

MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF LAUREL

June 24, 2025

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Laurel, Montana, was held in the Council Chambers and called to order by Mayor Dave Waggoner at 6:30 p.m. on June 24, 2025.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Thomas Canape	Jessica Banks
Michelle Mize	Irv Wilke
Casey Wheeler	Jodi Mackay

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT:

Richard Klose	Heidi Sparks
---------------	--------------

OTHER STAFF PRESENT:

Michele, Braukmann, Civil City Attorney
Brittney Harakal, Administrative Assistant
Kelly Strecker, Clerk/Treasurer
Jason Gonzales, Building Inspector
Matt Wheeler, Public Works Director

Mayor Waggoner led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag.

MINUTES:

Motion by Council Member Wilke to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of June 10, 2025, as presented, seconded by Council Member Mize. There was no public comment or Council discussion. A vote was taken on the motion. All six Council Members present voted aye. Motion carried 6-0.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- Fire Monthly Reports - May 2025
- Beartooth RC&D Correspondence

COUNCIL DISCLOSURE OF EX PARTE COMMUNICATIONS: None.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Mayor Waggoner opened the public hearing and asked Staff to present the item.

Mayor Waggoner opened the floor for public comment and stated that copies of the rules governing the public hearing were posted in the Council chambers.

The Public Works Director briefly reviewed the reasons why the rate increases are necessary. Approximately 1.5 years ago, the auditors noted that the City needed to review its rates. It has been 10 years since the City last raised rates.

Mayor Waggoner asked three (3) times if there were any proponents. There were none.

Mayor Waggoner asked if there were any opponents.

Council Member Wilke received a text message from Lance Graham, 1023 12th Avenue. Mr. Graham noted that there may be a need for a water rate increase, but every dollar would need to be used solely for water and sewer infrastructure. He also noted the need for more customers to raise more revenue. He is concerned that everything will turn brown and ugly due to the increased costs.

Maryanne O'Connell, 719 3rd Avenue, stated she has lived in Laurel for five years. She just received a bill for sewer service for \$120; she was threatened with having her water turned off. She has lived in four states and has never had a water bill this high before. She is not a big user of water.

Mayor Waggoner read the attached submitted public comment.

Mayor Waggoner stated that he would not have Staff respond to questions as there were none.

CONSENT ITEMS:

- **Claims entered through June 20, 2025.**
A complete listing of the claims and their amounts is on file in the Clerk/Treasurer's Office.
- **Approval of Payroll Register for PPE 6/8/2025 totaling \$279,250.12.**
- **Council Workshop Minutes of June 3, 2025.**
- **Council Workshop Minutes of June 17, 2025.**

The Mayor asked if there was any separation of consent items. The Claims and Payroll Register were removed from the Consent Agenda.

Motion by Council Member Mize to approve the consent items as amended, seconded by Council Member Mackay. There was no public comment or Council discussion. A vote was taken on the motion. All six Council Members present voted aye. Motion carried 6-0.

CEREMONIAL CALENDAR: None.

REPORTS OF BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS:

- Budget/Finance Committee Minutes of June 10, 2025.
- Library Board Minutes of January 14, 2025.
- Library Board Minutes of February 11, 2025.
- Library Board Minutes of March 11, 2025.
- Emergency Services Committee Minutes of May 19, 2025.
- Public Works Committee Minutes of May 19, 2025.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (THREE-MINUTE LIMIT): None.

SCHEDULED MATTERS:

- **Appointment of Jason Gonzales as the Building Official.**

Motion by Council Member Canape to approve the Mayor's appointment of Jason Gonzales as the Building Official, seconded by Council Member Wilke. There was no public comment or Council discussion. A vote was taken on the motion. All six Council Members present voted aye. Motion carried 6-0.

- **Motion to allow Council Member Sparks to be absent from the City of Laurel for more than ten days. (LMC 2.12.060)**

Motion by Council Member Banks to allow Council Member Sparks to be absent from the City of Laurel for more than ten days (LMC 2.12.060), seconded by Council Member Wilke. There was no public comment or Council discussion. A vote was taken on the motion. All six Council Members present voted aye. Motion carried 6-0.

- **Appointment of Gary Blaine to the Laurel Airport Authority for a five-year term ending June 30, 2030.**

Motion by Council Member Mackay to approve the Mayor's appointment of Gary Blaine to the Laurel Airport Authority for a five-year term ending June 30, 2030, seconded by Council Member Wilke. There was no public comment or Council discussion. A vote was taken on the motion. All six Council Members present voted aye. Motion carried 6-0.

- **Appointment of Richard Klose to the Cemetery Commission for a two-year term ending June 30, 2027.**

Motion by Council Member Wheeler to approve the Mayor's appointment of Richard Klose to the Cemetery Commission for a two-year term ending June 30, 2027, seconded by Council Member



Mize. There was no public comment or Council discussion. A vote was taken on the motion. All six Council Members present voted aye. Motion carried 6-0.

- **Appointment of Ken Olson to the Cemetery Commission for a two-year term ending June 30, 2027.**

Motion by Council Member Mize to approve the Mayor's appointment of Ken Olson to the Cemetery Commission for a two-year term ending June 30, 2027, seconded by Council Member Wilke. There was no public comment or Council discussion. A vote was taken on the motion. All six Council Members present voted aye. Motion carried 6-0.

- **Appointment of Tom Canape to the City/County Planning Board for a two-year term ending June 30, 2027.**

Motion by Council Member Banks to approve the Mayor's appointment of Tom Canape to the City/County Planning Board for a two-year term ending June 30, 2027, seconded by Council Member Mize. There was no public comment or Council discussion. A vote was taken on the motion. All six Council Members present voted aye. Motion carried 6-0.

- **Appointment of Richard Herr to the City/County Planning Board for a two-year term ending June 30, 2027.**

Motion by Council Member Wheeler to approve the Mayor's appointment of Richard Herr to the City/County Planning Board for a two-year term ending June 30, 2027, seconded by Council Member Wilke. There was no public comment or Council discussion. A vote was taken on the motion. All six Council Members present voted aye. Motion carried 6-0.

- **Resolution No. R25-40: A Resolution Of The City Council Authorizing The Mayor To Execute A Memorandum Of Agreement By And Between The City Of Laurel And Yellowstone City-County Health Department, D/B/A Riverstone Health.**

Motion by Council Member Mize to approve Resolution No. R25-40, seconded by Council Member Mackay. There was no public comment or Council discussion. A vote was taken on the motion. All six Council Members present voted aye. Motion carried 6-0.

- **Resolution No. R25-41: A Resolution Of The City Council Authorizing The Mayor To Execute An Independent Contractor Service Contract With True North Contracting.**

Motion by Council Member Canape to approve Resolution No. R25-41, seconded by Council Member Wheeler. There was no public comment or Council discussion. A vote was taken on the motion. All six Council Members present voted aye. Motion carried 6-0.

- **Resolution No. R25-42: A Resolution Approving An Increase To The City Of Laurel's Water And Wastewater Rates And Charges To Become Effective On July 10, 2025.**

Motion by Council Member Mackay to approve Resolution No. R25-42, seconded by Council Member Wilke.

The City needs to construct a new reservoir. Our current reservoir is the only functioning one we have. It was built in 1968. We do need to take this reservoir down to do internal repairs. Building a new reservoir is expensive. The increase in the rates will allow the City to build the reservoir. The City also has aging water lines and valves that need to be replaced.

The Clerk/Treasurer briefly reviewed the operation of an enterprise fund. Enterprise funds have strict uses for those funds. The City must maintain sufficient revenue to meet its bond covenants. Water rates have not increased since 2015. The costs associated with providing water have increased substantially over the past decade. One example is that the cost of chlorine has increase by 150%.

A vote was taken on the motion. All six Council Members present voted aye. Motion carried 6-0.

- **Ordinance No. O25-01: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 12.28 (Park Rules And Regulations) And Repealing Chapter 12.32 (Trees And Boulevards) Of The Laurel Municipal Code. (First Reading)**

Council Member Wilke noted an error in the number of board members.

Motion by Council Member Wilke to table Ordinance No. 025-01 until the next Council cycle, seconded by Council Member Mize. There was no public comment or Council discussion. A roll call vote was taken on the motion. All six Council Members present voted aye. Motion carried 6-0.

ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA:

Both the claims and Payroll Register will be on the next consent agenda.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS (ONE-MINUTE LIMIT): None.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION: None.

MAYOR UPDATES:

Mayor Waggoner reminded the public of the board, committee, and commission positions the City is still looking to fill.

UNSCHEDULED MATTERS:

- **Resolution No. R25-43: Resolution Of City Council Approving The Performance Bond Provided By Love's Travel Stops & Country Stores, Inc. As Principal And The City Of Laurel As Surety.**

The City has received the performance bond from Love's for the infrastructure improvements they will be implementing. The City must accept the performance bond for this process to proceed.

It was questioned if all the improvements can be installed for the cost of the performance bond. It was further questioned if this was a cost to the City. It was clarified that the performance bond covers the cost of the improvements if they are unable to fulfill their obligations. This is not a cost to the City.

Motion by Council Member Wilke to approve Resolution No. R25-43, seconded by Council Member Mackay. There was no public comment or Council discussion. A vote was taken on the motion. All six Council Members present voted aye. Motion carried 6-0.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Council Member Mize to adjourn the Council meeting, seconded by Council Member Wilke. There was no public comment or Council discussion. A vote was taken on the motion. All six Council Members present voted aye. Motion carried 6-0.

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 7:07 p.m.


Britney Harakal Administrative Assistant

Approved by the Mayor and passed by the City Council of the City of Laurel, Montana, this 8th day of July 2025.


Dave Waggoner, Mayor

Attest:


Kelly Strock, Clerk/Treasurer



Brittney Harakal

From: Laurel MT <laurel-mt@municodeweb.com>
Sent: Saturday, May 31, 2025 1:24 PM
To: Brittney Harakal
Subject: Robert Mann

Submitted on Saturday, May 31, 2025 - 1:24pm

Submitted by anonymous user: 174.45.227.198

Submitted values are:

Name Robert Mann
Address 320 2nd Ave., Laurel, Mt
Public Comment I don't believe you on the need for water and wastewater rate increases! If you are going to build more reservoirs, or install new water and sewer lines show me when and where. Maybe then rate increases would make more sense!
Email

The results of this submission may be viewed at:

<https://cityoflaurelmontana.com/node/16092/submission/3181>