monica Lyman asked if all entities out there that provide grants had been looked into besides Rural Development, Water and Waste? Mayor Purcell voiced yes, some are limited to what you can apply for; specific grants for specific things. He added the City tapped into everything they could think of with the help of the Engineers.

Jason Stephenson asked about the timeline to pay off the loans. Mayor Purcell noted one loan is thirty years and the other is forty years. Lehr reviewed annual payment amounts and interest amounts.

Mayor Purcell voiced he appreciates the community coming and appreciates their voice, opinions, and thoughts that is what helps guide the City in moving forward.

Merna Kincaid noted if you drive around Hardin there are homes that are vacant because people have had to leave and noted her concern is the people that can't afford to pay this, taxes, and insurance to keep their places up.

Funke asked if this is approved tonight, will Council look at starting program to help people that can't afford another \$40.00. It was noted it can be looked into.

Massine voiced the City was working on this when he was at the City, as Public Works Director, and before when Russell Dill was here. He noted he agrees with Kepp and he reviewed the upgrades that have been done in phases in the past. The start of this was an infiltration study and the City fixed those that were thought to be contributing and it helped; adding in his mind the City has started the phases, but now the City is almost overwhelmed with this huge deal. He reported he doesn't want to see it go up, because he knows there are people in the community that can't afford it to go up, but when the EPA tells you to do something, you have to do it; the City has to upgrade.

Hurff voiced when the project was started, the plant was scheduled to be upgraded to a Sequential Batch Reactor (SBR); in the process of trying to save money, this part was cut out of the system; adding a list of other equipment were cut out or will be updated

and not replaced. Hurff noted this has been through the engineers several times to get it down to what we need.

Sharpe voiced the City tried to do the project in phases, the bids were so high. Hopes voiced the problem is most of these people can't afford it. Sharpe noted that if the City doesn't do it, the City will start getting fines, lose money there, lose the grants that are lined out and the City will have to do the project anyway. Greer added if they shut the sewer plant down, the water has to be shut off.

Karl Roods asked if there is something that can be done to increase the minimum water through the summer so people can keep their lawns watered. She would like to see the town stay green as possible.

Koyama asked about balanced billing. There was discussion about whey the sewer rate is a flat rate and is not a rate based on water usage.

Mayor Purcell asked if there was any more discussion or comments. He extended a "Thank You" to everyone for coming.

There being no further discussion, the Public Hearing adjourned at 6:57 p.m.

**COUNCIL MEETING: The Regular Council Meeting for May 6, 2025 was called to order at 7:07 p.m. with Mayor Joe Purcell presiding by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.**

The following Aldermen were present: Steven Hopes, Clayton Greer, Chris Sharpe, Rock Massine, Antonio Espinoza and Jeremy Krebs.

Also present: Finance Officer/City Clerk Andrew Lehr, Public Works Director Michael Hurff, Jr., and Deputy City Clerk Angela Zimmer. Police Chief Paul George, Jr.

Also present physically and by virtual meeting: Several members of the public

**MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS & CLAIMS:** Greer made the motion to approve the Council minutes as written for April 15, 2025. Motion seconded by Massine. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved. Greer motioned to approve the Finance Committee minutes as written for April 15, 2025. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Greer made a motion to approve the claims for May 6, 2025.

	CLAIM No.	Monthly Total
April, 2025	32235-32258, 32279-32281, 32284-32302, 32304	\$ 78,709.57
May, 2025	32259-32278, 32282-32283,32303,	\$ 2,645.23
<b>Claims Total (Expenditures)</b>		<b>\$ 81,354.80</b>
<b>April, 2025</b>		<b><u>206,483.41</u></b>
<b>TOTAL Submitted</b>		<b>\$ 287,838.21</b>

Hopes seconded. On a voice vote, the motion was unanimously approved.

**PUBLIC COMMENT: N/A**

**MAYOR:**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Personnel Policy/City Policy:**

Mayor Purcell reported the City has filled the Seasonal positions; there are open positions for Police Officers and a Terminal Agency Coordinator (TAC) / Administrative Assistant. He added the Building Inspector position is open and will be posted this week or next; he is working on modifying the position.



**Sewer & Water:**

**Law Enforcement:**

**Streets & Alleys:**

**Parks & Playgrounds:**

Krebs provided a report on the South Park Project noting Hurff will be contacting the contractors that were awarded the bids for the pavilion, splash pad, etc. He reported Big Sky Lawn will be spraying the parks to get ready for summer.

**Finance/Landfill:**

Greer reported there is a meeting scheduled for Tuesday, May 13, 2025 with Barry Damschen for the Landfill Canister Site.

**Resolutions & Ordinances:**

**SPECIAL COMMITTEES:**

**PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS:**

Mayor Purcell reported the City received information from the Montana Department of Transportation providing an update on the Hardin Rest Area Restoration and an invitation from Hardin Public Schools 17H & 1 to join them on Friday, May 9<sup>th</sup> for their first Patron Day program.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

Mayor Purcell reported Tetra Tech, Inc. had previously requested to bring contaminated soil into the landfill; they were waiting on soil test results. Hurff reported the soil is from out of the County. The samples were sent to Energy Laboratories and the results were forwarded to Fred Collins, Solid Waste Section Supervisor with Montana Department of Environmental Quality at the State, and also to Barry Damschen, City Landfill Engineer. Hurff noted both Collins and Damschen were good with the results. Sharpe motioned to approve the request. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Jessica Mussetter, River Valley Farmer's Market Manager, requested temporary road closure of the 200 Block of North Center Avenue from 3:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. every Thursday in August and the first two Thursday's in September, restrooms (handicap accessible), handwashing station, and picnic tables. Krebs motioned to approve the requests. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Purcell made the recommendation to re-appoint Rachel Ybarra for a three-year term on the Police Commission. Greer motioned to approve. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Purcell reported with an increase in rates for the water and sewer, the proposed deposit amount for water would increase from \$150 to \$250. Hopes motioned to approve. Greer seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Purcell reported the Hardin Volunteer Police Department submitted a funding request in the amount of \$10,000 to support the outreach and activities that they do in the community. Massine motioned to approve the request. Espinoza seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

**STAFF REPORTS:**

**Public Works:**

**Finance:**

Lehr reported the State Entitlement for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 is going up \$6,002.42 and the Tax Increment District Entitlement for FY 2026 will be \$24,079.68. Lehr reviewed the audit that was done for the COPS Hiring Grant, adding the City will receive a letter regarding the audit.

**Police:**

Police Chief Paul George, Jr. reviewed calls for service. He reported the Easter Egg Hide was a success; there were over sixty kids that the department and members of the community hid eggs for. He extended a "Thank You" to everyone that participated.

Chief George reported two Police Officer candidates have gone through the back-ground process and are completing the final stages and the Police Service Aide will be starting soon.

Chief George reported he applied for a grant to the Coal Board for the purchase of new radios; the application was accepted pending approval at the Coal Board meeting. He applied for grant funding from the Montana Department of Transportation for traffic enforcement and education. The funding was granted in the amount of \$15,000 through September of this year for officers to come out to engage in DUI enforcement education for the community. They tentatively approved to provide an additional officer, in October, to start a traffic team that will be fully funded by the Federal Government. He put in for Preliminary Breath Tests (PBT's) for each officer, for a message board / speed trailer, other small equipment that was also tentatively approved by the Federal Government through the State.

**Legal:**

**Economic Development:**

Toyne reported she attended the onboarding meeting for the Pilot Tourism Grant in Helena; meetings continue with Cushing Terrell on the Infill & Redevelopment project focused on housing, they plan to come to Hardin in May for a site visit; meetings continue with Ayres Associates on the Economic Strategy, they are looking into ways to bring businesses into Industrial Park and they are planning to come for a site visit in early June; and a stakeholder group will meet this Thursday with High Plains Architects on the Preliminary Architectural Report for the Hotel Becker. Toyne provided a review of conferences, meetings, and trainings she attended online and in person that included the MEDA Conference in Livingston and the Governor's Tourism Conference in Helena. She announced local Shawn Backbone received the award for Excellence in Tribal Tourism, and the 13<sup>th</sup> annual three-day All-American Indian Shootout will be held at the Billings Metra.

**RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:**

**Resolution NO. 2401 - Relating to Up To \$2,121,000 Sewer System Revenue Bond and a \$2,121,000 Sewer System Revenue Bond Anticipation Note to Be Issued in Anticipation Thereof; Authorizing the Issuance and Fixing the Terms and Conditions Thereof and the Security Therefor.** Lehr reviewed page 5, Section 2.08 of the document noting the Bond Counsel requested for the date of June 2, 2020 and March 3, 2025 to be added to the resolution. Greer motioned to approve the resolution with the corrections. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

**Resolution NO. 2402 -Increasing Rates for the Users of the Sewer System.** Greer motioned to approve the resolution. Espinoza seconded. On a voice vote the motion passed. (5/1) Hopes voting Nay.

**Resolution NO. 2403 - To Increase Rates and Charges for the Users of the Water System.** Greer motioned to approve the resolution. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion passed. (5/1) Hopes voting Nay.

**Resolution NO. 2404 - Setting a Deposit for the Users of the Water System.** Hopes motioned to approve the resolution. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

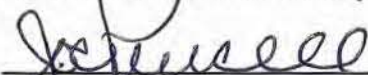
**Resolution NO. 2405 - Appointing a Resident to the Hardin Police Commission.** Greer motioned to approve the resolution. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Mayor Purcell announced Operation Sparkle is scheduled for May 9<sup>th</sup>; Weed Mowing Bids are due Tuesday, May 13, 2025 by 2:00 p.m.; and the Local Government Review Study Commission Meetings are held at City Council Chambers on the third Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. and are open to the public.

The City of Hardin has the following Job Openings: Full-time positions: Police Officer, Terminal Agency Coordinator (TAC) / Administrative Assistant I-IV. The Code Enforcement and Building Inspector position will be opening up. Positions are open until filled.

Greer motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:37 p.m. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joe Purcell, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Andrew Lehr, Finance Officer/City Clerk

