



**MINUTES
CITY OF LAUREL
PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2025**

The Public Works Committee meeting was called to order at 6:00pm on Monday, September 15, 2025, by Chair Heidi Sparks.

Members Present: Heidi Sparks- Chair, Jodi Mackay - Vice Chair, Irv Wilke, Jessica Banks, Richard Herr, Shawn Mullaney

Others Present: Matt Wheeler- Public Works Director, Michele Braukmann- City Attorney

Public Input: None

General Items:

1. Approval of Minutes from August 18, 2025. Irv made a motion to approve the minutes of August 18, 2025. Motion was seconded by Jodi. Motion carried 6-0 to approve the minutes.
2. Emergency Call Out Report- Report attached
 - i. Only 4 callouts since the last meeting, 2 were from last Thursday due to the lightning storm and issues at the water and sewer plants.
3. KLJ Report- Report attached
 - i. Water Tank Funding project- KLJ did put in for another grant last week
 - o Jodi asked about the tank inspections- Matt stated these started today and will be here all week. Inspection will include the water plant and tanks
 - o Have been having issues with intake, seems like something is blocking. Can clear when backflushing but think this might be moss that needs to be cleared
 - ii. Bills with KLJ have dropped dramatically- currently only working on a few things for Love's, the school district, and stormwater routing with CHS
 - iii. Jodi asked about the sidewalks going in by the new school
 - o Matt stated there will be a path added with millings in front of the vacant lot on E 8th to Alder as a wide shoulder
 - iv. Attorney Braukmann mentioned that it looks like there might be litigation coming forward over the City Council's decision on the Love's sign variance request. This came as a FOIA request, but looks like it could move to a request for re-decision through the court system

New Business:

4. Discussion of committee bylaws
 - i. This item came up from a request from a committee to put something before council. This highlighted the fact that most of the committees don't have a lot of structure in place on the role of the committee.
 - ii. Goal is that we have discussion following the legal memorandums that Attorney Braukmann provided. She will then put together a draft of bylaws to bring back to the committee at the October meeting for review and approval.

- iii. Consensus of the committee is to formalize the authority of the committee with being able to make recommendations for items to be presented to the council at large.

Old Business:

Other Items:

Announcements

Next Meeting will be Monday, October 20, 2025, at 6:00 pm in Council Chambers.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm

Emergency Overtime Callout List

1-1-25

TO

7-1-25

Maintenance Shop 406-628-4773

City Dispatch 406-628-8737

Response Code	X In Column Not accepting Overtime / NA = Not Available / Y = Responding / B=Phone Busy														
Employee Name	Telephone														
Shop Callout															
Kevin Budge															
Jay Hatton															
Keith Guy															
Wade Spalinger															
Brandon Gonzales															
Aaron Fox															
Joel Barnhardt															
Bridger Fornier															
Krista Gauslow															
Anthony Woodard															
Distribution		7-4	7-13	7-25	8-19	9-7	9-10								
Justin Baker			y3	2	Y3	y3	2								
Kevin Hoffman			1	na1	1	na1	Y3								
Daniel Nauman			2	y3	2	na2	1								

Elm Lift Station 628-7773 Village Lift Station 628-5918 Dial 9 after tone to acknowledge alarm

Wastewater Treatment Plant-628-6474

Autodailer- 628-4866

Response Code	NO= In 1st Column Not accepting Overtime / NA = Not Available / Y = Responding														
Employee	Telephone	7-20	7-28	9-10											
Thomas Henry		y4	3	2											
Cindy Caswell		1	Y4	3											
Corey Nicholson		2	1	Y4											
Norman Stamper		3	2	1											

Water Treatment Plant 628-4410

Response Code	NO= In 1st Column Not accepting Overtime / NA = Not Available / Y = Responding														
Employee	Telephone														
HP Nuernberger															
Dylan Ceaser															
Josh Sawyer															
Sam Waggoner															
Joe Waggoner															
TJ Worbel															
Daniel Waggoner															

Matt Wheeler Cell# 208-1885 8 One Call Locate - 1-800-424-5555 (City Job # 25663)

Kurt Markegard Cell# 860-5785 Hm 208-2356 SCHESSLER 628-4221 HESTON 281-0811

Mayor 406 633 3809 Dwight Ace Electric 406 697 2037

Travis Ace Electric 406 850 0612

MDU 1-800-638-3278 / MDT 252-4138

Pace Construction 252-5559 (sewer backups)

SanitarySystemOverflows call DEQ withing 24 hours at406-444-3080

Call Out - Date and Incident Location

6-5 H2O BREAK S 8TH ALL NIGHT	7-20 alarms sewer plant	
6-7 walmart lift	7-25 h2o shutoff	
6-7 walmart lift	7-28 STORM DAMAGE SEWER PLANT	
6-16 FLOODING	8-19 LEAK FIRE DEPT	
6-17 H2O TURN ON	9-7 emergency locate	
6-23 water plant problems	9-25 SEWER PLANT POWER OUT	
6-30 update	9-25 LIFT STATION POWER OUT	
7-13 village lift problems		



City of Laurel Project Status Update **September 15th, 2025**



Laurel Water Tank Funding Project

(KLJ # 2304-01608)

Reason for Project: Existing City water Tank needs to be recoated on the inside and can't happen until City has a backup storage supply. They also have needs for upgrades to their upper pressure zones. See previously approved Water System PER and City of Laurel CIP. This project looks at funding opportunities and provides grant writing services from multiple sources

Project Scope: To research funding alternatives, create packages for submittal, and assist City in finding monies for completing the future water tank and upper pressure zone improvements for the City of Laurel

Current Status:

- Task Order Signed by City on 12/13/23
- Met with EDA to discuss Funding on 1/9/24
- Letter of Support from CHS Received
- Letter of Support from Wood's Powergrip
- Submittal uploaded to EDA on 7.11.24.
- Multiple calls back/forth with EDA to clarify information including need for the project, priority for the city, provision of procurement documents, and verification of budget.
- EDA reviewed mid October and are waiting for notice of award - All grants must be awarded (or declined) and contracted/obligated by 12/31/2024.
- As of 12/13/24, EDA is still telling us they don't have an update.
- Notified of EDA denial of funding on 1/7/2025
- KLJ reviewing other opportunities for funding
- Meeting between City and KLJ reviewing denial and other funding sources on 1/16/2025
- As of January 2025 City has spent \$16,917.76 of the \$56,000 budget for funding applications.
- WWC has submitted this project for a BRIC grant
- KLJ has submitted an Application for consideration of Congressionally Directed Spending on behalf of the City on 3/26/25
- Public Disclosure Form completed and sent onto Senator Sheehy's office on 5/5/25. Awaiting response.
- Tank Inspection being performed in September

5th to 7th Sewer Line Replacement

(KLJ # 2304-01231)

Reason for Project: Refurbishment of an 8" sewer line between 7th Avenue and 6th Avenue and a 10" sewer line between 6th Avenue and 5th Avenue in the alley way between 1st Street and Main Street in Laurel, Montana. The existing sewer line experienced several collapses



City of Laurel Project Status Update **September 15th, 2025**



last year.

Project Scope: To replace approximately 363 lineal feet of 8" and 383 lineal feet of 10" and will include the update of 3 manholes and associated surface replacement.

Current Status:

- Work Order Signed by City in September 2023
- Survey scheduled for week of October 16th, 2023
- Base Drawing created and Working on preliminary design
- Preliminary Plans and EEOC sent to City on 12.14.23
- DEQ Approval received on 2.20.24
- Project began advertising on 3/14/24 and bid open will be 3.28.24
- Project awarded to Western Municipal Construction
- Construction started on June 10th 2024
- Sewer Line fully installed and accepted on 7/10/24
- Change Order Requested by City personal put together with cost estimate and submitted to City on 7/10/24
- City reviewed CO#1 cost and elected not to pursue
- Contractor achieved Substantial Completion on 8/1/24
- Contractor achieved Final Completion on 8/20/24
- Release of Retainage request submitted along with reconciliation Change Order
- Warranty walkthrough to occur in August of 2025
- Responded to a call from resident at 15 6th Ave. about storm water in their yard. Review and interview with property owner revealed that storm water is a historic issue at this location 10+ years of documented issues. A small amount of runoff is entering their yard from the alley way but majority is coming from the house and garage. City will install an asphalt berm adjacent to where the water appears to be running off the asphalt into their property.
 - Asphalt berm installed
- Warranty Walkthrough was held on Thursday September 4th, 2025. The following items required correction
 - Crack in the concrete on the approach at the Alley's intersection with 5th Ave.
 - Crack in the concrete on the east approach at the Alley's intersection with 6th Ave.
 - Crack in the concrete on the southwest approach at the Alley's intersection with 6th Ave.
 - Pothole in the asphalt asphalt just south of the Culligan building between 6th and 7th Avenues.
 - Gravel section between 6th and 7th Avenues is rutted.

Laurel Planning Services (KLJ #1804-00554)

Reason for Project: KLJ has been retained to provide City of Laurel planning services as needed.



City of Laurel Project Status Update September 15th, 2025



Project Scope: Planning services may include; subdivision, zoning, development, floodplain hazard management, miscellaneous reviews and other related work. KLJ will prepare staff reports, recommendations, and attend meetings upon request.

Current Status:

- Zoning Regulations Update.
 - Draft regulations sent to City April 11th, 2023
 - Zoning Map approved by Commission on August 16th, 2023
 - Staff Recommendation to Zoning Commission to occur on December 20th, 2023
 - Back to Planning Board Meeting on 1/17/23
 - City to publish advertisement for Public Hearing
 - To be presented at Workshop on 5/7/24
 - Adoption occurred at Council on 5/14/24
 - 2nd Reading and Public Hearing on 5/28/24.
 - Regulations adopted by Council. Minor wording and numbering corrections needed.
 - Wording and numbering corrections made and submitted to Kurt 7/3/24
 - Waiting on final comments from Kurt
- Love's Annexation
 - Annexation Application received 3/25/24
 - Revised Package received by City on 5/2/24
 - City requested KLJ to review on 7/12/24
 - KLJ's review sent back to City on 7/18/24
 - Love's submitted design for review on 12.10.2024
 - Engineering review and comments sent back on 1.10.25
 - Love's addressing comments
 - Love's 2nd package received 2.10.25 (still awaiting updated reports)
 - Love's 2nd package reviewed and sent back on 2/21/25
 - Love's has been approved by the City on 3/20/25
 - Love's Water & Sewer Extensions were approved by DEQ on 4/10/25
- Cherry Hills 4th Filing
 - City has received notice that Cherry Hills 4th Filing is requesting a Pre-Application Meeting
 - Pre-Application meeting was held on April 16th at City Hall.
 - Package submitted to City on 9/5/25



City of Laurel Project Status Update
September 15th, 2025



Other Notes and Information

Other potential projects have been identified during recent conversations between City staff and KLJ. City Public Works staff and KLJ task leaders meet monthly to discuss current and future projects. As these are tentative, the timing and extent of KLJ's services are TBD, unless noted otherwise.

Anticipated FY25 Projects

- Bulk Water Sales Station
 - Project task order to be started in early 2025
- West 7th Street Water and Valve Replacement
 - Updated Task Order and Budget sent to City on 6/27/2025

Legal Memorandum

TO: City Mayor, CAO Kurt Markegard, and Public Works Committee

FROM: Michele Braukmann, Civil City Attorney

DATE: 15 September 2025

RE: Issues Related to Public Works Committee Governance, Bylaws, and Rules of Procedure

I. Matters Governed by Law (No Input Needed)

1. Open Meetings & Public Records

- Mont. Code Ann. §§ 2-3-101 et seq. (Open Meetings Law).
- Mont. Code Ann. §§ 2-6-1001 et seq. (Public Records Act).
- All meetings must be noticed, open to the public, and minutes maintained.

2. Ethics & Conflicts of Interest

- Mont. Code Ann. §§ 2-2-101 et seq. (Ethics in Government).
- Requirements for disclosure of conflicts, abstention from voting, and ethical conduct.

3. General Municipal Authority

- Mont. Code Ann. §§ 7-1-4141 et seq. (municipal powers).
- Laurel Charter/Code provisions delegating authority from Council to committees.

4. City Council Oversight

- Committees function as advisory bodies to the City Council unless expressly delegated decision-making authority by ordinance or resolution.
- Final policy authority rests with the Council.

II. Information Needed from the Public Works Committee

1. Purpose and Scope

- Defined mission of the Public Works Committee.
- Scope limited to infrastructure (streets, water, sewer, stormwater) or broader facilities.
- Clarify advisory only vs. delegated authority.

2. Membership Structure

- Total number of members (Council, staff, citizen members).

- Qualifications or expertise required.
- Appointment process (Mayor/Council or other).
- Length of terms and staggering for continuity.
- Rules for vacancies and removal.

3. Officers and Roles

- Election of Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary.
- Duties of each officer (agenda, meeting facilitation, minutes, Council liaison).
- Frequency of officer elections.

4. Meetings and Procedures

- Regular meeting schedule (monthly, quarterly).
- Location of meetings.
- Standards for special meetings.
- Quorum standards.
- Voting method (voice, roll call, ballot).
- Adoption of Robert's Rules or simplified procedure.

5. Reporting and Communication

- Expectations for reports to City Council (frequency, format).
- Any liaison roles with other boards or departments.

6. Ethics Beyond Statutory Minimum

- Additional disclosure requirements or recusals (e.g., prohibiting bidding on City contracts).

7. Recordkeeping

- Who is responsible for minutes.
- Procedures for posting agendas and minutes.

8. Amendment and Review

- Process for amending bylaws (committee majority subject to Council approval).

- Frequency of mandatory review (3–5 years).

III. Deliverable

Once the committee provides input on the above points, the City Attorney's Office will:

- Draft a set of bylaws tailored to the Public Works Committee, consistent with Montana law and Laurel Municipal Code.
- Present the draft for committee review and recommendation.
- Submit final version for City Council approval.

Legal Memorandum

TO: City Mayor, CAO Kurt Markegard, and Boards/Committees

FROM: Michele Braukmann, Civil City Attorney

DATE: 10 September 2025

RE: Issues Related to Board/Committee Governance, Bylaws, and Rules of Procedure

I. Introduction

The City of Laurel has several boards, commissions, and committees that operate under authority delegated by state statute, the City Charter, or City ordinance. Many of these entities currently lack formally adopted governing documents, such as bylaws, rules of procedure, or policies. This memorandum explains the importance of establishing such documents, the legal risks associated with their absence, and recommendations for action.

II. Importance of Governing Documents

1. Compliance with Law:

- Montana statutes (e.g., Mont. Code Ann. §§ 2-3-101 et seq. [Open Meetings Law]; §§ 7-1-4141 et seq. [municipal powers]; §§ 2-2-101 et seq. [ethics in government]) require public bodies to conduct business transparently and fairly. Without bylaws or rules, there is an increased risk of unintentional violations.

- Clear rules ensure meetings are noticed, quorum requirements are met, and decisions are legally defensible.

2. Consistency and Transparency:

- Governing documents provide a consistent framework for how meetings are conducted, officers elected, and records maintained.

- They promote transparency to the public, reduce confusion among members, and ensure equitable treatment of all participants.

3. Authority and Scope:

- Boards and committees are limited-purpose bodies. Without written rules, there is a danger of exceeding delegated authority or taking action inconsistent with City Council

intent. Governing documents clarify scope of authority, reporting obligations, and relationship to the Council.

4. Risk Management:

- Inconsistent practices or procedural irregularities can expose the City to legal challenges, including claims under Montana's open-meeting statutes or challenges to the validity of board decisions. Written bylaws and procedures mitigate these risks.

III. Recommended Components of Governing Documents

At a minimum, each board or committee should adopt bylaws or rules of procedure that address the following:

1. Purpose and Authority:

- Statement of purpose, statutory or ordinance authority, and advisory vs. decision-making functions.

2. Membership:

- Appointment process, qualifications, terms of office, and rules regarding vacancies and removal.

3. Officers:

- Chairperson, vice-chairperson, and secretary roles; election or appointment process; duties of each.

4. Meetings:

- Regular meeting schedule, procedures for special meetings, notice requirements, quorum standards, and voting rules.

- Compliance with Montana's Open Meetings Law and Public Records Act.

5. Rules of Order:

- Adoption of parliamentary procedures (e.g., Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, or simplified rules).

6. Ethics and Conflicts of Interest:

- Incorporation of Montana's statutory ethics standards (Title 2, Chapter 2, MCA).

- Procedures for disclosure of potential conflicts and recusal.

7. Recordkeeping and Reporting:

- Minutes preparation and approval.

- Reporting requirements to the Mayor or City Council.

8. Amendment and Review:

- Procedures for amending bylaws and a requirement for periodic review (e.g., every 3–5 years).

IV. Recommendations

1. Council Directive:

The City Council should adopt a resolution directing all City boards and committees to draft and submit governing documents for approval within a specified period (e.g., 90–120 days).

2. Template Development:

The City Attorney's Office can provide a model set of bylaws to promote consistency and compliance with Montana law.

3. Training:

Once adopted, provide orientation or training for board and committee members on their responsibilities under the bylaws, open meetings, public records, and ethics laws.

4. Ongoing Oversight:

Require annual reporting from each board/committee to the Council to ensure ongoing compliance with adopted rules.

V. Conclusion

The adoption of bylaws and rules of procedure is essential for the lawful, transparent, and efficient operation of the City's boards and committees. Governing documents protect the City from legal challenges, provide clarity to members, and enhance public confidence in the City's decision-making processes.

I recommend that the City Council direct each board and committee to prepare and adopt governing documents, guided by a standard template developed by this office, and subject to Council approval.