

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

**PUBLIC HEARING:** Adoption of Updates and Revisions to the City of Hardin Subdivision Regulations was opened at 6:07 p.m. by Mayor Riley Ramsey.

Present at the hearing were:

Council Members: Steven Hopes, Clayton Greer, Chris Sharpe, George Toyne, and Jeremy Krebs

City Staff: Finance Officer/City Clerk Andrew Lehr, Public Works Director Michael Hurff, Jr., Deputy City Clerk Angela Zimmer, and City Attorney Jordan.

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

Mayor Ramsey asked if there were any questions.

Corrina Kirschenmann-Kuntz reported Forrest Mandeville, Planning Advisor for the City-County Planning Board, is online to go over the draft Subdivision Regulations.

Knudsen commended Mr. Forrest Mandeville for going through them. He noted from his overview it does seem to be legally sufficient.

Greer asked about the age of mobile homes, 1976 is written in the regulations (page 6 of the draft); adding Council adopted a twenty- year limit. Mandeville noted it can be replaced.

Laurie Tschetter voiced her thoughts about the age of mobile homes than can be brought into the City and noted she thinks the twenty-year rule is a little bit outdated now.

Knudsen referenced City Code 11-1-2-36 subsection E.16 – 20 year limit on manufactured houses. The subdivision regulations and city code should match, be congruent. There was discussion about having read the document. Ramsey asked what supersedes what. Mandeville noted a clause can be put in if there is a conflict between the Subdivision Regulations and City Code that the City Code definition would trump it. Knudsen recommended to cover the entire set of regulations, not just the one problem on page 6. Generally, City code controls, Subdivision Regulations are secondary. Krebs asked if the City would have to have an additional public hearing if more time is needed to make the decision. Knudsen suggested it is not a minor change; if there is an amendment, it should be put on the next agenda to give the public a chance to review and make comment prior to the action item on the agenda.

Mayor Ramsey asked if there was any comments or questions. There being no further discussion, the Public Hearing adjourned at 6:22 p.m.

**COUNCIL MEETING: The Regular Council Meeting for January 6, 2026 was called to order at 6:30 p.m. with Mayor Riley Ramsey presiding by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.**

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

Also present: Finance Officer/City Clerk Andrew Lehr, Public Works Director Michael Hurff, Jr., and Deputy City Clerk Angela Zimmer, and City Attorney Jordan Knudsen. Police Chief Paul George, Jr. joined the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

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

**MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS & CLAIMS:** Sharpe made the motion to approve the Council minutes as written for December 16, 2025. Motion seconded by Hopes. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Greer made a motion to approve the claims for January 6, 2026.

	CLAIM No.	Monthly Total
October, 2025	33202	\$ 5,369.70
November, 2025	33203-33206, 33215-33216, 332	534,968.85
December, 2025	33200, 33207-33214, 33218-33219, 33241-33275	128,781.40
January, 2026	33220-33240	<u>2,355.12</u>
<b>Claims Total (Expenditures)</b>		<b>\$ 671,475.07</b>
December, 2025		<u>249,570.80</u>
<b>TOTAL Submitted</b>		<b>\$ 921,045.87</b>

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT: N/A**

**MAYOR:**

Mayor Ramsey read aloud a letter voicing he is excited about taking on the responsibility as Mayor of Hardin.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Personnel Policy/City Policy:**

Mayor Ramsey reported the City will be updating committee assignments.

**Sewer & Water:**

**Law Enforcement:**

**Streets & Alleys:**

Hopes reported Alley Clean Up started yesterday.

**Parks & Playgrounds:**

Krebs reported the City is currently waiting to hear back on the delivery and installation date for the pavilion. (Police Chief Paul George, Jr. joined the meeting.)

**Finance/Landfill:**

**Resolutions & Ordinances:**

**SPECIAL COMMITTEES:**

**PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS:**

Mayor Ramsey reported the City received information for Newly Elected Officials Training and a Newsletter form the Montana Department of Transportation.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS: N/A**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Council Committee Appointments were reviewed. Sharpe noted he would like to step down as the Chairperson for the Impact Fee Advisory Committee since he is no longer Chairperson for the Sewer and Water Committee. Krebs motioned to approve the following committee appointments (read by Mayor Ramsey): Hopes as Chairperson of **Sewer and Water, Streets and Alleys** – add Toyne, No change to **Resolutions or Ordinances, Landfill** – Replace Massine with George Toyne, **Law Enforcement** – add Toyne, **Parks and Playgrounds, Finance and City Policy Manual** – No Changes, and Sharpe is stepping down as Chairperson of the **Impact Fee Advisory Committee** with

Clayton Greer as new Chairperson and add Toyne. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Greer nominated Krebs as President of the Board. Greer motioned for approval. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Ramsey noted the City is a member of the 500 Club. Tina Toyne reported she attended the most recent meeting and the next meeting is January 12<sup>th</sup> at noon. Greer volunteered to be the City representative to attend the 500 Club meetings. Knudsen reported the intent is to have a standing committee for Economic Development upon Council approval. Sharpe motioned to create an Economic Development Committee with Toyne as Chairperson, Greer, and Hopes as standing members. Krebs seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Ramsey reported there was a Public Hearing on Draft City of Hardin Subdivision Regulations. Krebs motioned to table and look at it further. Toyne seconded. Corrina Kirschenmann-Kuntz noted Mandeville is available to go over the document either by phone or in person. Mandeville reported he used The Montana Association and Counties 2023 updated model document, making changes specific to the City of Hardin and updating to 2025 legislative changes. He provided a brief overview of subdivisions. There was further discussion about the draft. On a voice vote the motion passed. (4/1) Sharpe voting Nay.

Lehr reviewed the Sewer Loan, Resolution NO. 2425, for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project. The loan from Rural Development (RD) will pay off the short-term State Revolving Fund (SRF) with the long-term fixed loan from RD that will be paid for forty years. This long-term loan is from the original round of funding from RD that was received in 2019. Krebs motioned to approve. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Ramsey reported three bids were submitted for Geotechnical report for the Visitor's Information Center site. Lehr reported the purpose of report is to test the soil conditions on the property. Big Horn County contributed \$15,000 to the project. His request is to go with SK Geotechnical, lowest bidder at \$9,200, for the project. Krebs motioned to approve the lowest bid of \$9,200 with SK Geotechnical. Greer asked about the travel fees. Sharpe noted there was a difference in the letter and the recommendation. Lehr noted he will have to look into it. Krebs withdrew his motion. Sharpe motioned to table the bids. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

### **STAFF REPORTS:**

#### **Public Works:**

Hurff reported: **Landfill** - The new water truck is being repaired under a safety recall and the County will be dumping the canisters at the canister site. **Water Treatment Plant** - They are working on intake meters; he received the Draft Preliminary Engineering Report adding copies will be available at his office for review; and the hill tank liner is doing good. Hurff reviewed a letter that was sent by the water treatment plant to all residents. He noted the letter was required to be sent by the state and referenced unregulated contaminants the state doesn't currently regulate. **Streets** - the crew has been working on the 300-gallon trash cans. The City has not currently received a bill from the County for the blacktop work that was done on Peritsa Creek. **Wastewater Treatment Plant** - Weekly meetings continue to be held on Tuesday mornings regarding the project. **Garbage** - The new garbage truck was repaired under a safety recall. **Parks** - The crew is working to replace broken benches and he is looking into concrete cornhole boards for South Park.

#### **Finance:**

Lehr reported the next pay application from Northcon, Inc. will be presented at the next meeting along with a change order for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project. The City received \$15,000 from Big Horn County and money from the Pilot Grant for the Geotechnical report. The Lodge Grass Project is currently shut down for the winter season. The City will be applying for a Coal Board Grant to help pay for the Visitor Center and a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) grant to help pay for an updated Capital Improvement Plan. City applied for a Montana Coal Endowment Program (MCEP) grant to complement the CDBG. The city started the ClearGov program that will help with the budgeting process. Bamboo, the new HR software, is working really well; it provides easier access for people to apply for job positions.

**Police:**

Police Chief Paul George, Jr. reported the police department started their new reporting system mid-December; adding the new CAD and Central Square system is already paying for itself. He provided a review of how the system works. Chief George reviewed calls for service; he reported two candidates for Police Officer will go before the Police Commission; and one officer has resigned. There was discussion about the use, certifications, and training of the Police Department K-9.

**Legal:**

Knudsen reported there is a closed session at the end of the Council meeting. He reviewed a report he provided to Council of the amount of cases that came through City Court; eight hundred and eight-five cases in 2025. He noted it is due to the City Police Department; the investment and work with the Police Department has produced a large increase in the number of cases in City Court.

**Economic Development:**

Toyne reported her primary focus has been on coordination, planning, and reporting related to tourism and downtown development. She attended several meetings by zoom and in person. She attended the local 500 Club Meeting in Hardin and the Southeast Montana Tourism Board meeting in Forsyth, MT; and several zoom meetings that focused on tourism related topics that included wayfinding and the visitor center. Toyne reported she has been working on completing the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter report for the Montana Main Street Program and noted she will continue to support tourism initiatives, coordination efforts, and reporting responsibilities and updates as projects move forward.

**RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:**

**Resolution NO. 2425 – Relating to \$2,121,000 Sewer System Revenue Bond, Series 2026; Confirming the Issuance Therof and Security Therefor and Making Certain Designations and Covenants in Respect of the Bond.** The resolution was voted on in New Business. Krebs motioned to approve. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

**Resolution NO. 2426 – Granting A Certain Elected Official Authority to Sign for Bank Account and Certificates.** Greer motioned to approve the resolution. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

**Resolution NO. 2427 – Granting A Certain Elected Official Authority to Sign for Bank Account and Certificates.** Sharpe motioned to approve the resolution. Krebs seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

**Resolution NO. 2428 - Adopting the City of Hardin Subdivision Regulations, January 2026.** The resolution was tabled under New Business with Krebs motioning to table and look into it further. Toyne seconded. On a voice vote the motion passed. (4/1) Sharpe voting Nay.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Jose Funke, resident, asked questions about the Police Commission, a Police Policy Book, and Police Officer s. Knudsen and Police Chief Paul George, Jr. addressed the questions.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

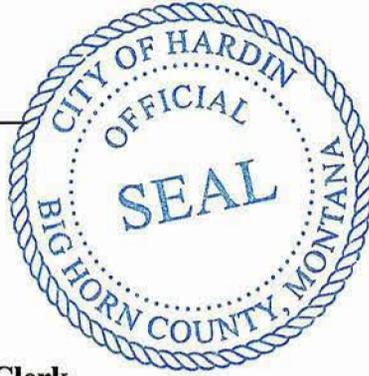
Mayor Ramsey reported Local Government Review Study Commission Meetings are held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month in Council Chambers; Letters of Interest to serve on the City-County Planning Board are due January 9, 2026; a City-County Planning Board Public Hearing for the Newcombe and Somes Variance is scheduled for Monday, January 12, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers; City Offices are closed Monday, January 19, 2026 for Martin Luther King Day; and Business Licenses are due by February 1, 2026. The City of Hardin has the following Job Openings: Full-time positions for Police Officers, Utility Billing Clerk/Cashier, and General Laborer - Landfill.

The Council Meeting Closed at 7:55 p.m. for a CLOSED SESSION – Legal.

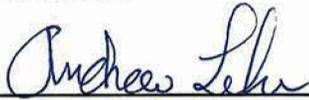
The Closed Session began at 8:02 p.m.

Greer motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

  
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Riley Ramsey, Mayor



ATTEST:

  
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Andrew Lehr, Finance Officer/City Clerk