

March 24, 2026
Harlowton City Hall

A regular meeting of the Harlowton City Council was held on March 10, 2026. The meeting opened at 7:00pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Runner asked for comments from the public on items not on the agenda.

Mayor Runner wants to clarify the steps for action items on the agenda. He explained that per Roberts Rule of Order there is discussion prior to the motion for the Council, discussion from the public, call for action (motion), another discussion of the motion if necessary, and call for action (vote).

The minutes of the February 24, 2026 Council meeting were moved to approve by Councilmember Susan Beley. Seconded by Councilmember John Billadeau. Motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Library: Councilmember Susan Beley reported the library was holding “hot cocoa and hardbacks” as she was reporting. That is a chance to exchange hardback books with others in the community. The Summer READing fundraiser is Sunday, March 15th from 2-4pm. It will be an ice cream social with carnival games. There is also a quilt raffle.

Tree Board: Councilmember Vicki Paddock reported on the Tree Board meet Monday night. Diane Jones was elected Chair. They are working on Arbor Day and the inventory list. They also need more board members.

Ordinance: Ordinance committee did not meet.

OLD BUSINESS:

West End Lots: Mayor Runner reported that Logan Holmquist is still interested in the lots. Mayor Runner asked that it be taken off the agenda while they are working on advertising, letters to the family, and/or filing with the court. There was concern that it would be forgotten.

Councilmember Beley moved to remove it from the agenda until April 28th. Councilmember Frank Brouillette seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Utility Bills: Mayor Runner explained there was an error in billing this month and the public will see a little higher bills next month. This is not a rate increase; this is just correcting the error.

Water/Sewer Rates: Mayor Runner reported we have a meeting with Bobbie Schular from Montana Rural Water on March 18th to do a rate analysis for both water and sewer. With the projects the city has undertaken, and the fact that increases did not happen at that time. And with the loans we have, the city needs to reevaluate where we are at with our rates. Mayor Runner is also going to the Central Montana Water Board and asking them to decrease our EDUs from 642 to 616 which is a more accurate accounting. This will save the city about \$12,000 a year. He is meeting with them on Wednesday.

NEW BUSINESS:

Resolution 2026-12 Budget Amendment FY 2024-25: Mayor Runner explained that the Financial people from Montana League of Cities and Towns are working on our Annual Financial Report. We cannot make any changes for FY 2024-25 until they finish with that. We are hoping to postpone this until April 14, 2026. Councilmember Beley moved to postpone this resolution. Councilmember Kyle Lawson seconded this motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2026-13 Budget Amendment FY 2025-26: Mayor Runner explained this budget amendment is needed to move money into the correct accounts for the purchase of the 2016 Chevrolet 1500 pickup. Councilmember Brouillette moved to approve this resolution. Councilmember Paddock seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Substitute Librarian Wages: The Library Board would like to raise the substitute librarian's wages from \$12.34/hour to \$15.00/hour. Library Director Tina Peterson and Clerk Anita Leach checked the budget and there is money in the budget for this change. Councilmember Billadeau moved to approve this wage change. Councilmember Lawson seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Speed Limit by the New Hospital: Mayor Runner explained that Montana Department of Transportation had requested the city approve/disapprove the new speed limits by the new hospital on Highway 191 and Highway 12. The Council discussed this and agreed they approve the speed limits. They would like the MDT to look in to putting in a turn lane for the hospital.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR REPORT: Public Works Director Bob Schuchard reported that there has been a lot of wind damage. The wind damaged the fence down around the baseball field and the pool house door. There are a lot of branches down and one tree in the latest windstorm. The pumps at the lift station are getting a workout with all the flushable wipes going through them. The company is going to take one pump and then the other and go through them. Not only are flushable wipes being found, but now plastic water bottles have been found flushed down toilets and into the system. They have looked in to getting a grinder to be ahead of the pumps, but it is about \$100,000. Councilmember Beley wondered if we can get solar floating aerators for the ponds.

REPORT OF THE CLERK-TREASURER: Clerk-Treasurer Anita Leach reported she is attending Budget Training in Helena Thursday, March 12th. She received the scholarship for tuition for Clerk Institute in May. The city is sponsoring an e-Waste and recycle event June 4th. Posters will be up as soon as we get the list of items the e-Waste people will and won't take. We are working on getting a shredding company to come to town also.

MAYORS REPORT: Mayor Runner reported he went to the Executive Forum March 4-6th. He said there was a lot of good information.

REPORT OF ATTORNEY: City Attorney Brent Brooks said he is working on the park use agreement. He currently has 8 misdemeanor/criminal cases pending.

REPORT OF WCSO: Deputies Lucas Verreth and Kylie Mahood were both in attendance. They said they've worked several crashes, a couple DUIs. They also said some got recertified in Basic Life Support. Mayor Runner reported that Deputy Mahood worked in Animal Control and has given us several ideas for our Animal Ordinance.

ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING: Solid Waste/Dump (Republic Services Prices) Public Hearing Rate Increase April 14th meeting, Park Use agreement for April 14th meeting, West End Lots for April 28th meeting.

CLAIMS:

Councilmember Frank Brouillette made a motion to approve claims 22624-22662. Councilmember Susan Beley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:46pm.

Council Members Present: Susan Beley, Kyle Lawson, Charley Bennett (via zoom), Vicki Paddock, Frank Brouillette, John Billadeau

Council Members Absent: None

City Office: Mayor Jack Runner, City Clerk-Treasurer Anita Leach, Public Works Director Bob Schuchard, City Attorney Brent Brooks

Public Present: Charlotte Runner, Dane Elwood, Julie Berg, Julie Wojtowick, Alex Thompson, Tye Miller, Lucas Verreth, Kylie Mahood

Jack Runner, Mayor

Anita Leach, Clerk-Treasurer