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
TOTAL Submitted		**$ 88,788.33**

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 31st; 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 16th. 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.

Joe Purcell

Joe Purcell, Mayor

CITY OF HARDIN OFFICIAL SEAL BIGHORN COUNTY, MONTANA

ATTEST:

Andrew Lehr

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
Claims Total (Expenditures)		**$ 67,815.84**
December 2024		**$ 247,662.13**
TOTAL Submitted		**$ 315,477.97**

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

CITY OF HARDIN OFFICIAL SEAL BIG HORN COUNTY, MONTANA

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	$ 2,537.47
TOTAL Submitted		$ **143,565.61**

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 17th 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, 1st 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.

Joe Purcell

Joe Purcell, Mayor

CITY OF HARDIN OFFICIAL SEAL BIG HORN COUNTY, MONTANA

ATTEST:

Andrew Lehr

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
TOTAL Submitted		**$ 112,978.35**

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 Lautt, 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

CITY OF HARDIN OFFICIAL SEAL BIG HORN COUNTY, MONTANA

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
TOTAL Submitted		$ **144,015.40**

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 17th 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

Joe Purcell, Mayor

CITY OF HARDIN OFFICIAL SEAL BIG HORN COUNTY, MONTANA

ATTEST:

Andrew Lehr

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
TOTAL Submitted		$ **1,348,232.72**

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 22nd; 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 inoperability 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 31st; 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

CITY OF HARDIN OFFICIAL SEAL BIG HORN COUNTY, MONTANA

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		10,789.21
Claims Total (Expenditures)		**$**	**159,272.43**
February 2025			**228,624.72**
TOTAL Submitted		**$**	**387,897.15**

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 6th 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 1st 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

Joe Purcell, Mayor

CITY OF HARDIN OFFICIAL SEAL BIG HORN COUNTY, MONTANA

ATTEST:

Andrew Lehr

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	1,128.75
Claims Total (Expenditures)		**$ 84,869.62**
March 2025		**235,837.63**
TOTAL Submitted		**$ 320,707.25**

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 in 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 plat. 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

Joe Purcell, Mayor

CITY OF HARDIN OFFICIAL SEAL BIG HORN COUNTY, MONTANA

ATTEST:

Andrew Lehr

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 loose 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
Claims Total (Expenditures)		**$**	**81,354.80**
April, 2025			**206,483.41**
TOTAL Submitted		**$**	**287,838.21**

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 9th 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 13th 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 9th; 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

CITY OF HARDIN OFFICIAL SEAL BIG HORN COUNTY, MONTANA

THE COMMON COUNCIL
CITY of HARDIN, MONTANA

COUNCIL MEETING: The Regular Council Meeting for May 20, 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., and Deputy City Clerk Angela Zimmer, City Attorney, Jordan Knudsen and 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 May 6, 2025. Motion seconded by Sharpe. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved. Greer motioned to approve the Public Hearing minutes as written for May 6, 2025. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Greer made a motion to approve the claims for May 20, 2025.

	CLAIM No.		Monthly Total
April, 2025	32305-32321, 32323-32325,32329	$	42,481.10
May, 2025	32326-32328, 32330-32341	$	48,328.73
TOTAL Submitted		**$**	**90,809.83**

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

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Cory Kenney pointed out he noticed on the Chamber of Commerce Beer and Wine permit that they were doing three days of alcohol for Big Horn Days.

MAYOR:

Mayor Purcell reported the City is working on the Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA) for the Hardin Police Department and for City employees and the Election filing deadline is June 16, 2025 to file for Alderman Wards I, II, and III and Mayor.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Personnel Policy/City Policy:

Mayor Purcell reported the City is looking at the Personnel Policy as they move forward with the CBA. Current open positions are listed at the bottom of the agenda.

Sewer & Water:

Massine reported a Pre-Construction Meeting for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project is scheduled for Friday.

Law Enforcement:

Hopes asked the Chief George about the radios and how they were working; noting there was a concern with them. It wasn't clear if they were the old radios or the new ones they had currently tested.

Streets & Alleys:

Espinoza reported he saw there was some patchwork being done.

Parks & Playgrounds:

Krebs provided a report on the South Park Project noting Rick Funk, with SplashPadsUSA, will be here on May 29th for a site visit, adding the City crew is going to be removing the asphalt so Mr. Funk can see the whole site plan and have a better idea of what needs to be done. Hurff is communicating with Stahly Engineering to look at what size water line is there; Funke recommends

a 4" water line. The restroom at South Park isn't currently open. Hurff is working on getting power there for the splash pad and to the new pavilion. Krebs reported Hurff will be communicating with the companies for the playground equipment and pavilion in the next couple of days.

Finance/Landfill:

Resolutions & Ordinances:

Sharpe reported he was asked about having a meeting about bulk water rates. He reported, upon research, the last time they were raised was in 2011, at $8 per thousand gallons. He noted bulk water is included in this current increase; raised to $10 per thousand gallons. Mayor Purcell noted the concern was that the bulk water was getting a better deal than City residents; by Sharpe's research it shows they are not.

SPECIAL COMMITTEES:

PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS:

Mayor Purcell reported the City received a newsletter from the Montana Department of Transportation and the City-County Planning Board minutes from the meeting of December 9, 2024.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

Mayor Purcell reported the City received one bid for the Weed Mowing Bids, Big Sky Lawn Care & Plowing, LLC. Greer motioned to approve the bid. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Purcell reported the Chamber of Commerce submitted a Beer/Wine Permit requesting extended hours and waiver of fee for Big Horn Days. Alexandria Edwards, Secretary of the Chamber, voiced they are requesting the permit for June 27th, 28th, and 29th. She provided a review of events to be held on Sunday the 29th adding historically they serve mimosas for breakfast that day. Krebs motioned to approve the requests. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Purcell reported the Chamber of Commerce submitted a letter of request for Big Horn Days, scheduled from June 27th to June 29th. They include road closures of the 200 Block of Center Avenue and portable restrooms (including ADA). There was discussion of where the bathrooms would be located and other options were recommended. Krebs motioned to approve the requests. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Lehr reported the City passed the template for the Lodge Grass Agreement in 2023. This Amendment updates the agreement by including the contractor, Western Municipal Construction, Inc., that was selected for Phase II of their Waste Water Treatment Facility Improvements. Greer motioned to approve the request. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

STAFF REPORTS:

Public Works:

Hurff reported he is working with Carr Coatings to set up a pre-construction meeting for the water tank liner; the annual cleaning of the sedimentation basin at the Water Treatment Plant (WTP) was done today and the flocculation basin will be scheduled for another day; tomorrow there is a meeting with Stahly Engineering for the WTP Preliminary Engineering Report; and a Pre-Construction meeting is scheduled for this Friday at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Hurff reported the pre-construction meeting for the landfill canister site is rescheduled for Tuesday, May 27th and the culvert replacement was cancelled this week; it has been rescheduled for next week after Memorial Day. He congratulated Dakota Bahr for receiving his CDL license today.

Finance:

Lehr voiced he would like to tentatively schedule a Budget Meeting for June 24th, 25th, or 26th; adding the main budget meetings would be scheduled for July 8th – 10th and Continuing as needed.

Lehr reported the Rural Development Bond Anticipation Note is closing May 22, 2025, the first draw is $283,463; unemployment rates for the City are going from .0025 percent to .0035 percent; budgets have been provided to each department for their review; a payout was received from the City insurance, Montana Municipal Interlocal Authority, for a police vehicle that was repaired; and the City received a $5,000 contribution from the 17H&1 School District for the City of Hardin Police Department K-9. Lehr provided a review of Tax Receivables outstanding in the Tax Increment Finance District and a review of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) reporting from April 2024 to March 2025.

Police:

Police Chief Paul George, Jr. reviewed calls for service. He reported over the past several weeks the department has issued a lot of improperly parked or junk vehicles tags around the city.

He reported Police Service Aide (PSA) Martinez started, he will be attending the next Council meeting.

George Toyne, local business owner, asked if there were any ordinances against allowing people to live in trailers/campers in people's yards. Mayor Purcell noted it is a matter of knowing they are doing it and following up with it; proving they are in there and being able to enforce it. When they are on the street, it is a little different, but the parking ordinance can be looked at. There was further discussion about campers being parked, stored on private lots. Knudsen noted zoning could be looked into.

Legal:

Economic Development:

Toyne reported the City is working to finalize the Economic Development Strategy with Ayres Associates, Inc. Karlyn Vasan will be here Wednesday, June 11th and would like to meet with Council; the meeting will take place at the Hardin Depot at 6:00 p.m. She asked Council to please let her know as soon as possible if they can attend so the meeting can be noticed to the public.

RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Purcell announced the following employee anniversaries: Dakota Bahr, 1 year and Jeremy Beckman, 30 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. and are open to the public and City Offices are closed Monday, May 26, 2025 in Observance of Memorial Day.

The City of Hardin has the following Job Openings: Full-time positions - Police Officer and Terminal Agency Coordinator (TAC) / Administrative Assistant I-IV. Part-Time positions - Project Manager & Administrative Assistant and Building Inspector. Positions are open until filled.

Hopes asked about the project manager position. Mayor Purcell noted the Administrative Assistant is a budgeted position for help in the office and the Project Manager position will be funded by the Pilot Tourism Grant. Krebs asked if a code enforcement officer was hired. Mayor Purcell noted it will be combined with the Police Service Aide (PSA). Hopes asked about the process for the building inspector. Mayor Purcell reviewed the process that will be followed. Krebs recommended the possibility that a public works assistant could also be a building inspector; a combined position.

Greer motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:12 p.m. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Joe Purcell, Mayor

ATTEST:

Andrew Lehr, Finance Officer/City Clerk

CITY OF HARDIN OFFICIAL SEAL BIG HORN COUNTY, MONTANA

THE COMMON COUNCIL
CITY of HARDIN, MONTANA

COUNCIL MEETING: The Regular Council Meeting for June 3, 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., and Deputy City Clerk Angela Zimmer, City Attorney, Jordan Knudsen and Police Chief Paul George, Jr.

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

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS & CLAIMS: Hopes made the motion to approve the Council minutes as written for May 20 2025. Motion seconded by Greer. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Greer made a motion to approve the claims for June 3, 2025.

	CLAIM No.		Monthly Total
February, 2025	32413	$	30.00
March, 2025	32414		30.00
April, 2025	32406		76,132.31
May, 2025	32343-32347, 32367-32369, 32373-32391		44,444.51
June, 2025	32342, 32348-32366,32370-32371		11,716.82
Claims Total (Expenditures)		**$**	**132,353.54**
May, 2025			**203,545.11**
TOTAL Submitted		**$**	**358,898.65**

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

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jose Funke, voiced it is sad of all the allegations and asked for resignations of the Mayor and the Chief to resign immediately or a thorough internal investigation into the matters; referencing what he read in the papers.

Officer Laurie Welch, voiced she doesn't live here, but she works here and cares about the town and people in it. She expressed her frustration of the letters that were sent to the Briefs; noting they were really frustrating to someone who works for the police department, because it hurts all of us (officers) to do our job. She added she loves her job and the leadership she is under has been the best she has ever been under. Officer Welch noted people are reading this and getting their own ideas off of what they are reading without really knowing any of it; its' frustrating.

MAYOR:

Mayor Purcell reviewed the process for building inspections and permits. Individuals can go online to apply and can pay online or in the office. The process is still in place and going forward.

He reported the Code Enforcement duties have been shifted to the Police Service Aide; they are marking abandoned vehicles, putting up signs for weed and grass violations, community decay complaints, animal control, etc. Complaints will be forward to the Police Chief and Police Service Aide (PSA).

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Personnel Policy/City Policy:

Mayor Purcell reported the City continues to work on the Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA) for the Hardin Police Department and for City employees. Open positions are listed at the bottom of the agenda and Interviews are scheduled for Police Officers and the Terminal Agency Coordinator positions.

Sewer & Water:
Law Enforcement:

Streets & Alleys:

Espinoza reported the culvert by Town Pump is done; adding they did a good job.

Parks & Playgrounds:

Krebs reported he and Hurff met with Rick Funk, of SplashPadsUSA, for a site visit at South Park, to look at what was needed before installation of the splash pad. The installation is planned for the first week of July. Krebs anticipates a grand opening around mid-August. He reported they are communicating with the company for the installation of the gazebo and with Northwestern Energy on getting power where it is needed.

Krebs reported on the playground equipment from WillyGoat that was approved last year; the installation agreement was signed, but when Hurff contacted them for a timeline installation he was notified the price was not locked in. The new quote of the equipment was almost $10,000 more, he contacted them and they did come down to $63,000; an increase of $7,688 from the approved amount. He added it wasn't anybody's fault; overlooked. The equipment is expected to be installed around the end of July. It was noted the additional cost still falls under the amount received for the grant.

Finance/Landfill:

Greer reported there are some issues that arose regarding the landfill container site project; pertaining to the scale of the plan drawings. The job was bid and awarded to Yochum Contracting, Inc. (YCI) who based the bid off of the scale of the drawings and not the call-out dimensions. YCI is asking for an additional $37,500 to offset the additional cost of materials due to this discrepancy. Krebs asked Knudsen if he could comment on this; on what the options are. Knudsen noted YCI was the lowest bidder by a large margin; he is comfortable with the City continuing as a change order and not having to go back to bid. There was further discussion about the project. Mayor Purcell voiced if Council is good, he and Hurff will meet with Barry Damschen and consult with Knudsen.

Resolutions & Ordinances:

SPECIAL COMMITTEES:

PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS:

Mayor Purcell reported the Montana League of Cities and Towns Annual Conference will be held in Billings, MT and the City received information form the Montana Department of Transportation regarding the 2025-2029 Draft Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

Mayor Purcell reported Landa Uffelman submitted requests for the 7th Annual 4th of July Celebration. The requests include dumpsters, portable restrooms, blockades and street closure of the 200 block of Center Avenue from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on July 4, 2025, use of electricity in the Plaza, and street sweeping. Greer motioned to approve the bid. Espinoza seconded. On a voice vote the motion passed. 5/0 Sharpe was not present during the vote.

Mayor Purcell reported the Hardin FFA (Future Farmers of America) Alumni submitted a Beer/Wine Permit requesting extended hours and waiver of fee for the 7th Annual 4th of July Celebration. Krebs motioned to approve the requests. Espinoza asked the Chief if there were enough officers. Hopes seconded. Chief Paul George noted the grant money received from the Federal Government, through the state, can be used to hire other officers to assist the department if needed. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Purcell reported quotes were received in the total amount of $19,789.57 to purchase a Motorola hand held radio, car mount, antenna, installation, etc. for the police

department. Mayor Purcell noted this will be for the Police Service Aide (PSA) position. Police Chief Paul George, Jr. reported the funding will come from the Animal Control budget; funds left from the position not being filled. He put in for a grant through the Coal Board (in the amount of $158,000); he will be attending the Coal Board meeting Thursday. He added this is the new radio the City will be going to. There was discussion about the expense. Chief George noted the total project for every car to have a radio plus a portable is over $300,000. Officer Welch and Chief George provided information about the problems with not being able to communicate with each other using the current radios. Mayor Purcell reported the Coal Board grant that was applied for would allow the City to purchase handheld radios and other grants would be applied for to get the car radios. Chief George noted with the current radios they are unable to communicate with the Big Horn County Sheriff's Office; the new radio would allow that communication. Hopes asked Lehr if the City had money for the purchase. Lehr noted if this were to be purchased there would be $25,000 left in the PSA budget. Sharpe motioned to approve. Hopes seconded. Espinoza asked if this radio was to only be able to communicate with the County. Chief George noted that they will be able to talk with any agency in the State, any agency in this Country. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Purcell reported a request was received from the 500 Club for a donation of $500 toward the Fabba concert event during Big Horn Days. It was noted there is funding available in the Council budget. Krebs motioned to approve taking money from the budget to give $500 to the 500 Club. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Purcell reported Krebs spoke earlier about the playground equipment for the South Park Project. He noted the price increase for the equipment from WillyGoat is $7,688; adding the additional amount falls under the grant award the City received for the project. Greer motioned to approve. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

STAFF REPORTS:

Public Works:

Finance:

Lehr reported he would like to schedule the first Budget Meeting at the end of this month and additional meetings the second week in July and continuing as needed. He noted the FY 2024 audit is close to being complete and the current auditor is retiring so the city will be going out to bid for an auditor. The Gas Tax allotment for FY 2026 decreased to $173,706. The City received payment, in the amount of $283,463, from DNRC for the 2019 Rural Development grant for the wastewater project to cover engineering invoices the city had covered; the loan is fully closed and the City can draw on it going forward.

Police:

Police Chief Paul George, Jr. reviewed calls for service. He reported the department has started signing properties for the overgrown weeds; Police Service Aide Riley Martinez completed one animal control certification and is moving onto a second certification; an officer started employment on Monday; and another officer will start soon. There are three Police Officer interviews and a Terminal Agency Coordinator interview scheduled for tomorrow.

Legal:

Knudsen reported he like many had read the Original Briefs. There was a closed session planned for after the meeting tonight. Upon research, he determined the items that were going to be in the closed personnel session can be discussed in public for two reasons, because of what was published, they gave an implied waiver by putting it in the paper and referenced a Supreme Court case law about rights to privacy regarding police officers. He voiced unfortunately the public has been misled. He addressed information that was published last week in the Original Briefs by each bullet point listed.

Police Chief Paul George, Jr. expressed his frustration about the publications. He voiced he will not resign from this position; he cares about what happens to the City. He voiced his concerns about his current officers having to deal with what was published. He voiced what was published is false.

Knudsen addressed the allegations that were in the publication of the Original Briefs today. The public is getting lies, half-truths, do not believe what is going on here.

Mayor Purcell addressed the publications and voiced there are no facts; it is gossip and slander, adding they are half-truths. He encouraged the public to ask the questions and find out the facts before casting judgement on people.

Economic Development:

Toyne reported she has been researching and reaching out to property owners in search of the best location for a future Welcome Visitor's Center. The center will create a space to welcome tourists and also includes incubator store fronts to support local entrepreneurs; this is in the exploratory phase and is possible through the Pilot Tourism Grant. Cushing Terrell came to Hardin May 20th and toured the city focusing on identifying Infill and Redevelopment opportunities for housing. They will be providing a report on recommendations and strategies for moving forward. Karlyn Vasan, with Ayres Associates, Inc., will be here Wednesday, June 11th and would like to meet with City Council; the meeting for the Economic Development Strategy will take place at the Hardin Depot at 6:00 p.m. She will be hosting a public meeting with local business owners and community members earlier that afternoon at 3:00 p.m. where she will be presenting a draft plan focused on supporting business growth, enhancing quality of life, and strengthening economic resilience. A meeting was held with High Plains Architects and stakeholders for the Hotel Becker Preliminary Architectural Report on May 8th; a final meeting is scheduled for next Thursday to finalize the direction. She will be going to Wibaux and Medora to attend a Visit Southeast Montana Board Meeting that will conclude with a tour of the future Teddy Roosevelt Memorial Library in Medora; set to open July 4, 2026. She will be traveling to Great Falls for the Rural Retreat Conference hosted by the International Economic Development Council.

RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

Resolution NO. 2406 – Authorizing Creation Capital Reserve Account. Krebs motioned to approve the resolution. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion unanimously approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Purcell announced the Hardin Community Blood Drive is scheduled for Thursday, June 5th form 12:30 p.m. to 5:45 p.m. at the First Alliance Church; 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; and Budget Meetings are scheduled for June 24, 2025 and July 8th, 9th, and 10th, 2025 and continuing as needed.

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

Greer motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:04 p.m. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Joe Purcell

Joe Purcell, Mayor

CITY OF HARDIN OFFICIAL SEAL BIG HORN COUNTY, MONTANA

ATTEST:

Andrew Lehr

Andrew Lehr, Finance Officer/City Clerk

THE COMMON COUNCIL
CITY of HARDIN, MONTANA

COUNCIL MEETING: The Regular Council Meeting for June 17, 2025 was called to order at 6:32 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. Steven Hopes was excused (joined the meeting at 6:45 p.m.)

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

Also present physically: Several 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 June 3, 2025. Motion seconded by Greer. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Greer made a motion to approve the claims for June 17, 2025.

	CLAIM No.		Monthly Total
May, 2025	32420-32428, 32433-32450, 32452, 32454	$	130,782.99
June, 2025	32429-32432, 32451, 32453, 32455		252,239.67
TOTAL Submitted		**$**	**383,022.66**

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

PUBLIC COMMENT:

JoAnn Feger, provided a history of situations where she has encountered dogs that are loose at or near her home. She voiced she is not only concerned for herself, but children. Mayor Purcell directed her to call the City Police Department or Sheriff's Department day or night.

Jose Funke voiced his concerns about crime, law enforcement at night, seeing more "whinos", and driving personal vehicles. (Hopes joined the meeting)

Corrina Kirschenmann-Kuntz voiced her thoughts on loosing police officers at the Police Department.

Pat Sargent, resident, provided information about an incident that happened at his home while he was out of town. He hasn't heard from the Hardin Police Officer that attended that call. He asked who he should contact about vehicles that have been parked across the street from his residence. Mayor Purcell directed him to the police department. Sargent will meet with the Police Chief.

MAYOR:

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Personnel Policy/City Policy:

Mayor Purcell reported on positions that are currently open at the City; adding interviews were held recently for those positions and offers have been extended.

Sewer & Water:

Massine reported extra water samples are being taken.

Law Enforcement:

Streets & Alleys:

Parks & Playgrounds:

Krebs reported he has been talking with Lehr and Hurff about what needs to be ordered for the South Park Project; including picnic tables, volleyball equipment, water lines etc. that would be

covered by the grant. Rick Funk, of SplashPadsUSA, is planning to be here by the end of this month to get started on the splash pad.

Finance/Landfill:

Resolutions & Ordinances:

Sharpe reported there was discussion about pedestrian interference and disorderly house. Knudsen will draft ordinances for the next meeting.

Mayor Purcell reported there will be a committee meeting held before the next Council meeting to discuss a City-County Planning Board letter regarding Subdivision Zoning changes and updates.

SPECIAL COMMITTEES:

PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS:

Mayor Purcell reported the City received the City-County Planning Board minutes from the meeting of May 12, 2025.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

Mayor Purcell reported the City received a recommendation from the City-County Planning Board to approve a Conditional Use Application submitted by Thomas Lind and Keshia Croft. Lind reported the proposal is to renovate the old USDA office, located at 724 West 3rd Street, into apartments for people coming into the area working at the hospital, schools, elderly that don't to go into assisted living, etc. He reported they are trying to improve the community, the area; adding it is a sound building. Krebs asked if this would be subsidized housing, Lind voiced it is not. Krebs voiced he thinks we, the City, need the additional housing; it would be a good change to the building. Krebs motioned to approve the recommendation. Greer seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Purcell reported a letter was submitted by Environmental Contractors for grain bin disposal at the City Landfill. Hurff noted the bins will come from Billings; around 550 tons of metal with caulking in between that has non-friable asbestos. He added it can be disposed of in the landfill with other garbage. Massine asked if the bins would be cut up into pieces and then hauled to Billings or Yochum's to be recycled. C.J. Yochum reviewed state law regarding ACM asbestos contained material; adding the answer is no on scrap. Hurff noted, upon research, it would be difficult to get the metal smashed down to get it covered. He noted Fred Collins, Montana Department of Environmental Quality inspector for the landfill, will check on the lab results and recommended to talk with the landfill engineer to make sure the City can handle the amount of waste being added. Krebs asked if it was worth taking it with the added labor; adding he didn't think it was. Barry Damschen, City Landfill Engineer, recommended to not take it where they are just to bring it in, the City does not have the manpower or equipment to spend to knock it down and pack it to bury it. He recommended to not take it. He also noted if it comes in baled, we can take it. Sharpe motioned to not accept it. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion passed. (5/1) Sharpe voting Nay.

Janelle Enzminger, President of Help Every Pet, read a letter aloud outlining projects and the current amount of money they have paid in regard to the City animal population. Sharpe asked what they were asking for, veterinary expenses in the amount of $27,086. She noted when an animal comes in they let Animal Care Center know if HEP is paying for it, if it is a County or City animal; they have three separate accounts. Loretta Barnes, Vice President, reported HEP paid $5,073.98 from August 25th to present. She noted they want to help people in our community. Barnes provided an overview of their needs and the work they do. Mayor Purcell asked how it is determined what is a "city animal", "county animal" etc. Barnes reported she asks for the physical address. Mayor Purcell noted the report shows their expenses and asked where the funding comes from. It was reported there are donors, fundraisers, and Big Horn County. She reported a report has to be given to the County every quarter; they have a contract with the County

Attorney. Lehr asked why the County wouldn't cover the City, we are also county tax payers. Espinoza asked if they have asked the tribe for anything. She noted they have; the response was to apply for grants. Knudsen asked if they are asking to sign a contract, if they want to work with law enforcement, if they are asking for a donation? Sharpe asked if this could be tabled to have more in depth conversation. There was discussion about how the process was in the past. Mayor Purcell voiced his concern is there are other non-profits in town, it would be hard to donate city taxpayer money to one non-profit without having a contract or agreement in place. Enzminger noted they are not looking for donations, they are coming back to get a reimbursement for the money they spent at Animal Care Center and wondering if the city will do a contract like the county does. Mayor Purcell noted that can be looked at. Barnes voiced they would like to discuss it further; adding they would like to be reimbursed the money they spent this last year. Krebs voiced he is concerned about spaying and neutering and controlling the population. Mayor Purcell noted if Council is good with it, the city can go forward to negotiate a contract. The city program is set up for feral animals. Knudsen noted a contract would be better, with terms and the scope of what the city will be billed for. The city is accountable to the taxpayers. Knudsen noted they are not city owned animals, they are animals within the city. There was further discussion. Mayor Purcell noted if Council is good talks can be started with Chief George and Animal Control.

Barry Damschen, Landfill Engineer, reviewed the bid process for the Landfill Container site. He reported the bid was awarded to Yochum Contracting, Inc. (YCI) He then reviewed the layout and a diagram for the construction. Damschen noted he and Yochum are at a difference of opinion; adding the dimensions were detailed out. YCI did not use the call-outs. There was further discussion about the dimensions. Damschen reported he has used these plans for three other projects and has never had anyone tell him there is a discrepancy. He noted Yochum did not bring it up until two days after the notice to proceed. Yochum voiced he did at the pre-construction meeting before it was signed and Damschen dismissed it. Damschen voiced "No". Knudsen noted there is not a need for contract amendments. Mayor Purcell voiced the discussion moving forward is if Council will agree to move forward with $37,500 increase without having to go out to bid and with no other contingency or other expenses identified. Espinoza motioned to accept. Yochum requested additional time if this is approved; he is concerned about the 4th of July holiday. Sharpe seconded. Mayor Purcell noted it has been moved and seconded to go forward with the increase for the landfill container site for $37,500 with up to a thirty-day extension to get completed with no other contingencies. There was further discussion about the project. On a voice vote the motion passed. On a voice vote the motion passed. (5/1) Krebs voting Nay.

Police Chief Paul George, Jr. reported the Coal Board awarded the department $118,000 to purchase new radios. There is $40,000 obligated from the department's budget. Sharpe asked who the radios were for. Chief George noted they are for ten police officers, an additional officer that will be coming in October, a few will be sent to dispatch in Alabama to communicate with the City department, and one additional to have on hand. It was noted these radios will allow communication with Big Horn County. Krebs noted the purchase if for 15 radios; asking how many officers does the department currently have. Chief George reported there are currently five. Mayor Purcell reported the plan is for a full department. Espinoza motioned to approve the purchase. Greer seconded. Lehr pointed out if one breaks, it will cost about $8,200 to repair. It was noted they are tough radios. There was further discussion about the budget, cost of the radios, and the communication it will allow. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Police Chief Paul George requested approval to purchase camera's in the amount of $16,985. There was discussion about the purpose of the cameras and how they will be utilized. Espinoza motioned to approve the purchase. Mayor Purcell asked if there was a second to the motion. Hopes motioned to table the request. Greer motioned to second the request to approve the purchase and go forward with the quote. On a voice vote the motion was at a tie vote with Espinoza, Greer, and Hopes voting Yea and Sharpe, Massine and Krebs voting Nay. The Mayor broke the tie vote by voting Yea. Motion passed.

Lehr reviewed the Audit for Fiscal Year 2024. He reported the auditor is retiring and the City will be going out to bid for an auditor. Krebs motioned to approve the audit. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

STAFF REPORTS:

Public Works:

Hurff reported the City took possession of the new garbage truck today. **Water Treatment Plant**: working on getting a Pre-Construction meeting scheduled for the liner installation in the

water tank. **Wastewater Treatment Plant**: the electrician made an onsite visit as part of the WWTP Project. **Landfill**: getting close to a water truck replacement, there was a DEQ inspection, and the street crew put down gravel on the landfill road. **Streets**: working on potholes, keeping the drains clean, and mowing. There has been a lot of requests for Alley Clean Up, it is scheduled for the end of July. **Parks**: were sprayed for weeds. **Water T&D**: lift station is working good. Hurff reported the City is gearing up for Big Horn Days and the 4th of July Events and the new vactor truck is expected to be delivered in about three months.

Finance:

Lehr reported the first budget meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 24, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.; the City received $4,598 in the marijuana excise tax for this quarter with a total of $13,825.46 received for the year; the May 2025 tax payment received was nearly $570,000; the second draw request for the WWTP Project was provided to the City today for $84,888, the funding agencies need to provide final approval before it is received. The American Rescue Plan (ARPA) Minimum Allocation Grant was requested in the amount of $11,810 for this quarter for the final engineering invoices for the 1st Street Project, tank lining project, and the Preliminary Engineering Report for the Water Treatment Plant. There were no requests for the Lodge Grass ARPA project the City is sponsoring.

George Toyne asked if there was a projection of what the property tax changes are going to do to the revenue next year. Lehr noted he did not.

Police:

Police Chief Paul George, Jr. reviewed calls for service adding code violations are at forty-nine due to putting out weed signs. He reported Officer Joshua Garcia started Monday, he is doing trainings and certifications until he attends the academy. Job offers were extended and accepted for a Police Officer and the TAC/Admin Assistant positions.

Chief Paul George reported he is very transparent, and provided ways he can be reached. He addressed people that say things to make him look bad or post things in the paper adding it is not a PD issue, not a Police Chief issue, the issues the department has had are officer issues. He has no respect for liars and cowards. He provided a background of those issues. He noted the department has policies and procedures for a reason and he expects his staff to abide by the policy and the law; do the job they are paid to do. He reviewed a case and noted that now there is a skewed vision of him because of one officer. He voiced he is trying to provide the tools they, the officers, need to do their job. He noted Public Safety should be the largest fund of any Cities budget. He voiced if you have a problem with an officer, contact him. He reviewed the term "Disorderly House", a house who is engaged in gambling, public drinking, fighting etc. An ordinance will give the department the right to arrest everyone in the house and also include putting the liability on the landlord.

George Toyne voiced the department was established to stop crime in the City, get rid of drunks and vagrants, and to clean up the community and since it has been established it has gone up. There was discussion between Lehr, Knudsen, and Chief George about court fees/fines dropping. Chief George reported violent crime is down and citations have gone up since he has been here. Knudsen noted the majority of people that go to jail do not pay the fines.

Legal:

Knudsen pointed out a response has been drafted to the letters in the Original Briefs that will provide facts in the cases that were mentioned.

Economic Development:

RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Purcell announced the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument 149th Battle Anniversary Event schedule is in the lobby. He announced the following employee anniversaries: Dean Baker, 11 years; Brock Boyer, 3 years; Michael Hurff,

15 years; Remington Malensek, 2 year; Tamara Mendez, 6 years; and Shawndae OldElk, 4 years.

Local Government Review Study Commission Meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, June 18th at City Council Chambers and is open to the public; Request for Qualifications for the Pilot Community Tourism Grant are due by 3:00 p.m. June 20, 2025, Request for Proposals for the Historical Depot Infrastructure Improvement Project are due by 3:00 p.m. July 2, 2025, and Budget Meetings are scheduled for June 24, 2025 and July 8th, 9th, and 10th, 2025 and continuing as needed.

The City of Hardin has the following Job Openings: Full-time position - Police Officer. The Terminal Agency Coordinator (TAC) / Administrative Assistant I-IV position is pending the pre-employment qualifications. Part-Time position - Building Inspector. Positions are open until filled.

Espinoza voiced the Local Government Review Study Commission was voted for and no one shows up for the meetings. He encouraged citizens to participate.

Greer motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:17 p.m. Feger asked a question about animals being on a leash. Mayor Purcell directed her to the Chief and Police Service Aide. Espinoza seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

Joe Purcell

Joe Purcell, Mayor

CITY OF HARDIN OFFICIAL SEAL BIG HORN COUNTY, MONTANA

ATTEST:

Andrew Lehr

Andrew Lehr, Finance Officer/City Clerk

THE COMMON COUNCIL
CITY of HARDIN, MONTANA

COUNCIL MEETING: The Regular Council Meeting for July 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, and Rock Massine. Jeremy Krebs was excused and Antonio Espinoza was absent.

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

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 June 17, 2025. Motion seconded by Greer. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved. Sharpe motioned to approve the Resolutions or Ordinances Committee minutes as written for June 17, 2025. Motion seconded by Massine. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved. Greer motioned to approve the Finance/Budget Committee minutes as written for June 24, 2025. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

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

	CLAIM No.		Monthly Total
May, 2025	32462-32526, 32528-32529	$	22, 301.65
June, 2025	32546-32459, 32461, 32463-32469, 32472-32477, 32498-32503, 32505-32515, 32517-32518, 32521-32525, 32527, 32530, 32534-32536		736,988.11
July, 2025	32470-32471, 32478-32497, 32504, 32519-32520, 32531-32532		176,117.11
Claims Total (Expenditures)		**$**	**935,406.87**
June, 2025		**$**	**236,533.47**
TOTAL Submitted		**$**	**1,171,940.34**

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

PUBLIC COMMENT: N/A

MAYOR:

Mayor Purcell reported City employees approved the Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Union. The draft agreement may be presented at the next meeting. The City is working with the Hardin Police Department and the Union to finish their agreement.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Personnel Policy/City Policy:

Mayor Purcell reported on positions that are currently open at the City.

Sewer & Water:

Massine reported there was a brief meeting today on the construction that will happen at the Waste Water Treatment Plant.

Law Enforcement:

Hopes noted Law Enforcement participated in the parades and did an excellent job downtown.

Streets & Alleys:

Parks & Playgrounds:

Finance/Landfill:

Greer reported the Landfill container site project has been started.

Resolutions & Ordinances:

Sharpe reported there was meeting regarding a request from the City-County Planning Board to review subdivision and zoning regulations.

SPECIAL COMMITTEES:

PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS:

Mayor Purcell reported the City received newsletters from the Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority and the Montana Department of Transportation.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: N/A

NEW BUSINESS:

A committee meeting was held to review a Memo that was submitted by Forrest J. Mandeville, AICP, Planning Advisor for the City-County Planning Board, regarding Amendments to Regulatory Documents. The City-County Planning Board had requested for Mandeville to create a list of subdivision and zoning regulations that need to be updated. The Memo reviewed changes that may be needed due to where the statue has changed. Sharpe motioned to approve the amendments to the Regulatory Documents. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Tina Toyne reported they received five proposals for the Request for Qualifications for the Sustainable Tourism Management Plan. The recommendation of the Pilot Tourism Committee is to award the RFQ to DestinationiQ. Kirsten Slavin, Project Manager with DestinationiQ, voiced she is stoked to help re-develop a brand that is dedicated to the community. Greer motioned to approve the recommendation. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Purcell reported a proposal was submitted by In Control, Inc. proposal in the amount of $5,750.75 for the 2025 Automation & Cybersecurity Service Plan for the Water Treatment Plant. Massine reported it is the same that has been done the last couple of years, he discussed this with Hurff and the cost has gone down from last year; he made the motion to go forward with the proposal. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

STAFF REPORTS:

Public Works:

Hurff reported right now they are dealing a lot with irrigation ditches in town. He asked Council if they are able talk to constituents to help with information as to who monitors the ditches, who maintains them. He heard at one point there was a ditch committee, but not sure if there is one or if there was interest in starting one. The ditches are not the City responsibility. The City does maintain where they cross road rights-of-ways.

Finance:

Lehr reported the new garbage truck was delivered and the payment for the truck is included in the claims; he is working on the reimbursement claim to the Coal Board for the grant they awarded for the truck in the amount of $210,000. He noted the City is working on the Pilot Grant first draw request adding the first report is due at the end of July. Lehr reported he is working with I-State Truck to replace the water truck at the landfill; the City will pay the deductible of $1,000 with the rest to be paid by insurance.

Police:

Police Chief Paul George, Jr. reviewed calls for service and code violations for high weed properties. He reported all officers and the Police Service Aide worked through Big Horn Days and they will work through the 4th of July weekend; the TAC/Admin Assistant will start on Monday; and the new radios that were delivered last week are currently being programmed; he looks to be transitioned to them by the end of the week. Chief Paul George reported he plans to purchase paint and supplies to have those sentenced to community service to tackle the graffiti issue and he wants to organize

himself and other community residents to volunteer on the weekends to cover up the graffiti. Two uncertified police officer candidates are going through the pre-employment process; they will go to the academy. He has been communicating with two certified officers about joining the department.

Corrina Kirschenmann- Kuntz voiced she has seen a big difference in the community with the weed signs being put up; it is nice to see and they know it isn't tolerated.

Legal:

Economic Development:

Tina Toyne reported in early June Cushing Terrell (CTA) reached out with questions for the Infill and Redevelopment for the housing report, the information was forwarded to Joe Connelly. CTA will be joining her at the first Farmers Market to begin public engagement for this project. Karlyn Vasan, with Ayres Associates, Inc. visited the community on June 11th and 12th and submitted a draft of their report for the Economic Development Strategy. Mike Scholl will present the plan at the August 5, 2025 Council Meeting. The final stakeholder meeting for the Preliminary Engineering Report (PAR) for the Hotel Becker was held on June 12th. High Plains presented a draft of the final PAR along with the project pro forma. The final report is anticipated to be presented at the next Council Meeting.

Toyne reported she attended the Visit Southeast Montana Board Meeting in Medora. There was a visit to the construction site of the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library that is scheduled to open on July 4, 2026. She attended the Rural Retreat Conference in Great Falls that was hosted by the International Economic Development Council; she noted the immersive experiences offered valuable insight into rural development strategies. The second day of the conference they traveled to Choteau and learned how the community is utilizing the Pilot Tourism Grant as a Cohort 1 recipient to support their local tourism.

RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

Ordinance NO. 2025-01: First Reading – Amending Pedestrian Interference. Massine motioned to approve the ordinance. Greer seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Ordinance NO. 2025-02: First Reading – Creating The Offense of Maintaining a Disorderly House. Hopes motioned to accept the ordinance. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Purcell announced Local Government Review Study Commission Meetings are scheduled for the third Wednesday of each month with the time to be determined at City Council Chambers and is open to the public; Request for Proposals for the Historical Depot Infrastructure Improvement Project are due by 3:00 p.m. July 2, 2025, City Offices are closed Friday, July 4th for Independence Day; and Budget Meetings are scheduled for July 8th, 9th, and 10th, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. and continuing as needed.

The City of Hardin has the following Job Openings: Full-time position - Police Officer and Part-Time position - Building Inspector. Positions are open until filled.

Greer motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:56 p.m. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Joe Purcell

Joe Purcell, Mayor

CITY OF HARDIN OFFICIAL SEAL BIG HORN COUNTY, MONTANA

ATTEST:

Andrew Lehr

Andrew Lehr, Finance Officer/City Clerk

THE COMMON COUNCIL
CITY of HARDIN, MONTANA

COUNCIL MEETING: The Regular Council Meeting for July 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: 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., and Deputy City Clerk Angela Zimmer, City Attorney, Jordan Knudsen and Police Chief Paul George, Jr.

Also present physically: Several 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 July 1, 2025. Motion seconded by Sharpe. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved. Hopes motioned to approve the Resolutions or Ordinances Committee minutes as written for July 1, 2025. Motion seconded by Massine. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

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

	CLAIM No.		Monthly Total
June, 2025	32538-32539, 32541, 32543-32547, 32549-32550, 32553-32554, 32556-32568	$	103,629.98
July, 2025	32537, 32542, 32551-32552, 32555	$	174,548.22
TOTAL Submitted		**$**	**278,178.20**

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

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Tyler Malensek, resident, expressed his concerns about the weed control ordinance. He provided a picture to Council about a property that he feels needs attention.

Jose Funke, resident, passed out letters to Council and noted the information is what he will be discussing. Mayor Purcell voiced his formal complaint is under review and this does not apply to Council; it will be addressed at another level. He added at the conclusion of the investigation he will be informed.

MAYOR:

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Personnel Policy/City Policy:

Mayor Purcell reported the City has openings for Police Officers. The City has received applications for the Part-time Building Inspector position.

Sewer & Water:

Massine reported the mixer was fixed at the water tank.

Law Enforcement:

Streets & Alleys:

Espinoza reported Alley Clean-Up is scheduled for Monday, July 28th.

Parks & Playgrounds:

Finance/Landfill:

Greer reported the contractor has been working on the Landfill container site project.

Resolutions & Ordinances:

SPECIAL COMMITTEES:

PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS:

Mayor Purcell reported the City received a newsletter from the Montana Department of Transportation about the Hardin Rest Area.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: N/A

NEW BUSINESS:

Mayor Purcell reported the Big Horn County 4-H Fair and Rodeo has requested the donation of city water, water truck and driver for the events. Greer motioned to approve the requests. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Purcell reported City employees agreed to the Collective Bargaining Agreement. He reviewed changes and noted it is a three-year contract. Knudsen pointed out a typo on page 17, column b (list of certifications). The word "of", in A/C of HVAC should be "or". Sharpe motioned to approve the agreement. Greer seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Purcell reported the proposed agreement with DestiationiQ that was in the packet was not complete, the complete version has been provided to Council. Knudsen noted an Indemnity Liability was added in Section 18 on pages 6-7 was added to the agreement. Mayor Purcell reported this is for the Pilot Tourism Grant. Greer motioned to approve the agreement. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

STAFF REPORTS:

Public Works:

Hurff reported the new mechanic truck was delivered today. He provided reports on the Water Treatment Plant and Wastewater Treatment Plant; adding the streets department is finishing up pot holes, they replaced a culvert and are moving into tree trimming. The splash pad crew is at South Park working on the pad; there will be a thirty-day curing period before they return to finalize the project. The new water truck for the Landfill is expected to arrive in the next few weeks and the vactor truck is expected to arrive sometime next month.

Finance:

Lehr reported he submitted the reimbursement claim to the Coal Board for the grant they awarded for the garbage truck in the amount of $210,000. The City received $155,678 for taxes from the Tax Increment Finance District (TIFD). He will be turning in paperwork requesting the grand funding for the PAR for the Hotel Becker in the amount of $45,000; the draw was completed for the Lodge Grass Project for the last quarter; the City received the 4th quarter payment of the School Resource Officer agreement from the school; and the City received a draw for the Pilot Grant. Lehr noted he would like to schedule a budget meeting to be held before the Council Meeting of August 5th.

Police:

Police Chief Paul George, Jr. reviewed calls for service. He reported School Resource Officer Laurie Welch attended the National School Resource Officer Conference in Texas and brought back a lot of valuable information they hope to implement within the school system here. He is working on graffiti abatement; the Officers and Police Service Aide Officer continue to tag and tow junk vehicles; and he is communicating with a facility on temporary housing for dogs at large.

Legal:

Economic Development:

RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

Resolution NO. 2407 – Establishing Wages for Non-Union Employees and Elected Officials for Fiscal Year 2025/2026. Massine motioned to approve the resolution. Espinoza seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Resolution NO. 2408 – Establishing Wages for Hardin City Police Department Employees for Fiscal Year 2025/2026. Hopes motioned to approve the resolution. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Resolution NO. 2409– Establishing Wages for Certain City Employees for Fiscal Year 2025/2026. Espinoza motioned to approve the resolution. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Ordinance NO. 2025-01: Second Reading – Amending Pedestrian Interference. Hopes motioned to approve the second reading of the ordinance. Espinoza seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Ordinance NO. 2025-02: Second Reading – Creating The Offense of Maintaining a Disorderly House. Massine motioned to approve the second reading of the ordinance. Espinoza seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Purcell announced the following anniversaries: Paul George, Jr., 2 years; Nathan McConnell, 2 years; Michael O'Riehl, 3 years; Judge Snively, 2 years; and Tina Toyne, 1 year.

Mayor Purcell reported a Public Hearing for Amendments to the Budget Fiscal Year 2024-2025 is scheduled for 6:10 p.m. Tuesday, August 5, 2025 and a Public Hearing for Street Maintenance District, and levies and assessments for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 is scheduled for 6:20 p.m. Tuesday, August 5, 2025; the Local Government Review Study Commission Meetings are scheduled for the third Wednesday of each month, time to be determined, at City Council Chambers and is open to the public; Alley Clean-up is schedule for July 28th; and he noted there is a notice of the Garbage Service Holiday Schedule in the packet.

The City of Hardin has the following Job Openings: Full-time position - Police Officer and Part-Time position - Building Inspector. Positions are open until filled.

Greer motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 p.m. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Joe Purcell, Mayor

ATTEST:

Andrew Lehr, Finance Officer/City Clerk

CITY OF HARDIN OFFICIAL SEAL BIG HORN COUNTY, MONTANA

THE COMMON COUNCIL
CITY of HARDIN, MONTANA

COUNCIL MEETING: The Regular Council Meeting for August 19, 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, Chris Sharpe, Rock Massine, Antonio Espinoza and Jeremy Krebs. Clayton Greer was excused.

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

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

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS & CLAIMS: Hopes made the motion to approve the Council minutes as written for August 5, 2025. Motion seconded by Espinoza. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved. Sharpe motioned to approve the Public Hearing minutes as written for August 5, 2025. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Sharpe made a motion to approve the claims for August 19, 2025.

	CLAIM No.	Monthly Total
June, 2025	32669, 32690, 32694-32695, 32704	$ 5,586.48
July, 2025	32666-32668, 32670, 32672-32673, 32679, 32681, 32684-32689, 32691-32693, 32696-32703	$ 389,161.65
August, 2025	32674-32677, 32680, 32682-32683, 32705-32709	$ 9,338.42
TOTAL Submitted		**$ 404,086.55**

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

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mayor Purcell reported the public comment has been split up on the agenda with the first public comment for anything on the agenda and the public comment at the end of the meeting is for general public comment. He opened up public comment for agenda items. There was none.

MAYOR:

Mayor Purcell reported the Big Horn County Commissioners are working on appointing new members to the City-County Planning Board.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Personnel Policy/City Policy:

Mayor Purcell reported the City has openings for full-time Police Officers, General Laborer – Landfill, and a part-time Building Inspector.

Sewer & Water:

Massine reported dirt work is being done at the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Law Enforcement:

Streets & Alleys:

Espinoza reported the City Crew has been working on old signs and doing street patching.

Parks & Playgrounds:

Krebs reported there are a couple of ideas for tables, garbage cans, benches, and water fountains in the packet for the South Park Project. He provided a report on the progress and noted the project is under budget with no additional City funds.

Finance/Landfill:

Hurff reported the Landfill cannister site is finished; Barry Damschen, Landfill Engineer, signed off on the project. He will submit paperwork for the next Council meeting.

Resolutions & Ordinances:

SPECIAL COMMITTEES:

PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS:

Mayor Purcell reported the City received a letter from the Big Horn County Board of County Commissioners thanking the City for the generous support during the 2025 Big Horn County Fair; letters were received from the City-County Planning Board noting there was not a quorum for their Public Hearings and regular meeting that were scheduled for August 11, 2025 for the M&R Developing Variance Request and the Stewart Conditional Use and that the public hearings have been rescheduled to September 8, 2025; and the City received information for Pipeline Safety Resources.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: N/A

NEW BUSINESS:

Hurff reviewed the quote for a Bobcat 265 Air Pak, in the amount of $15,219, that would be put on the new mechanics truck. Massine motioned to accept the bid for the Miller Bobcat 265 Air Pak for $15,219. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Hurff reported he and Matt Smith, of Stahly Engineering, went around and looked over the streets. Smith proposed chip seals for 1st Street and N. Terry Avenue and chip seal for West 8th Street, which he felt was the biggest need at this time. Hurff reported he reached out to three companies and received one quote that was submitted. Hurff reviewed the itemized quote that was submitted by Jody Teske of Hardrives Construction, Inc. Hurff noted the City can do some of the work. Teske reported there is an option to chip seal and crack seal and patch and an option to patch and scrub seal; on N. Terry Avenue and 1st it would just be the chip seal. He explained the process for scrub sealing. It was noted the after sweeping can be done by the City crew. Massine motioned to accept the bid from Hardrives, they will do the patching, the pre- sweep, the chip seal, and the scrub seal. Hopes seconded. Mayor Purcell reported it has been moved and seconded to go forward with Hardrives Construction for the Hardin Chip seal project mobilization, chip seal of N. Terry with 1st Street, the West 8th Street scrub seal and West 8th Street patch adding the City will do the pick-up sweeping. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Lehr reviewed Pay Application #1, in the amount of $344,982.49, that was submitted by Northcon, Inc. for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project. Hurff noted that on the surface, it doesn't look like that amount of work is being done there. Lehr reported the pay app has been reviewed and approved by other entities. Knudsen noted to compare this pay app to the next application. Massine motioned to go forward with the pay application. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Krebs reviewed a final quote from Global Industrial, in the amount of $9,509.30, for four picnic tables, two garbage cans, four benches with backrests, two picnic tables, and an ADA drinking fountain for the South Park Project. Krebs motioned to approve the purchase. Espinoza seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Deanna Albert, Principal of Hardin High School, requested two crosswalks. She noted everyday kids come from the academy and crossover to the north door of the High School and middle school kids also come from the trailers on Terry Avenue across to the High School or the Middle. Krebs motioned to approve the requests. Sharpe seconded. Massine noted after the street is chip sealed. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

STAFF REPORTS:

Public Works:

Finance:

Lehr reported discussion on the budget was finalized last week and the final budget with mill levies and assessments will be presented at the next meeting. He noted he will be working with Mayor Purcell and Knudsen on a possible budget amendment for the Lodge Grass Project grant that the City is sponsoring. Lehr reviewed the last quarterly request from the Montana Department of natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), the Tax Increment Finance District (TIFD) taxes received, and the current request to State Revolving Fund (SRF) for the Rural Development (RD) loan from 2019 for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project.

Police:

Chief Paul George, Jr. reviewed calls for service. Two of the Police Officer applicants have completed the pre-employment process and will be presented to the Police Commission for final approval. He provided a report on a property that has received complaints of community decay. Police Chief George responded to questions asked by Krebs about the number of police officers patrolling the streets, the hours of work, etc.

Legal:

Economic Development:

Tina Toyne reported she was awarded the MEDA Growth Scholarship and is waiting to hear the details about the scholarship. The City officially kicked things off with DestinationiQ for the Sustainable Tourism Management Plan under the Pilot Tourism Grant. She reported Alexandria Edwards, Project Manager, has been working closely with them and they are scheduled to visit Hardin the last week of August for a site tour and a more in-depth planning. DestinationiQ would like to meet with Council; Edwards will reach out to Council to schedule a meeting.

Toyne reported she reached out to local property owners to gauge interest in participating in the Infill and Redevelopment Plan that the City has been working on with Cushing Terrell; Mike Scholl gave his final report for the Economic Development Strategy; and the City received the final Preliminary Architectural Report for the Hotel Becker. Toyne reported she attended the Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority Board meeting online and attended the Beartooth RC&D board meeting in Joliet, MT.

RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Purcell announced the following employee anniversaries: Steffen Peters, 7 years and Chris Schneider 20 years.

Mayor Purcell reported City offices will be closed on Monday, September 1, 2025 for Labor Day; a Local Government Review Study Commission Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 20, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. in City Council Chambers; and a Public Hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, September 2, 2025 for Adopting the Final Budget for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 and setting mill levies, assessments and user fees at 6:15 p.m. in Council Chambers.

City-County Planning Board Public Hearings for the M&R Developing Variance Request and the Stewart Conditional Use have been re-scheduled to Monday, September 8, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers.

The City of Hardin has the following Job Openings: Full-time position - Police Officer and General Laborer – Landfill and Part-Time position - Building Inspector. Positions are open until filled.

Greer motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:21 p.m. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Joe Purcell

Joe Purcell, Mayor

ATTEST:

Andrew Lehr

Andrew Lehr, Finance Officer/City Clerk

CITY OF HARDIN OFFICIAL SEAL BIG HORN COUNTY, MONTANA

THE COMMON COUNCIL
CITY of HARDIN, MONTANA

Public Hearing: The Public Hearing for Adopting the Final Budget for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 and setting mill levies, assessments and user fees.

Present at the hearing were:
Council Members: Steven Hopes, Clayton Greer, Chris Sharpe, Rock Massine, and Jeremy Krebs (6:17 p.m.). Antonio Espinoza was excused.

City Staff: Finance Officer/City Clerk Andrew Lehr, Public Works Director Michael Hurff, Jr., Deputy City Clerk Angela Zimmer, and City Attorney Jordan Knudsen.
Also present physically and by virtual meeting: Several members of the public

Mayor Purcell opened the meeting for discussion or Public Comment.

Lehr reported there were not any changes in assessments for Lighting District #1 or Lighting District #54; garbage increased by 4% (four percent). He reviewed unpaid assessments against Real Property and the Taxes/levies for FY 2025/2026. Krebs joined the meeting. Massine noted the power company recently fixed lights that were out.

There was no further discussion. The Public Hearing adjourned at 6:18 p.m.

COUNCIL MEETING: The Regular Council Meeting for September 2, 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 Jeremy Krebs. Antonio Espinoza was excused.

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 via virtual meeting.

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 August 19, 2025. Motion seconded by Sharpe. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Greer made a motion to approve the claims for September 2, 2025.

	CLAIM No.	Monthly Total
June, 2025	32734, 32747	$ 2,706.70
July, 2025	32713, 32740-32742, 32756, 32758	366,737.98
August, 2025	32710-32712, 32733, 32735-32739, 32743, 32745-32746, 32748-32755, 32757, 32759-32761, 32764-32769	34,632.82
September, 2025	32714-32732, 32762-32763	2,437.47
TOTAL Submitted		**$ 406,514.97**

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

PUBLIC COMMENT: N/A

MAYOR: N/A

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Personnel Policy/City Policy:

Mayor Purcell reported the City has openings for full-time Police Officers and General Laborer – Landfill.

Sewer & Water:

Massine reported there is a pre-construction meeting at the water tank this Thursday at 11:00 a.m.; dirt work and dewatering is being done at the Wastewater Treatment Plant; the Duck Derby is scheduled for this Thursday at 6:30 p.m. September 4th; Hurff will provide information on a letter that went out for the Water Treatment Plant; and Hurff is having repairs done at the 6th Street lift station.

Law Enforcement:

Streets & Alleys:

Hurff reported 8th Street and 1st Street will be closed on September 16th for chip seal; letters have been sent asking for cars to be removed from the street for the project.

Parks & Playgrounds:

Hurff reported SplashPads USA will be here next week. Krebs noted they will get the finish poured for the splash pad, hook everything up, install the fixtures, connect the water lines and test the system. The concrete around the splash pad was poured today and the lines were roughed in for the drinking fountain. The City Crew did the sleeves for the volleyball court and moved sand over there. The woodchips will be delivered this week for the new playground area and the shed is currently being built that will house the water lines, control valves and electrical. There was further discussion about how the splash pad will be operated.

Finance/Landfill:

Resolutions & Ordinances:

SPECIAL COMMITTEES:

PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS:

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: N/A

NEW BUSINESS:

Mayor Purcell reported Barry Damschen, Landfill Engineer, submitted a letter regarding the Landfill Container Site Project. Hurff reported the site has been completed; Damschen came down and performed the final inspection. The letter notes the project is complete. Hurff noted Yochum Contracting, Inc (YCI) has requested an additional reimbursement in the amount of $1,500. He extended the culverts due to the steepness. It was noted the additional cost is for materials only, not labor. The request will go before council on the next agenda. There was discussion about some erosion and cracks at the site. Massine motioned to approve. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Lehr reported the Architectural Services Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is for the Visitors Center under the Pilot Tourism Grant. There were thirteen different firms that attended the mandatory site visit. Cushing Terrell (CTA) scored higher on the scoring and interview. He extended a "Thank You" to all the firms that responded. Maggie Hardt, Interior Designer and Stakeholder Engagement Lead for Cushing Terrell, voiced she is available for questions and they are excited about the project. There was discussion about other projects CTA has done in the City. Cory Kenney, resident, asked about the Pilot Tourism Grant. Mayor Purcell reported the grant is to promote and sustain tourism in the community and the County. Massine asked if the City was allowed to purchase land and a building or does the City have to build on their own. It was noted the City cannot purchase real property through the grant. Massine motioned to go with Cushing Terrell. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Lehr reviewed Pay Application #2-2 submitted by Western Municipal Construction, Inc., in the amount of $26,794.84, for the grant the City is sponsoring for

Lodge Grass Wastewater Treatment Facility Improvements. Lehr noted this pay app is not for any construction costs; only for equipment purchase and related costs. Greer motioned to approve the Pay Application. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Hurff reported an estimate was submitted by Chavez Sprinklers in the amount of $6,700 to install a sprinkler system in the South Park Project area. He noted that he reached out to three other companies for quotes and did not receive any call backs. Krebs motioned to approve the estimate. Greer seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Lehr reviewed quotes received to replace the copier in the Administrative Office and a copier at the Police Department. The copiers have been budgeted and the two copiers we currently have are failing. He noted Peterson Quality Office covers the County, Hospital, School, etc.; he made the recommendation to move forward with their quote in the amount of $14,416. Hopes motioned to go with Peterson Quality Office. Greer seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

STAFF REPORTS:

Public Works:

Hurff provided a timeline report about the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project; the contractors hit one of the return lines from the screw pump to the digester and cracked the pipe. The following day they were digging in the same area and knocked out the power to the screw pump and the wastewater flowed up out the pipe onto the ground. The incidents were reported as required to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The contractor made repairs and picked up all the contaminated soil and moved it into the drying bed; a sample will be taken and then the dirt will be taken to the landfill.

Hurff provided a report on a letter that was mailed to the water users in the City about the drinking water; adding the results returned within the reporting limit. He noted the Vac Truck is expected to delivered soon.

Finance:

Lehr reported Lodge Grass had a meeting today for their Wastewater Project; they are looking to sign their return to work order. He added there may be a change in the Interlocal Agreement with the City. The City received the second request for funding today from the Pilot Grant and he is expecting the latest draw from the 2019 Rural Development Loan for the Wastewater Treatment Plant project to come in this week.

Police:

Chief Paul George, Jr. reviewed calls for service. There are two candidates that have completed the background process and will be going before the Police Commission. He and Officer Tyler Nedens are currently attending MPAT (Montana Law Enforcement Physical Abilities Test) Proctor in training; they are becoming proctors to help streamline the process to get candidates moved through the MPAT training. Chief George reported the department will be starting night shifts this Thursday.

Legal:

Economic Development:

Tina Toyne reported she received the $1,000 scholarship from the Montana Economic Development Association (MEDA); she will be using the scholarship to attend the Fall MEDA Conference in Polson next month. Toyne reported DestinationiQ visited last week, as part of the Sustainable Tourism Management Plan, it was a great visit with three days of showing them around Big Horn County and sharing the amazing assets we have. She worked with holding interviews for the Visitor Center Request for Qualifications. She and Alex Edwards have been attending the Farmer's Markets encouraging public comment and sharing all the different things they have been working on for Economic Development and the Pilot Tourism Grant. There was a meeting with Cussing Terrell (CTA), for the Infill & Redevelopment, to go over potential housing sites; they brought forward a list of properties they have identified with the City adding a few of their own and they will be organizing a list and getting back to the City on the next steps. The City received feedback from the Department of Commerce for the Economic Development Strategy, CEDS document, that Mike Scholl from Ayres Associates, Inc. had reported on; they are working on the final version. She and Edwards will be attending a Visit Southeast Montana Board Meeting in Baker.

RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

Resolution NO. 2414 – Assessing Lighting District NO.1. Sharpe motioned to approve the resolution. Greer seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Resolution NO. 2415 – Assessing Lighting District NO. 54. Hopes motioned to approve the resolution. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Resolution NO. 2416 – Assessing the Cost of Garbage Disposal. Krebs motioned to approve the resolution. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Resolution NO. 2417 – Assess Unpaid Assessments Against Real Property. Greer motioned to approve the resolution. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Resolution NO. 2418 – Adopting the Final Budget Fiscal Year 2025/2026. Greer motioned to approve the resolution. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion passed. (4/1) Krebs voting Nay.

Resolution NO. 2419 – Taxes/Levies Fiscal Year 2025/2026. Greer motioned to approve the resolution. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Karla Roods voice she wanted to share the City is looking nice with the Police Department and Mr. Martinez. She pointed out he has repeatedly had to go to the same people with the signs; maybe a fine could go into place adding it is spending good resources repeating the work. Krebs noted it is looking better. She voiced she appreciates all they have done. Kenney pointed out the the property where the Crow Tribe stores things. Janelle Enzminger asked about the Western Motel and where they were in the process for the grant they applied for. Mayor Purcell and Toyne both reported they haven't received any information. Riley Ramsey referenced the speed sign on 3rd Street. Chief George noted it was placed as a reminder that you are entering a speed zone; now that school has been started up for about a week their plan is to move it.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Purcell reported Local Government Review Study Commission Meetings are held the third Wednesday of each month, Knudsen noted there is a meeting scheduled for Wednesday, September 3rd at 6:00 p.m. at First Alliance Church. City-County Planning Board Public Hearings for the M&R Developing Variance Request and the Stewart Conditional Use have been re-scheduled to Monday, September 8, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers.

The City of Hardin has the following Job Openings: Full-time position - Police Officer and General Laborer – Landfill and Part-Time position - Building Inspector. Positions are open until filled.

Greer motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:42 p.m. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Joe Purcell

Joe Purcell, Mayor

ATTEST:

Andrew Lehr

Andrew Lehr, Finance Officer/City Clerk

CITY OF HARDIN OFFICIAL SEAL BIGHORN COUNTY, MONTANA

THE COMMON COUNCIL
CITY of HARDIN, MONTANA

COUNCIL MEETING: The Regular Council Meeting for September 16, 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: Several 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 September 2, 2025. Motion seconded by Hopes. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved. Hopes motioned to approve the Public Hearing minutes as written for September 2, 2025. Motion seconded by Greer. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Greer made a motion to approve the claims for September 16, 2025.

	CLAIM No.	Monthly Total
June, 2025	32770	$ 715.85
July, 2025	32871-32872	27,065.50
August, 2025	32771-32776, 32778-32780, 32783, 32785, 32787-32789, 32791, 32798-32823	112,413.67
September, 2025	32777, 32784, 32786, 32790, 32792-32797	494,648.98
Claims Total (Expenditures)		**$ 634,844.00**
August, 2025		**$ 344,793.56**
TOTAL Submitted		**$ 979,637.56**

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

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jim Wedel, resident neighboring property, provided a letter to Council and read the letter aloud regarding the M&R Developing, LLC variance request. He and Mrs. Wedel are property owners neighboring the property located on 1st Street South and West Railway. The letter requests for the variance to be denied. They believe the laws that have determined required distances for the setbacks have established for a reason and variances shortening these distances should not be granted. They commend Mr. Ebert for wanting to build on the property, but feel he should revise his plans to stay within the required setbacks. He read the names of neighboring property owners that signed the letter.

George Toyne noted the gentleman wants to build and develop in our town and voiced the idea to bring up to him to maybe swap a vacant property the City owns with him that he could build on and use that property as a park.

MAYOR:

Mayor Purcell reported the Tourism Group has a survey available that gives the opportunity for individuals to provide their input.

Mayor Purcell reported the Coal Board came to Hardin after their meeting last Thursday. The City, in collaboration with the hospital and Big Horn County, gave them a tour; showed them the projects they helped to sponsor and voiced appreciation for their contributions to the projects.

The City-County Planning Board had new appointments to their board that were made by Big Horn County; Erin McCleary, Taylor Sidwell, and Larry Vandersloot. Mayor Purcell announced the City has two appointments that expire in December; Letters of Interest will be advertised.

Jane Lamb, Tobacco Education Specialist, and Deb French, Public Health Nurse for Treasure County, provided information on Senate Bill 390. French noted electronic devices have been added into the CIAA (Clean Indoor Air Act). She provided signage for businesses to post.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Personnel Policy/City Policy:

Mayor Purcell reported the City has openings for full-time Police Officers, General Laborer – Landfill, and part-time Building Inspector.

Sewer & Water:

Massine reported dirt work is being done at the Wastewater Treatment Plant and the first part of lining the water tank may start this week.

Law Enforcement:

Streets & Alleys:

Espinoza reported Wharton Asphalt paved Peritsa Creek.

Parks & Playgrounds:

Krebs reported the sprinkler lines have been installed at South Park. The cornhole boards and horseshoe pits will be installed soon; wood chips have been installed in the new playground area and the border has been finished and wood chips have been installed in the new playground equipment in Heimat Park. The splash pad company was delayed and are set be here on September 29th. He reviewed what needs to be completed before the gazebo is delivered.

Finance/Landfill:

Greer noted there is an advertisement in the Original Briefs about the landfill canister site being open.

Resolutions & Ordinances:

SPECIAL COMMITTEES:

PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS:

Mayor Purcell reported the City received the City-County Planning Board meeting minutes of June 9, 2025.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: N/A

NEW BUSINESS:

Mayor Purcell reported the City received a recommendation from the City-County Planning Board to approve a Conditional Use Application that was submitted by Douglas and Florence Stewart. The request is to build a pole barn on their property at 7 Watson Drive. Krebs asked if the setbacks were adequate. It was noted it is, the issue is the size of the building. Krebs motioned to approve the request. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Purcell reported the City received a recommendation from the City-County Planning Board to deny a Variance Application that was submitted by Michael Ebert, M&R Developing, LLC. The request is to build a home on the property addressed 506 W. Railroad Street. Ebert provided an updated drawing of the plans. He noted he understands the concerns. He is omitting the request for any changes to a side setback and doesn't need any changes up front; the only thing they are asking for is a rear set back from twenty to twelve feet. He reviewed the plans. Mayor Purcell asked if the original proposal that was denied was for different setbacks than he is proposing now. Ebert noted yes, they are dropping the requests for the change to the side and front setbacks. Mayor Purcell asked Knudsen if this would have to go back before the City-

County Planning Board. Knudsen noted it would; the plans have changed and it was not considered with the new plans. Ebert asked about changing the address. It was noted 911 Emergency Services at the County takes care of addresses. Mayor Purcell noted because of the change in the application he will have to go back and re-apply to the City-County Planning Board with those changes. Greer motioned to deny the variance due to not meeting those requirements. Hopes seconded. Krebs noted he does not think it would be a good idea to trade lots and put a City park there; there are grain trucks, beet trucks, cars flying, etc. Mayor Purcell asked if there was any more discussion or comments about the motion or this request. There were none. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Hurff reported the City was able to get in with the County on the paving of Peritsa Creek Road. Wharton submitted an estimate in the amount of $13,275 for paving a 2" overlay of asphalt; adding the average price for that is around $25 - $30,000. Krebs motioned to approve. Massine Seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Alexandria Edwards, Secretary for the Chamber of Commerce and Project Manager for the City, reported the Chamber created a committee for the depot grant. She has been working closely with Lehr, Tina Toyne, and Rachel Mullen from the Montana Department of Commerce on the grant. Toyne did an onsite visit with Conair Engineering and Wyman Construction after the City posted Request for Proposals and there were not any responses. Wyman Construction has been working with the committee to utilize as much of the $45,000 grant funding as possible to do 18 windows and fix some roofing tiles with a quote in the amount of $63,787. Within the grant the City committed to $9,000; a percentage of that could be in-kind. She has written a letter to Big Horn County to ask for a $9,000 contribution as a match to the City. She reviewed what the original grant included and noted all of those items could not be done within the $45,000. Mayor Purcell noted the grant was sponsored by the City with the Chamber. It was noted that she reached out to five different contractors and only two responded. Knudsen noted part of the issue was with BNSF, and asked if they had communications with them. The City leases the Depot from BNSF and the City leases the property to the Chamber. BNSF wanted the City to buy their insurance etc. Toyne reviewed communication she has had with them. Knudsen asked if they had something in writing with permission BNSF to do this; the project. Toyne noted she does not have it in writing; she will work on that documentation. Krebs asked Knudsen if his opinion is to wait until something is signed from them; wait on this approval. Knudsen noted it is in the best interest of the City to get something in writing from BNSF or their third party that manages the property. He added he encourages for the contactor to carry general liability insurance. Krebs motioned to table until the next meeting. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Lehr provided a review of the Tax Incremental Finance District (TIFD) Annual Report. The Power Plant has been paying their current taxes; adding the new company that took over the data mining company is behind on their obligation. Greer motioned to approve the report. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

STAFF REPORTS:

Public Works:

Hurff reported he received an email from Kylee Macks, with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, reporting they will be doing a site visit to remove pest traps that are placed in the City to test for invasive insects (species); the Vac Truck was delivered by Joe Johnson; and the storage unit company has finished the blacktop on 12th Street. He is working to purchase more of the three-hundred-gallon trash cans from Billings.

Finance:

Lehr reviewed the Event Notice – Continuing Disclosures.

The City received the first State Entitlement for FY 2025-2026 in the amount of $228,230.82. The Montana Main Street Program has finished their review of the Preliminary Architectural Report for the Becker Hotel; they accepted the completion report and the funds in the amount of $45,000 will be distributed to the City. The third request for the Pilot Tourism Grant will be submitted this week in the amount of just over $6,500; currently, through the end of August, the City has requested the total of $14,128.45. The fourth request for the Rural Development Loan for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project was turned in this week for the amount of $391,545; this will cover the second pay application from Northcon Construction company and also the engineering invoices for August. Lehr provided a review of funds that have been committed to street projects from a portion

of revenue that is received in the Capital Improvement Fund and reviewed cash reserve fund balances in the water, garbage and landfill funds per Resolution 2406. He reviewed the second pay application submitted by Northcon Inc. for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project; adding this will go before Council at the next meeting.

Police:

Chief Paul George, Jr. reviewed calls for service and provided a report on arrests that have been made due to public drinking. He announced Officers Jake Kinder and Raymond Longstreth joined the department yesterday.

Legal:

Knudsen reported it has been busy in City Court; he extended a "Thank You" to Chief George.

Economic Development:

RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

Resolution NO. 2420 – Establishing Wages for the Fire Chief and Assistant Fire Chief. Hopes motioned to approve the resolution. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Resolution NO. 2421 – Authorizing the Submission of Funding Applications in Support of the City of Hardin's Capital Improvement Plan. Greer motioned to approve the resolution. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT: N/A

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Purcell announced the following employee anniversaries: Randy Melville, 19 years and LaRicia Smith, 2 years. He reported Local Government Review Study Commission Meetings are held the third Wednesday of each month; the meeting of September 10th has been cancelled.

The City of Hardin has the following Job Openings: Full-time position - Police Officer and General Laborer – Landfill and Part-Time position - Building Inspector. Positions are open until filled.

Espinoza asked Knudsen for an update on the Local Government Review Study. Knudsen reported there was a Community Outreach event two weeks ago; 6-8 community members came and discussed many topics. They are looking at possibly planning another community event.

Greer motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:26 p.m. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Joe Purcell, Mayor

ATTEST:

Andrew Lehr, Finance Officer/City Clerk

CITY OF HARDIN OFFICIAL SEAL BIG HORN COUNTY, MONTANA

THE COMMON COUNCIL
CITY of HARDIN, MONTANA

COUNCIL MEETING: The Regular Council Meeting for October 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, and Antonio Espinoza. Steven Hopes was excused and Jeremy Krebs was not present.

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: Several members of the public

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

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

	CLAIM No.	Monthly Total
July, 2025	32897	$ 170.00
August, 2025	32824, 32835-32836, 32878-32879, 32908-32909	378,163.41
September, 2025	32825-32834, 32837-32838, 32861-32877, 32880-32896, 32898-32905, 32910, 32913-32915	904,238.12
October, 2025	32839-32860, 32906, 32911-32912	13,470.02
TOTAL Submitted		**$ 1,296,041.55**

Massine 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 openings for full-time Police Officers and a part-time Building Inspector.

Sewer & Water:
Massine reported the construction company is digging at the Wastewater Treatment Plant and a company is at the hill tank working on coating the tank.

Law Enforcement:

Streets & Alleys:
Espinoza reported soft spots on Peritsa Creek were dug up and patched; looks good.

Parks & Playgrounds:
Finance/Landfill:
Resolutions & Ordinances:

SPECIAL COMMITTEES:

PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS:
Mayor Purcell reported the City received a newsletter from the Montana Department of Transportation.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Mayor Purcell reported the Chamber of Commerce bid for roof and windows in the amount of $63,787 was tabled pending verification of insurance and permission from BNSF Railroad; adding the city is still working on getting permission. He asked Council if they would approve the bid pending permission and approvals from BNSF so there would not be a delay on the project. Massine motioned to approve the bid while waiting. Greer seconded. Mayor Purcell noted it has been motioned and seconded to approve Lehr reported he attended a Big Horn County Meeting last week; they approved giving the Chamber, through the City, $9,000 to match what the city is putting into it. Knudsen reported he received a proposed interlocal agreement from the County; it will be brought to Council at the next meeting. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mayor Purcell reported the Chamber of Commerce submitted a request for street closure of the 200 Block of Center Avenue and for a portable restroom to be provided on Friday, October 31st 2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. for a Trunk-or-Treat Community event. Sharpe motioned to approve the request. Espinoza seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Police Chief Paul George, Jr. reported the department was officially approved, as of October 1st, for a grant through the state, funded by the Federal Government under the National Highway Traffic Administration, for an additional officer that will be a dedicated traffic officer for traffic enforcement. The primary goal is for DUI's as well as education and outreach at schools and public events, on distracted driving, slowing down speeds and drug and drunk driving. The unit will be called the SHADE Unit, Strategic Highway And Aggressive Driving Enforcement. Chief George reported the grant also approved preliminary breath testing (PBT's, intoximeters) for every officer and the All Traffic Speed Sign. The speed sign message board will be used for traffic enforcement, public information, events etc. The department is also receiving funding for STEP program that will provide funding to the department to bring in additional officers. Lehr asked if it would be an issue requesting funding due to the Government shutdown. Chief George reported he thinks the funding has been distributed adding the items will not be purchased until he hears from the state.

Mayor Purcell reported the first item funded by the grant is the All Traffic Solutions Inc. quote for the speed sign in the amount of $19,424.26. Sharpe made the motioned to approve pending state funding. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Purcell reported the next item funded by the grant is six Intoximeters (PBT's) in the amount of $3,881.94. Espinoza motioned to approve the request. Greer seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Chief Paul George, Jr. requested the approval to purchase five desktop computers in the amount of $3,999.95 Massine motioned to go forward with the computers for $3,999.95. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Purcell requested approval of the Police Academy tuition fee in the amount of $11,750. Chief Paul George, Jr. reported this is the total cost for the Chief School that includes everything except travel; he will personally take care of the travel costs. Sharpe motioned to approve. Greer Seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Purcell reported he is going to be out of town greater than seven days; he is requesting the approval of Council to be out of town for ten days. Espinoza motioned to approve the ten-day vacation. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Lehr reviewed Pay Application #2, in the amount of $347,612.09, that was submitted by Northcon, Inc. for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project. Massine motioned to approve Pay Application #2 in the amount for $347,612.09. Espinoza seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

STAFF REPORTS:

Public Works:

Hurff reported the Splash Pad is done, the foundation is in for the gazebo, and the horseshoe pits and cornhole pits will be done in the Spring. The bathrooms have been closed for the season.

Finance:

Lehr noted the City had a demo with BambooHR software and will be looking at additional demos for comparison. He provided an overview of the software that helps with onboarding employees, managing employee data, recruiting, tracking equipment hours, employee compensation and benefits, offboarding employees, etc. He noted the subscription would cost about $8,700 a year; to offset that he did get the grant management software lowered from $18,000 to $11,000 per year. He provided information on the return on investment; it equates to more than the software costs. He voiced this would be beneficial/cost effective. Massine asked if this would include the Police Department. Lehr noted it would.

Lehr reported the amount of $129,038.11 has currently been expended out of the Land Water and Conservation Fund for the South Park Project; adding additional funds have been set aside for work that has been done that includes hydroseeding, building for the splashpad controls, electrical, and some concrete etc. He provided an overview of remaining funds available for the project.

There was a project update meeting today on the Lodge Grass Project that the City is sponsoring; the engineers are working on an amendment to allow the City to continue receiving and expending the funds until June 30, 2026. He is expecting there to be another memorandum of understanding agreement.

Lehr reported there will be a Public Hearing on Tuesday, October 21st for the Preliminary Engineering Report for the Water Treatment Plant; the City received the Vac Truck; he noted the government shutdown will impact the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project adding Rural Development funding is affected by it.

Lehr reported the Renewable Resource Grant application was submitted for $15,000 to go towards the Capital Improvement Plan. He is currently waiting on guidance from the state and for the application period to open for the Montana Coal Endowment Program (MCEP) grant.

Police:

Chief Paul George, Jr. reviewed calls for service.

Legal:

Knudsen reported things are getting busy in City Court; he appreciates the work they, the Police Department, are doing and provided a comparison to last years' cases.

Economic Development:

RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jose Funke asked the people that are running for re-election what are they going to do different than what they have already done in that position; what are they going to do different. Knudsen addressed Council noting it would be unlawful use of city time to make comments on political positions; they have to do it on their own time. They cannot act as candidates while sitting on Council.

George Toyne asked about the Devers house, that he thought there were some requirements to get it up to code and cleaned up; adding he has not seen any progress on the house and he doesn't know if there may be an agreement or contract. Mayor Purcell noted it will be looked into to see if there is something on file.

Hurff noted he heard Al Sargent on the radio sharing positive comments about the new landfill canister site.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Purcell announced the Community Blood Drive is scheduled for Thursday, October 16th from 1:45 – 5:45 p.m. at First Alliance Church; City Offices are closed October 13th for Columbus Day; the City-County Planning Board Public Hearing for the Gerber Variance Request is scheduled for Tuesday, October 14, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers; and the Local Government

Review Study Commission Meetings are held the third Wednesday of each month in Council Chambers.

The City of Hardin has the following Job Openings: Full-time position - Police Officer and Part-Time position - Building Inspector. Positions are open until filled.

Greer motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:18 p.m. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Joe Purcell, Mayor

ATTEST:

Andrew Lehr, Finance Officer/City Clerk

CITY OF HARDIN OFFICIAL SEAL BIG HORN COUNTY, MONTANA

THE COMMON COUNCIL
CITY of HARDIN, MONTANA

PUBLIC HEARING: Preparing a Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) for the City Water System was opened at 6:30 p.m. by Mayor Joe Purcell.

Present at the hearing were:
Council Members: Steven Hopes, 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 City Attorney Jordan.

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

Mayor Purcell opened the meeting with Public Comment.

Matt Smith, PE, PMP, Senior Engineer with Stahly Engineering & Associates, Inc, reported he is working with David Carleson, PE of AE2S, a Water Engineering Consulting Firm, on the Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) for the City Water System. He noted a PER is needed to apply for a grant. They look at the entire system, water supply, water treatment, and distribution – the storage lift stations. Smith voiced the water system is in pretty good shape. He added the two biggest things he would have recommended were lining the concrete tank and to put mixers in the tank; the lining was just completed and will be certified on in the next week and the mixers have been installed. The system operators are doing quite a bit to keep the water system in pretty good shape. He will cover the existing condition of the water system, alternatives for improvements, improvement recommendations, opinions of probable cost, and where the City can fund the improvements.

Smith reviewed three issues he found in the distribution system: 1. The amount of fire flow around the Hardin High School doesn't meet ISO standards, not a huge deal. Option – extend a water line on Terry Avenue that will get more water pressure to the high school; adding it isn't a crisis. 2. Water storage tanks – the tank is structurally sound and was currently lined. Recommendation – start considering, in the next ten years, building another tank. 3. AC (Asbestos Cement) water mains – the City currently has about ninety thousand linear feet of AC in the system. They are usually fairly brittle; they have exceeded their useful life.

Smith reviewed recommendations, purpose, and costs. 1. Loop the existing main around the high school (about $265,000) and the other is to loop mains on the North side of the interstate and the Industrial area to get looped also. 2. Build a one-million-gallon water tank (about $5.5 million) that he would like to see on the North side of the interstate. His concern is both the five hundred thousand-gallon tanks are connected to one main line; adding the city is not the only one with that issue and provided Laurel as an example. 3. Replace existing AC water mains. He noted there is not an estimated project cost; the recommendation is to go in and replace the AC lines when the City looks at doing street replacements. He added the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is going to force the replacement of lead service lines; the recommendation is to replace water mains at the same time those are replaced. He recommended adding AC line replacement into the Capital Improvements Plan.

Carleson, with AE2S, noted it was great to see the water plant in such great shape; great maintenance. He noted there is not any major deficiencies and reviewed recommendations for: 1. emergency power backup generators for the Water Treatment Plant (WTP) and Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP); $300,000 to $600,000 per site. 2. Filter Media study 3. Electrical gears 4. Sedimentation Basin.

Smith reviewed grants and loans that can be used to fund the project and their terms: Montana Coal Endowment Program (MCEP), Renewable Resource Grant Loan (RRGL), State Revolving Fund (SRF), Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), and the United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development Grant and Loan program. He voiced the system is in really good shape. The City is going through a big infrastructure improvement with the sewer system right now and City staff would like to wait until that project is complete.

Krebs asked about lead service lines in the City. Smith noted the City has some, it is minimal. Krebs asked if there are funding opportunities that don't go off of a target rate, he doesn't think the water users can afford a water hike. Smith noted the City could fund it itself and the RRGL doesn't require a target rate; but it is a small loan. Smith noted there may be other funding sources like HB355. George Toyne asked about street maintenance being tied to pipe repairs. Smith provided the example if a thirty-foot street was being replaced, they will allow up to thirteen feet of water lines to be replaced at the same time; thirteen feet would be paid by MCEP and the remaining would need to be paid by gas tax or other funding. There were questions about the capacity of the infrastructure if more housing were added to the City or if the mental facility or a women's prison were to be built here. Smith noted the City has the ability right now to absorb growth.

There being no further discussion, the Public Hearing adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

COUNCIL MEETING: The Regular Council Meeting for October 21, 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. Clayton Greer 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 ~~Police Chief Paul George, Jr.~~

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

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

Sharpe made a motion to approve the claims for October 21, 2025.

	CLAIM No.	Monthly Total
August, 2025	32916	$ 76.77
September, 2025	32917, 32920-32937, 32939-32942, 32945-32950, 32955-32959, 32961, 32966	110,036.19
October, 2025	32918-32919, 32938, 32943-32944, 32951-, 32954, 32960, 32962-32965	318,808.38
Claims Total (Expenditures)		**$ 428,922.23**
September, 2025		**229,074.49**
TOTAL Submitted		**$ 657,996.72**

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

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jose Funke, resident, voiced his concerns about the Police Department and problems with criminals and drug activity.

MAYOR:

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Personnel Policy/City Policy:

Mayor Purcell reported the City has openings for full-time Police Officers and a part-time Building Inspector.

Sewer & Water:

Massine reported the construction company is working at the Wastewater Treatment Plant and the lining of the hill tank is done and sounds like in a week to ten days it will be back online.

Law Enforcement:
Streets & Alleys:

Parks & Playgrounds:

Krebs provided an update on the South Park Project. The splash pad is complete, due to the weather it has been winterized, and an open house will be scheduled for next Spring. The sprinkler system is installed, hydroseed has been applied to the lawn, and the City Crew prepared the concrete foundation for the pavilion.

Krebs reported park sprinkler systems have been winterized and sprayed for weeds. Trunk or Treat is scheduled for October 31st from 2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Corrina Kirschenmann-Kuntz asked if the City would be able to ask for more money next year for umbrellas at the splash pad. Mayor Purcell noted there may be some funding left from the grant.

Finance/Landfill:
Resolutions & Ordinances:

SPECIAL COMMITTEES:

PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS:

Mayor Purcell reported the City received City-County Planning Board minutes from the meeting of September 8, 2025.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: N/A

NEW BUSINESS:

Mayor Purcell requested a motion on the Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) for the City Water System. Krebs asked if the PER says the City will replace these things. Mayor Purcell reported it is a plan to work forward to apply for grants. Massine motioned to go forward with the PER for the Water Treatment Plant. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Purcell reported the City received a recommendation from the City-County Planning Board (CCPB) to approve a variance request that was submitted by Luke Gerber. The request is to add a carport to the side of his garage at 838 W. 5th street. This would allow the setback of 1 ½ feet instead of 5 feet. Kirschenmann-Kuntz, CCBP Chair, reported the neighbor said that it was okay with him. Krebs motioned to approve. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Knudsen reviewed the Interlocal Agreement between Big Horn County and the City of Hardin for the Funding of Renovations to the Hardin Depot. The City approved funding, $9,000, for the renovations. The County, in addition to the City, will be giving the City $9,000 to administer the funds for the project. Hopes motioned to approve. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Lehr reviewed Pay Application #3, in the amount of $249,909.50, submitted by the Northcon, Inc. for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project. It was noted the amount on the agenda is incorrect; the correct amount is the amount reported by Lehr. Massine motioned to go forward with Pay Application #3 in the amount of $249,909.50. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Purcell reported a request was submitted to purchase Glock weapons and equipment in the amount of $8,746.50 for the police department; this is a budgeted item that was approved during the budget. Krebs noted that during the budget process he brought up opposition; he thinks they should utilize what they have. There was discussion about the current guns vs. the new ones. Hopes made the motion to table until they can get some answers from the Chief even though it was done in the budget. Espinoza noted it was done in the budget and Council did ask him questions. Krebs noted it was brought up in the budget meeting that the ammunition for the guns they have

now are more. Mayor Purcell reported there is a motion on the floor to table and asked if there was a second to that motion. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion passed. (unclear/1). Espinoza voting Nay. Funke asked why the money isn't being used to hire more officers and voiced other concerns. Krebs noted more officers are budgeted. Zimmer asked for a re-voice on the vote; adding she doesn't believe she got everybody. Mayor Purcell voiced there will be a redo of the voice vote to clarify. It was motioned by Hopes and seconded by Sharpe to table the weapons decision to the next meeting. The motion to table was passed by Hopes, Krebs, Sharpe, and Massine. Espinoza voting Nay. (4/1)

STAFF REPORTS:

Public Works:

Hurff reported there were some sink holes and soft spots on Peritsa Creek Road; the contractor lowered the price from $13,000 down to $10,000 on the paving project. The Vac Truck was delivered and is doing a really good job; it is helping the crew get through jobs faster. A Defensive Driving Course scheduled for employees on October 29th that will be presented by Montana Municipal Interlocal Authority (MMIA), the City insurance. UV lights were replaced at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. The welcome sign on Crawford was hit; it will be repaired or replaced. He and Chris Schneider, Landfill Lead, have been working on spec sheets for new dump trucks and also a new compactor or scraper for the Landfill.

Finance:

Lehr reviewed the Quarterly Investment Report for the First Interstate Bank Investment Account: adding the account is healthy.

Lehr reported the City can apply for Montana Coal Endowment Program (MCEP) for the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and has applied for the Renewable Resource Grant (RRG). This is a planning document that helps in receiving funds from State or Federal Programs. Lehr noted the City did start the Capital Reserve Cash Account for water, garbage, and landfill funds; they can only be used for capital purposes.

Lehr reported the government shutdown is affecting Rural Development funding for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project. He reviewed funding that has been requested from MCEP and the Coal Board. He reviewed the terms of the grants.

Lehr noted he reviewed a human resources program at the last meeting. The City reached out to another company; adding this program is cheaper, includes time keeping, and would replace three current applications the city uses now.

Police:

Mayor Purcell reported Chief Paul George, Jr. is in training.

Legal:

Economic Development:

Tina Toyne reported the Economic Development Strategy Report has been received and is available.

RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

PUBLIC COMMENT:

George Toyne asked what triggers a house being deemed as a nuisance house. Knudsen reported it could start with complaints from neighbors and also observations from Police Officers.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Purcell reported on the front table there is a survey from Destination IQ for the Pilot Tourism Grant and also an invitation from Cushing Terrell (CTA) to attend a Stakeholder Engagement Meeting for the new Big Horn County Visitor Information Center scheduled for Tuesday, October 28th from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Big Horn Academy for Pilot Tourism.

Mayor Purcell announced the following employee anniversaries: Moses Gonzales, 47 years; Judge Bob Snively with a combined 9 years as City Attorney and City Judge; Markus Takes the Horse, 10 years; and Angela Zimmer 10 years.

The Local Government Review Study Commission Meetings are held the third Wednesday of each month in Council Chambers. Knudsen reported the meeting for the third Wednesday in October was rescheduled for Wednesday, October 22nd at 5:30 p.m.

The City of Hardin has the following Job Openings: Full-time position - Police Officer and Part-Time position - Building Inspector. Positions are open until filled.

Hopes motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 p.m. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Joe Purcell

Joe Purcell, Mayor

ATTEST:

Andrew Lehr

Andrew Lehr, Finance Officer/City Clerk

CITY OF HARDIN OFFICIAL SEAL BIG HORN COUNTY, MONTANA

THE COMMON COUNCIL
CITY of HARDIN, MONTANA

COUNCIL MEETING: The Regular Council Meeting for November 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, and Jeremy Krebs. Antonio Espinoza 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 Police Chief Paul George, Jr.

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

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS & CLAIMS: Mayor Purcell reported there are two corrections on the minutes of the Council meeting for October 21, 2025. The minutes have Clayton Greer and Chief Paul George, Jr. listed as present; neither were present. Massine motioned to approve the minutes. Hopes seconded. Mayor Purcell noted the corrections are to remove Chief Paul George and Greer from the attendance list. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved. Hopes motioned to approve the Public Hearing minutes as written for October 21, 2025. Greer seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

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

	CLAIM No.	Monthly Total
August, 2025	33035	$ 24,846.50
September, 2025	33036	76,165.90
October, 2025	32967-32971, 32973, 32995-33021, 33023-33031	79,967.37
November, 2025	32974-32994, 33032-33034	6,357.62
TOTAL Submitted		**$ 187,337.39**

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

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jose Funke, resident, voiced his thoughts about the City Police Department and the approved budget for the weapons that are on the agenda.

MAYOR:

Mayor Purcell voiced "Good Luck" to the candidates that are up for election and "Thanks" to the public for voting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Personnel Policy/City Policy:

Mayor Purcell reported the City has openings for full-time Police Officers and a part-time Building Inspector.

Sewer & Water:

Massine reported the construction company is digging at the Wastewater Treatment Plant to get ready for concrete before winter hits and the lining of the hill tank is complete and it is back online as of this afternoon.

Law Enforcement:

Streets & Alleys:

Parks & Playgrounds:

Krebs reported the Splash Pad will be ready in the spring and the first payment will be made for the pavilion. He reviewed how the grants will be used for the project. Krebs reported the sprinklers have been blown out in the parks and the bathrooms have been closed.

Finance/Landfill:
Resolutions & Ordinances:

SPECIAL COMMITTEES:

PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS:

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Chief Paul George, Jr. provided final quotes for the purchase of glock weapons. He reviewed the quote from Oregon Rifleworks in the amount of $8,612 for seven guns with RMR's and lights. He noted the current guns the department has are not cost efficient. He had to purchase two of the glocks already for sending recruits to the academy; they provide rounds for the glock weapons and not for the weapons the department currently has. He reviewed the difference in the cost of the rounds the department currently has to purchase to send a recruit to the academy and reasons why he prefers the glock. Sharpe asked about the buy-back of the current guns. Chief Paul George noted the current guns will be bought back for $550 each. Chief Paul George noted it was presented at the budget meeting and money was put in the budget for that. Krebs noted he voiced opposition to it during the budget season, he thinks the City should use what they have; adding other departments also use the same gun the department currently uses. In his research the most popular one used by police departments is the glock and they are moving to the Tricon Defense sight. There was further discussion about the difference in the guns the department currently uses and the glock. Hopes motioned to approve so the City doesn't have to spend any extra money. Massine seconded. Hopes noted it will be brought up later to make it a permanent weapon with this department. Funke voiced since they approved the glocks; Krebs noted they didn't approve them yet. Funke noted his comment is are we going to see better service. George Toyne voiced they should be more accurate and the Mayor added and overall safer. On a voice vote the motioned passed. (4/1) Krebs voting Nay.

NEW BUSINESS:

Landa Uffelman Lehman, local business owner, requested road closure of the 200 Block of Center Avenue on Saturday, November 29th from 2:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. for the Hardin Christmas Stroll. Additional requests included candles, barriers, and garbage cans. Krebs motioned to approve the requests. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Purcell noted the hydraulic plate compactor will be removed from the agenda; Hurff will look into different quotes and products.

Lehr reviewed quotes received for a Human Resources program from bambooHR, $8,688.12 for the first year with an additional one-time implementation fee of $3,000 and Rippling, $8,336 for the first year. He reviewed the costs, what each software provides, benefits, differences, and implementation time. He noted an HR program will also help streamline the hiring process. He reported both programs provide electronic signatures. The City currently pays for an electronic signature software that would be cancelled; in combination with a decrease in cost for the current grant management program, it will roughly help cover the cost. Lehr recommended approval for bambooHR. Greer motioned to go with the human resources program bambooHR. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Lehr reviewed Pay Application #4, in the amount of $549,942.09, submitted by the Northcon, Inc. for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project. Massine motioned to go forward with Pay Application #4 in the amount of $549,942.09. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Lehr reviewed a request to extend the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding deadline from December 31, 2025 to June 30, 2026 for the Lodge Grass Phase 2 Waste-

water Treatment Facility Improvements Project. Greer motioned to approve the request. Hopes seconded. On a voice the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Purcell reported he visited with Hurff and Mayor Quincy Dabney, of Lodge Grass, about the City of Hardin donating a garbage truck and a vac-con truck to the Town of Lodge Grass to help them with their sewer system and garbage pick-up. Knudsen reported Resolution NO. 2422, on the agenda, is a resolution of intent; statute allows municipalities, counties, and the like to transfer property between each other. The requirements are to do a resolution of intent and publish a notice of the intent to do so in the paper. The approval of the new business item and the resolution of intent will authorize the City to advertise. Upon approval of Council he will have a contract between the City and the Town of Lodge Grass available at the next meeting. Hopes motioned to approve the donation. Greer seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

STAFF REPORTS:

Public Works:

Hurff reported the hill tank is back online. He extended a "Thanks" to Council for making the commitment to Lodge Grass; adding "I really appreciate that".

Finance:

Lehr reported the City received the last pay application that was requested from Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) today, in the amount of $131,026.00, for the Lodge Grass Project. He noted tomorrow he and Robie Culver, of Stahly Engineering, have a review with Montana Coal Endowment Program for the MCEP grant the City received for the Wastewater Project.

Lehr noted Mayor Dabney wanted to say how thankful and appreciative he is of the Council moving forward with the donation.

Lehr reported the City received a letter from Montana Municipal Interlocal Authority (MMIA) notifying the City they will no longer be continuing their Worker's Compensation Program; it will end at the end of this fiscal year. He noted next year the City will have to look for a replacement for worker's compensation purposes. Mayor Purcell provided more details of the situation from his time on the MMIA Board.

Police:

Police Chief Paul George, Jr. reviewed calls for service. He reported everyone at the department worked Halloween night and he reviewed an investigation into graffiti.

Chief Paul George, Jr. addressed things that were voiced during public comment.

Legal:

Knudsen reported he has two things he would like to bring to Council after talking to the Police Chief and members of the city staff. He asked Council if they are interested in having an ordinance drafted prohibiting extended stays in campers. Sharpe recommended a committee meeting, noting he also has other questions about trailers parked on the road. Knudsen reported the second issue is the water code; Title 3, Chapter 3A, Section 19, Rule 18 establishes by ordinance the amount for a deposit when a water account is started. The amount needs to be amended to match the current deposit of $250. The proposed amendment to rule 18 would be to insert the words "as set by resolution" instead of having a dollar amount. A Resolutions or Ordinances Committee meeting was scheduled to be held before the next Council Meeting.

Economic Development:

Tina Toyne reported she has attended trainings, board meeting, and conferences, all focused on strengthening partnerships and advancing the projects the City is working on. She voiced appreciation to the community for sharing their input during public engagement events the City held at the Farmer's Market. City and County officials hosted members of the Coal Board; they were able to see firsthand how their grant funding has helped the area. She attended a Beartooth RC&D board meeting in Roberts and traveled to Billings, MT for their Chamber Community Awards.

Toyne noted her focus has been on the Hardin Depot Project coordinating with BNSF and their insurance providers regarding the improvements to the building; the roof and window repairs are expected to be completed by December 31st. She reported she has been assisting a local business owner in applying for an Agritourism grant, she attended a Southeast Montana board retreat in

Billings, and attended a regular Southeast Montana board meeting in Baker. She noted she was able to attend the Fall MEDA Conference in Polson thanks to the MEDA Growth Scholarship she received. The City is preparing the Montana Mainstreet Grant application that will fund implementation of the Wayfinding Project. The City held a public engagement event to gather input for the Visitor Information Center. She and the Mayor met with Cushing Terrell to discuss the Housing Infill and Redevelopment Project; and the Montana Department of Commerce launched a new statewide branding campaign. Toyne reported the new tourism brand is Montana's Big Horn Country; it is entering its visual identity phase. She reported a QR code has been created that is available to the public to choose a flexible tagline. She read aloud the flexible taglines that are available to choose from.

RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

Resolution NO. 2422 – To Transfer Equipment to the Town of Lodge Grass, Montana. Greer motioned to approve the resolution. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Laurie Tschetter provided information about problems she had with a rental she had provided an eviction notice to and an incident with a vehicle regarding the same rental. She referenced an incident that happened last December in which she noted she was told the City Officer's would not be responding and that she could call Big Horn County. She noted there is absolutely no reason why her truck company is not being used by the City. Knudsen noted when it comes to holdover tenants and eviction, statutorily the City cannot help her. There was further discussion with Tschetter noting that is not what she was asking for assistance for. Knudsen addressed Council voicing the City cannot assist with evictions; the statue specifically says County Sheriff's Office.

Police Chief Paul George addressed the reason why the City Police Department did not respond to the tenant problem that Tschetter spoke about; it is a civil matter that needed to be handled by the Sheriff's Office. He addressed the vehicle incident, her tow company, and the incident that happened last December that she referenced.

Jose Funke voiced his thoughts about the conversation between Tschetter and Chief Paul George.

Ed Clampitt, noted he works for Tschetter and voiced his support for her and his views about supporting a local business.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Purcell City Offices will be closed on Tuesday, November 11, 2025 in Honor of Veterans Day. Letters of Interest to serve on the City-County Planning Board will be advertised soon and the Local Government Review Study Commission Meetings are held the third Wednesday of each month in Council Chambers, time to be determined.

The City of Hardin has the following Job Openings: Full-time position - Police Officer and Part-Time position - Building Inspector. Positions are open until filled.

Hopes motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:19 p.m. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Joe Purcell

Joe Purcell, Mayor

CITY OF HARDIN OFFICIAL SEAL BIG HORN COUNTY, MONTANA

ATTEST:

Andrew Lehr

Andrew Lehr, Finance Officer/City Clerk

THE COMMON COUNCIL
CITY of HARDIN, MONTANA

COUNCIL MEETING: The Regular Council Meeting for November 18, 2025 was called to order at 6:49 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, Jeremy Krebs and Antonio Espinoza.

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: Several members of the public

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS & CLAIMS: Hopes made the motion to approve the Council minutes as written for November 4, 2025. Motion seconded by Greer. On a voice vote the motion passed. (5/1) Espinoza voting nay.

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

	CLAIM No.	Monthly Total
August, 2025	33071	$ 60.00
October, 2025	33039-33060,33062-33068, 33073-33076, 33078-33082, 33084, 33090	697,856.96
November, 2025	33037-33038, 33069-33070, 33072, 33077 33083, 33085-33089, 33091	205,268.64
Claims Total (Expenditures)		**$ 903,185.60**
October, 2025		**260,520.11**
TOTAL Submitted		**$ 1,163,705.71**

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

PUBLIC COMMENT: N/A

MAYOR:

Mayor Purcell reported Alderman Hopes and Alderman Espinoza have agreed to move back to their original committees; Hopes - Streets and Alleys Committee and Espinoza - Law Enforcement Committee.

Mayor Purcell announced Montana Municipal Interlocal Authority (MMIA) put out a notice announcing there will be two vacancies on the MMIA Board of Directors; adding it is open to Elected Officials and Clerks.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Personnel Policy/City Policy:

Mayor Purcell reported the City has filled the Building Inspector position; a combined position of building inspector and a streets employee. The City currently has job openings for full-time Police Officers.

Sewer & Water:

Massine reported the uv system at the Wastewater Treatment Plant went down and is back up and going and the construction company working on Wastewater Treatment Plant Project is getting ready to pour concrete for the basin.

Law Enforcement:

Espinoza reported the police department has had a lot of DUI's. He extended his gratitude for them keeping the streets safe.

Streets & Alleys:

Hopes reported the streets crew is out with the street sweeper and the blade preparing for winter.

Parks & Playgrounds:

Lehr noted the payment for the gazebo will be made this week.

Finance/Landfill:

Greer reported the City of Billing is offering a better discount on the used three-hundred-gallon garbage cans; reducing them from $100 to $50. He recommended for the City to purchase two hundred cans and hire a trucking company, with assistance of the City crew, to facilitate hauling them to the City. Mayor Purcell noted he and Hurff can make a decision if Council wishes to go forward.

Resolutions & Ordinances:

Sharpe reported there was a committee meeting discussing a couple of ordinances Knudsen drafted. The first one is an ordinance amending the water deposit and the second is a draft ordinance for camper storage and camper use on private property. Knudsen will make changes to the camper ordinance; it will be presented at the next meeting.

SPECIAL COMMITTEES:

PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS:

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Hurff noted the hydraulic plate compactor will not fit the excavator; adding the compactor that would go on the excavator would be more around $9,000. Krebs voiced the compactor Hurff spoke about would be a very good buy and would make the job go faster. Hopes noted it and would be safer. There was further discussion about the benefits. The hydraulic plate compactor will be removed from the agenda per Hurff's request.

NEW BUSINESS:

Myrna Lastusky, Project Manager of Beartooth RC&D, introduced Sky Losleben as the new Rural Energy for America Project Manager and Brad Eik as the new Food and Ag Director. She provided information about their scope of work and projects they have worked on this past year. Nan Knight, Finance Director, provided an overview of the Brownfields Program and how it has benefited the County. Lastusky provided information about a Site Selector Tool that Gaurav Thakur, Economic Development Director, has been working on. She provided a pamphlet that has just been completed on the Bozeman Trail.

Krebs motioned to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Hardin and Beartooth RC&D. Greer seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Lehr reported the ClearGov program will create more efficiency in reporting and budgeting. The cost for the first year is $12,630 and the cost for the remainder of this fiscal year (June 30, 2026) is $7,845 plus a one -time set up fee for a total of $9,375. He noted this program will allow him to pull information from the current accounting system and allow department heads to look at their current year budget information and request budget amounts for the upcoming fiscal year. Lehr reviewed additional benefits of the program. Massine motioned to go with ClearGov in the amount of $9,375. Hopes seconded. Krebs asked if the program will pay for itself. Lehr noted that it would. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

STAFF REPORTS:

Public Works:

Hurff reported the concrete footing on the hill tank was completed last week. He provided reports on the following departments: Wastewater Treatment Plant Project: He reported the construction company has shifted to the intake building while they are cleaning up a spill; Water Treatment Plant: The new computers have been installed. Water Distribution: The City is inspecting water lines for lead lines. Streets: They picked

up garbage cans from Billings. The City is working on bids for roof replacement on the water treatment plant. He provided a report on two vehicles that need repair.

Finance:

Lehr reported the City received the $190,000 request from MCEP (Montana Coal Endowment Program) for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project. The City is currently waiting for a request for about $58,000 from the Coal Board and waiting for payment from the State Revolving Fund (SRF) for the payment of pay application number four for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project. The City has begun implementing the new HR program, BambooHR, that was approved at the last meeting; adding it will be beneficial to everyone. Lehr reported the City received $154,547.10 in property taxes for the Tax Increment District. He hasn't currently heard back from Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) regarding the Lodge Grass Project on the change in scope and the budget that Council approved at the last meeting. He reviewed the pay applications for the tank lining. Lehr wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and extended a "Thank You" to all those that served and committed their time to the City; thank you for your service.

Police:

Police Chief Paul George, Jr. reviewed calls for service. He reported they have had approximately twenty-two DUI's over the last sixty days; adding most of them are triple the legal limit. Cory Kenney asked what the procedure is for determining a DUI for marijuana. Chief George reviewed the process.

Legal:

Knudsen reported there is a closed session scheduled at the end of the meeting.

Economic Development: N/A

RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

Ordinance NO. 2025-03 – First Reading: Amending Cash Deposit Amount Required for New Water Service Customers. Krebs motioned to approve the resolution. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Demi Hickman voiced her concern about a personal incident and the Police Department. Knudsen recommended for a legal guardian to contact him.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Purcell announced the following Employee Anniversaries: Joe Connelly, 13 years; Jim Kuntz, 12 years; Jim Seykora, 10 years; and Julie Stieber, 5 years. The Notice of Intent to Transfer Equipment to the Town of Lodge Grass, MT is scheduled to be published in the Big Horn County Newspaper on November 19th and 26th; City Offices are closed Thursday, November 27, 2025 for Thanksgiving Day and will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Friday, November 28, 2025; a Local Government Review Study Commission Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 19th at 5:30 p.m. in Council Chambers; Letters of Interest to serve on the City-County Planning Board are due December 3, 2025; and a City-County Planning Board Public Hearing for the Newcombe and Somes Variance and Public Hearing for the proposed City of Hardin Subdivision Regulations is scheduled for Monday, December 8, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. Corrina Kirschenmann-Kuntz noted Forrest Mandeville, CCPB Planner, will be here for the meetings. The City of Hardin has the following Job Opening: Full-time position - Police Officer.

The Council Meeting Closed at 7:43 p.m. for a CLOSED SESSION – Legal.

The Closed Session began at 7:55 p.m.

Greer motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:01 p.m. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Joe Purcell

Joe Purcell, Mayor

ATTEST:

Andrew Lehr

Andrew Lehr, Finance Officer/City Clerk

CITY OF HARDIN OFFICIAL SEAL BIG HORN COUNTY, MONTANA

THE COMMON COUNCIL
CITY of HARDIN, MONTANA

COUNCIL MEETING: The Regular Council Meeting for December 2, 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, Jeremy Krebs and Antonio Espinoza.

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: Several members of the public

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS & CLAIMS: Greer made the motion to approve the Council minutes as written for November 18, 2025. Motion seconded by Hopes. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved. Hopes motioned to approve the Resolutions or Ordinances Committee meeting of November 18, 2025. Greer seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Greer made a motion to approve the claims for December 2, 2025.

	CLAIM No.	Monthly Total
October, 2025	33101, 33103, 33108 - 33109	$ 5,514.95
November, 2025	33092-33098, 33100, 33102, 33104-33107, 33129, 33132-33158	359,865.45
December, 2025	33110-33128, 33130-33131	2,385.12
TOTAL Submitted		**$ 367,765.52**

Sharpe 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 currently has job openings for full-time Police Officers.

Sewer & Water:
Massine reported the construction company working on Wastewater Treatment Plant Project is pouring concrete and the Water Treatment Plant received an update on their computers.

Law Enforcement:
Streets & Alleys:
Hopes reported the streets crew is putting together garbage cans and blading. Alley Clean-Up is scheduled for January 5, 2026.

Parks & Playgrounds:
Krebs reported the payment has been made for the gazebo for the South Park Project.

Finance/Landfill:
Greer reported Hurff has been looking at specifications for a new loader for the Landfill.

Resolutions & Ordinances:
SPECIAL COMMITTEES:
PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS:

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: N/A

NEW BUSINESS:

Knudsen reviewed the Agreement to Convey Equipment to the Town of Lodge Grass, Montana; a 1992 Ford L800, Jeter Vac-Con Truck and a 2000 Freightliner Garbage Truck. He noted the agreement pairs with Resolution NO. 2423 – To Transfer Equipment to the Town of Lodge Grass, Montana. Massine motioned to approve the agreement. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Hurff requested approval of an estimate received from Five Star Diesel, in the amount of $9,426.47, for repairs on a Chevy Silverado that is used for water leaks etc. Krebs motioned to approve the repairs. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Hurff reviewed three quotes that were received for roof repairs at the Water Treatment Plant, the roof in the back of the plant. There is also a small roof that needs repair. Hurff noted Kirkness Roofing & Exteriors noted they will do a complete tear off and add in the smaller roof for an additional $335.15 for a total of $20,000. Krebs asked if there was money in the budget to do both roofs. Lehr reported there is $24,130 available. Krebs motioned to go with Kirkness Roofing & Exteriors for both roofs. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

STAFF REPORTS:

Public Works:

Finance:

Lehr provided a review of the Lodge Grass project the City sponsors for their Wastewater Treatment Facility. He reported the City is still waiting for final word from the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC); they are reviewing the request to change the scope and budget of the project and to extend the time period to June 2026.

The City previously received about $295,000 from State and Local Infrastructure Partnership Act, HB 355, for the tank lining and mixers. The City has received the tank lining portion of that in the amount of $190,725 and is currently waiting for roughly $30,000 for the mixers. Lehr reported there is a delay in processing the loan draw for the City to receive money to pay the contractor for the Waste Water Treatment Plant Project. Rural Development is a federal program and was furloughed from the government shutdown; the City should receive the payment soon. The City applied for a Montana Coal Endowment Program (MCEP) grant, in the amount of $30,000, to update the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). He added a Community Development Block Grant and Community Technical Assistance Program (CTAP) are other grants the City can apply for. The payment was made to EMB Metal Buildings, LLC for the pavilion for the South Park Project.

Police:

Police Chief Paul George, Jr. reviewed calls for service. He reported the new duty weapons are here and will be issued to the officers when the holsters arrive.

Legal:

Economic Development:

Toyne reviewed projects she has been working on related to tourism development and community planning. She attended the Beartooth RC&D board meeting in Columbus, participated in Zoom meeting focused on the City Sustainable Tourism Management Plan, and she has been involved in conversations regarding the Visitor Information Center Project. Carol Foxe asked about the Visitor Information Center. Toyne, Mayor Purcell, and Lehr provided a review of the purpose of the new center.

RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

Resolution NO. 2423 – To Transfer Equipment to the Town of Lodge Grass, Montana. Greer motioned to approve the resolution. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Ordinance NO. 2025-03 – Second Reading: Amending Cash Deposit Amount Required for New Water Service Customers. Massine motioned to approve the ordinance. Greer seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Ordinance NO. 2025-04 – First Reading: Storage and Use of Campers, Recreational Vehicles and Other Temporary Dwelling Units in The City. Cory Kenney and Corrina Kirschenmann-Kuntz voiced concerns about the ordinance. Krebs motioned to approve the ordinance. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jonathan Noteboom, resident, asked if the concrete area at South Park could be filled with water for ice skating before the gazebo is put in. Mayor Purcell reported the plan is to have the gazebo installed by the end of this year. Noteboom voiced having a place in town would be safer and the community would have somewhere to ice skate and have something to do. Mayor Purcell noted it is something that can be looked into. There were several recommendations for locations, what other cities have done, and input from others that they would also like to have an ice-skating rink.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Purcell reported Business Licenses are due by February 1, 2026. The City Employee Christmas Party is scheduled for Thursday, December 11, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. No business will be conducted, but there is a possibility for a quorum to be present. The Local Government Review Study Commission Meetings are held the 3rd Wednesday of each month in Council Chambers; City-County Planning Board Letters of Interest are due December 3, 2025; City-County Planning Board Public Hearing for the Newcombe and Somes Variance and a Public Hearing for the proposed City of Hardin Subdivision Regulations are scheduled for Monday December 8, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers; and the Hardin Community Blood Drive is scheduled for Dec. 11th 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the First Alliance Church located at 934 1st St West. The City of Hardin has the following Job Opening: Full-time positions for Police Officers. Mayor Purcell reported the Oaths of Office for Elected Officials will be held at the end of the meeting on December 16, 2025.

Greer motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 p.m. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Joe Purcell, Mayor

ATTEST:

Andrew Lehr, Finance Officer/City Clerk

CITY OF HARDIN OFFICIAL SEAL BIG HORN COUNTY, MONTANA

THE COMMON COUNCIL
CITY of HARDIN, MONTANA

COUNCIL MEETING: The Regular Council Meeting for December 16, 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, Jeremy Krebs and Antonio Espinoza.

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

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

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS & CLAIMS: Hopes made the motion to approve the Council minutes as written for December 2, 2025. Motion seconded by Sharpe. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved. Greer motioned to approve the Closed Meeting minutes as written for November 18, 2025. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Greer made a motion to approve the claims for December 16, 2025.

	CLAIM No.	Monthly Total
October, 2025	33168, 33178-33179	$ 154,149.07
November, 2025	33160-33167, 33169-33172, 33174, 33176, 33181-33182, 33184,33198	83,261.17
December, 2025	33159, 33173, 33175, 33177, 33180, 33183, 33185-33196, 33199	151,938.15
TOTAL Submitted		**$ 389,348.39**

Sharpe 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 opened up the position for a Utility Billing Clerk/Cashier and there are openings for full-time Police Officers.

Sewer & Water:

Massine reported Dax Simek, with Stahly Engineering, is here to provide a report on the Waste Water Treatment Plant Project.

Law Enforcement:

Espinoza reported the City Police Department went live on a new recording and dispatch system today; officers are now issuing printed warnings and citations.

Streets & Alleys:

Hopes reported the streets crew has been hauling gravel to the Landfill and down to the river and clearing streets.

Parks & Playgrounds:

Krebs reported the City is currently waiting to hear back on a date for the pavilion installation.

Finance/Landfill:

Greer reported he and Hurff have been discussing the placement of the gravel on the existing road to the ash pit.

Resolutions & Ordinances:

SPECIAL COMMITTEES:

PETITIONS & COMMUNICATIONS:

Mayor Purcell reported the City received the City-County Planning Board (CCPB) meeting minutes from October 14, 2025.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: N/A

NEW BUSINESS:

Mayor Purcell reported the City received a recommendation from the City-County Planning Board to approve a Variance Application that was submitted by Joseph Newcombe and Nicholas Somes. Approval of the recommendation would allow the existing homes to be rebuilt in the same footprint, subject to a condition that the property must remain in a single ownership and not be divided. Sarah Somes, relative of Mr. Somes, noted the property they own has two homes, the insurance does not cover one of the homes, and the variance would need to be approved so the structure can be rebuilt if something happens to them. Krebs pointed out all the properties within one hundred and fifty feet are not on the list as required, that he is not against it, and he is not sure it can be approved if it wasn't followed. Knudsen voiced if any persons were missed they need to be notified and given the opportunity to present their position on it to the CCPB. Hopes motioned to table the application until everybody in the neighborhood within one hundred and fifty feet is notified and to send it back to the CCPB. Espinoza seconded. Nickolas Somes, by virtual meeting, noted everyone was notified that was requested and their intentions are to leave the properties existing as is, but to continue to upgrade them. The mortgage lender was not willing to refinance based on the fact that if something happened to one of the buildings, they would not be covered by insurance to be rebuilt. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Purcell reported the City received a recommendation from the City-County Planning Board to approve the Love's RV Park Final Plan. He noted Hurff has looked over it to make sure the recommendations were met. Hurff reported it appears everything is taken care of. Hurff reported they never responded to that. Greer motioned for approval. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion passed 5/1. Hopes voting Nay.

Mayor Purcell reported the City did not receive any Letters of Interest for the Mayor appointment. A notice for Letters of Interest will be reposted.

Krebs motioned to re-appoint Corrina Kirschenmann-Kuntz, as the Council appointment, to the City-County Planning Board for a term ending December 31, 2027. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Dax Simek, Stahly Engineering, provided an update on the Waste Water Treatment Plant Project. The construction company will be taking a holiday break. The contractors schedule still shows completion by March 2027. Simek noted he is working on the semi-annual report for the EPA that is due January 1st.

Mayor Purcell reviewed the Addendum to Professional Services Contract between the City of Hardin and Stahly Engineering Associates, Inc. The addendum would renew the contract an additional three years. Hopes motioned to accept the contract. Sharpe seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Lehr reviewed Northcon, Inc. Pay Application #5 in the amount of $485,674.57 for the Waste Water Treatment Plant Project. Massine motioned pay the pay app in the amount of $485,674.57. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Sharpe motioned to approve the Northern Cheyenne Landfill Agreement. Massine seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

STAFF REPORTS:

Public Works:

Hurff reported the City tied in with the County to have work done on Peritsa Creek Road. The contract was originally set for $13,275; also included in the contract the City was to purchase the mix from Knife River Heights. He noted he missed this in the fine print when he presented it to Council. He noted Knife River will be billing in the amount of around $20,945. Krebs noted the total price of milled off and re-surfaced with new asphalt was $33,000. Hurff reported Wharton Asphalt charged $10,000 of the original $13,000; the new total would be more around $30,945. Krebs voiced it is a decent price. Hurff noted he will provide the official invoice to Council once received.

Finance:

Lehr reported the City received the second installment of the Quarterly Entitlement payment in the amount of $228,230.82. The City has received all the State and Local Infrastructure Partnership Act funding requested amounting to $218,137.50. Last week the City received November property taxes that included the TIFD in the amount of $114,973.19; which was remitted to US Bank. The City received the first reimbursement from the Selective Traffic Enforcement Program Grant (STEP), for the Police Department, in the amount of almost $700. Lehr reviewed funds that remain in the two Rural Development (RD) Grants the City received in 2019 for the Waste Water Treatment Plant Project (WWTP). The remaining funds in the first grant will be used to pay the next contractors pay app and the remaining amount due will be paid from the second RD grant received in 2019. He attended the quarterly Coal Board meeting last week; member Hal Fuglevand extended a "thank you" for hosting them last month and showing them projects the board has funded. The Coal Board did approve extending the grant that partially funds the WWTP Project. He provided a review of the Lodge Grass project the City sponsors for their Wastewater Treatment Facility. Lehr reported there will be public meeting held on January 13, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. at the County Courthouse regarding unpaid taxes owed by Rocky Mountain Power for their simply assessed taxes. They have a proposal to the City, County, and Department of Revenue to settle on the amount that is owed, considerably less than what they originally owed.

Police:

Legal:

Knudsen reported there is not a meeting scheduled tomorrow night for the Study Commission; the next meeting will be held the third Wednesday in January.

Knudsen voiced it has been a pleasure serving with the Mayor and Massine over the past several years, he appreciates it.

Economic Development:

Toyne reported she attended the annual 500 Club Meeting; she was asked to attend on behalf of the Council. Members will be asked to contribute the annual $500 membership fee. They will elect officers at their next meeting; scheduled for Monday, January 12th at 12:00 p.m. They are looking to see Council represented at that meeting.

RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

Resolution NO. 2424 – Adopting the 2024 Eastern Montana Region Hazard Mitigation Plan. Krebs motioned to approve the resolution. Greer seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

Ordinance NO. 2025-04 – Second Reading: Storage and Use of Campers, Recreational Vehicles and Other Temporary Dwelling Units in The City. Sharpe motioned to approve the ordinance. Espinoza seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jose Funke voiced he was there to serve the City with court documents; adding they can discuss it with their attorney; no court hearing yet, but it is in the District Court 22.

***Swearing in – Oaths of Office*:** Mayor Purcell performed the Oaths of Office for Mayor – Elect Riley Ramsey, Alderman Steven Hopes, Alderman Clayton Greer, and Alderman - Elect George Toyne.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Purcell reported Bryan Wilson has been with the City for four years; there is not a Local Government Review Study Commission Meeting for December, the next on will be held the 3rd Wednesday of January in Council Chambers. Request for Proposals (RFP) for General Contractor/Construction Manager for the Visitor Information Center is due December 23, 2025 by 3:00 p.m. City Offices will be closing at 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 24, 2025 and will be closed Thursday, December 25, 2025 for Christmas Day & Thursday, January 1, 2026 for New Year's Day. Alley Clean-Up & Christmas Tree pick – up is scheduled for Monday, January 5, 2026. Business and Pet Licenses are due by February 1, 2026. Letters of Interest to serve on the City-County Planning Board are due January 9, 2026. A Public Hearing for the proposed City of Hardin Subdivision Regulations is scheduled for Tuesday, January 6, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers. The City of Hardin has the following Job Openings: Full-time positions for Police Officers and Utility Billing Clerk/Cashier.

Greer motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 p.m. Hopes seconded. On a voice vote the motion was unanimously approved.

~~Joe Purcell,~~ Mayor

CITY OF HARDIN OFFICIAL SEAL BIG HORN COUNTY, MONTANA

ATTEST:

Andrew Lehr, Finance Officer/City Clerk