



Montana's Sunrise City

115 2nd Street S.E., Sidney, Montana - 406-433-2809

City Council Regular Meeting 5/18/26

May 18, 2026 6:30 PM

City Council meetings are held in a hybrid format, allowing both in-person and Zoom participation. Councilmembers will attend in person unless remote attendance is necessary. Consistent with the Montana Constitution's Right of Participation and Right to Know, the City is committed to open and accessible meetings. Public participation via Zoom or phone is available using the information below:

Zoom Link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/7130805898?pwd=tJpmtgBdGbsjBXS0EAU50ANb4u7h3l.1&omn=83837880415>

Call: 1-346-248-7799 **Meeting ID:** 713 080 5898 **Passcode:** 4332809

1. Call to Order

Mayor Norby called the regular meeting to order at 6:30pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was stated by all present.

3. Aldermen Present

Christensen, Larson, Kauffman, DiFonzo, Rasmussen (via Zoom). Absent: Buxbaum.

4. Correction or Approval of Minutes

a. May 4th, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion was made to approve.

Motion made by Alderwoman Christensen, Seconded by Alderwoman Larson.

Voting Yea: Alderman Kauffman, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderwoman Christensen, Alderwoman Larson

5. Public Comment/ Visitors

Your opportunity for the public to address the Council on items not included on the agenda, no action will be taken during this time.

Brittany Peterson, Director of the Richland County Health Department, and Sammy Abel, AmeriCorps member, presented information regarding the upcoming Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response (CASPER). They explained the assessment is conducted every

four to five years to gather information regarding community health needs and public emergency preparedness.

Sammy Abel explained that volunteers would go door-to-door conducting surveys beginning June 9, 2026, and that the information gathered would be used to assist with the Community Health Improvement Plan. The assessment also assists the Health Department with maintaining public health accreditation status. Volunteers will work in teams consisting of a Health Department representative and a community volunteer. Training, food, and refreshments will be provided for volunteers.

Aiden Rasmussen raised concerns regarding pedestrian crosswalk countdown timers and visibility of stop signs obstructed by parked commercial vehicles. Council discussed contacting the Montana Department of Transportation regarding crosswalk timing concerns and requested additional information regarding the obstructed stop sign location.

Others Present: James Falcon (Sidney Heald, via Zoom), Jody Wells (the Roundup), Evelyn Gonzales, Shannon Wicks, Stacy Fischer, Kelly Burke, Loren Kutzler, Tom Kalil (City Attorney, via Zoom), Stephanie Ridl (Sidney Parks Supervisor).

a. Sidney Chamber of Commerce: America 250 Celebration-Permission for Parade and Veteran's Park Celebration & Pillar Memorial

Shannon Wicks, Executive Director of the Sidney Area Chamber, provided an update regarding the planned America 250 celebration activities scheduled for July 4 and July 5, 2026.

Ms. Wicks explained that the event would begin with a parade through downtown Sidney and continue at the Richland County Fairgrounds with carnival rides, food vendors, activities, a truck and tractor pull, and fireworks. She also discussed the July 5 remembrance activities planned at Veterans Memorial Park, including a community church service, barbecue, and dedication of the Veterans Memorial Pillars project.

Ms. Wicks explained that the pillars would represent each branch of the military, including Space Force, and would include plaques and QR codes linking visitors to information recognizing Richland County veterans. Discussion also occurred regarding lighting, long-term maintenance, vandalism prevention, and future expansion opportunities in Veterans Memorial Park.

Council discussed the proposed parade route, use of Veterans Memorial Park, and the Veterans Memorial Pillars project. Public Works Director Hintz discussed coordination regarding electrical infrastructure and irrigation concerns associated with the project.

Motion was made to approve the parade route, use of Veterans Memorial Park, and authorization to proceed with the Veterans Memorial Pillars project.

Motion made by Alderman DiFonzo, Seconded by Alderman Kauffman.

Voting Yea: Alderman Kauffman, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderwoman Christensen, Alderwoman Larson

b. MonDak Heritage Center-Closing of Street for Arts in the Park

Nikki Bailey-Will with the MonDak Heritage Center addressed the Council regarding the upcoming Arts in the Park event scheduled for June 27, 2026. She requested approval to temporarily close Fifth Street Southwest near Veterans Memorial Park during the event to accommodate activities, including a small car show associated with the event.

Council discussed the request and Public Works indicated no concerns with the temporary street closure.

Motion was made to approve the temporary street closure request.

Motion made by Alderwoman Larson, Seconded by Alderwoman Christensen.

Voting Yea: Alderman Kauffman, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderwoman Christensen, Alderwoman Larson

6. Public Hearing

Nothing

7. Public Hearing

Nothing

8. Mayor Norby

Mayor Norby reported that Richland County Commissioners had enacted a county-wide fire ban effective at midnight on May 19, 2026. He explained that fireworks restrictions had not yet been determined and that additional discussions would likely occur in mid-June depending on weather conditions.

Council discussed campfires, grilling restrictions, and the City's authority regarding potential fireworks restrictions within city limits.

9. City Council Comments

Alderwoman Rasmussen discussed concerns raised by residents regarding speeding near West Side School, particularly during school pickup and drop-off times. Discussion occurred regarding existing yield signs, traffic patterns, and possible future review by the Public Safety Committee.

10. Committee Meeting Work

Budget and Finance – Chairman Christensen – DiFonzo, Buxbaum, Skinner

Public Works – Chairman DiFonzo – Larson, Christensen, Harris

Public Safety – Chairman Buxbaum – Rasmussen, Kauffman, Creek

a. Budget and Finance Committee: May 12th, 2026 Meeting Report

Alderwoman Christensen reported on the May 12, 2026 Budget and Finance Committee meeting.

b. Budget and Finance Committee: Conflict of Interest Policy and Form

The Committee recommended approval of the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Policy and Form.

Motion was made to approve the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Policy and Form.

Motion made by Alderwoman Christensen, Seconded by Alderman DiFonzo.

Voting Yea: Alderman Kauffman, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderwoman Christensen, Alderwoman Larson

c. Budget and Finance Committee: Public Works Operations Manager Job Description

The Committee recommended approval of the Public Works Operations Manager Job Description with updates discussed during committee review. Discussion occurred regarding succession planning and internal advancement opportunities.

Motion was made to approve the Public Works Operations Manager Job Description.

Motion made by Alderwoman Christensen, Seconded by Alderman DiFonzo.

Voting Yea: Alderman Kauffman, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderwoman Christensen, Alderwoman Larson

Voting Nay: Alderwoman Rasmussen

d. Budget and Finance Committee: Assistant Public Works Director Job Description

The Committee also recommended approval of the Assistant Public Works Director Job Description as part of long-term succession planning efforts.

Motion was made to approve the Assistant Public Works Director Job Description.

Motion made by Alderwoman Christensen, Seconded by Alderwoman Larson.

Voting Yea: Alderman Kauffman, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderwoman Christensen, Alderwoman Larson

e. Budget and Finance Committee: Public Works Director Job Description

The Committee recommended approval of the Public Works Director Job Description.

Motion was made to approve the Public Works Director Job Description.

Motion made by Alderwoman Christensen, Seconded by Alderwoman Larson.

Voting Yea: Alderman Kauffman, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderwoman Christensen, Alderwoman Larson

The Committee reported that the proposed Employee Handbook revisions, Drug and Alcohol Policy updates, and FY26-27 payroll recommendations were tabled to allow additional Council review and discussion prior to formal recommendation. Councilmembers were encouraged to review the materials and provide feedback prior to the next committee meeting.

11. Chief Administrative Officer Update/ Report

None

12. Department Head Comments/ Reports

City Attorney Kalil reported there were no major legal matters to discuss at this time.

Police Chief Kraft reported no items for discussion.

Public Works Director Hintz reported that the Meadow Village stormwater project was progressing and discussed upcoming street patching work planned for several rough streets.

a. Website ADA Accessibility Updates

Interim Clerk/Treasurer Lange reported that the City website had been updated to include ADA accessibility features for visually impaired and hearing-impaired users. She demonstrated the accessibility functions available on the City website, including font adjustments, contrast changes, and accessibility assistance tools.

Interim Clerk/Treasurer Lange also demonstrated a new searchable feature allowing users to ask questions directly within documents and receive summarized responses.

13. Unfinished Business

14. New Business

a. Richland County Commissioner Update: Declaring and Defining Stage One Fire Restrictions

Mayor Norby discussed earlier in the meeting the Richland County Commissioner Update: Declaring and Defining Stage One Fire Restrictions.

b. B&B WO #12-Shop Cabinets and Countertops \$9,012.00 (SLIPA Grant)

A motion was made to approve B&B WO #12-Shop Cabinets and Countertops \$9,012.00 (SLIPA Grant).

Motion made by Alderman DiFonzo, Seconded by Alderman Kauffman.

Voting Yea: Alderman Kauffman, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderwoman Christensen, Alderwoman Larson

c. Reynolds Market Conditional Use Permit for Electronic Digital Sign

Public Works Director Hintz presented the Reynolds Market Conditional Use Permit request for a new electronic digital sign. The Zoning/Board of Adjustments had reviewed and recommended approval of the permit.

A motion was made to approve the Reynolds Market Conditional Use Permit.

Motion made by Alderman Kauffman, Seconded by Alderwoman Christensen.
Voting Yea: Alderman Kauffman, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderwoman Christensen, Alderwoman Larson

d. MDT TA Final Agreement-22nd Ave Project

Council reviewed the final Transportation Alternatives Agreement related to the 22nd Avenue project. Discussion occurred regarding whether the trail improvements would utilize asphalt or concrete, with Council expressing preference for concrete installation due to maintenance concerns associated with older asphalt pathways.

Motion was made to approve the MDT Final TA Agreement for 22nd Avenue.

Motion made by Alderman DiFonzo, Seconded by Alderwoman Larson.
Voting Yea: Alderman Kauffman, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderwoman Christensen, Alderwoman Larson

15. Consent Agenda

Motion was made to approve claims and building permits.

Motion made by Alderman Kauffman, Seconded by Alderwoman Larson.
Voting Yea: Alderman Kauffman, Alderwoman Rasmussen, Alderman DiFonzo, Alderwoman Christensen, Alderwoman Larson

a. Claims to be approved: \$185,252.17

Intermediary Claims: none

b. Building Permits to be approved: City 2026-50, 2026-51, 2026-52, and 2026-54

16. Adjournment

at 7:15pm.

Meeting Guidelines

- We ask that all participants be respectful and courteous.
- Please direct comments to the Council as a whole.
- When speaking, please state your name for the record.
- Be mindful of others by keeping comments concise and avoiding repetition.
- The presiding officer may guide speaking time to help the meeting run smoothly.
- Disruptive behavior may result in removal from the meeting.