

**A REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING OF THE LEWISTOWN CITY COMMISSION
ON SEPTEMBER 21, 2026, WHICH WAS HELD AT THE CENTRAL MONTANA
COMMUNITY CENTER AND STARTED AT 7:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Day called the meeting to order.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Day asked everyone to stand and say the Pledge to the Flag.

ROLL CALL

Present were Commissioners: Bowser, Buehler, Day, Hewitt, Robertson, Shaver, and Warren.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Day stated that without objection and based on the corrections the minutes from the August 31, 2026, special meeting and the September 8, 2026, meeting are approved.

COURTESIES

There were none.

PROCLAMATIONS

There were none.

BOARD AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner Bowser reported the Ordinance Committee met on September 16th and received a draft of the preliminary zoning ordinance for review. There will be a lot of opportunities for public comments on the ordinance and review by the committee.

Commissioner Bowser reported the Library Board met in the afternoon on September 16th. The board reviewed the county funding for the Library, and the Library Director will present at the October 6th committee of the whole.

Commissioner Robertson reported the Public Works committee met on September 11th. The following topics were discussed; the new Public Works Director, invasive snail concerns, weed management through the County weed district, and utility extensions for future development. It was suggested that there should be an early meeting of snowplowing staff to prepare for winter operations. City Manager Phelps explained the plan for the property at Fourth Ave and Janueax, which is to demolish the building this fall and allow the site to settle over the winter.

Commissioner Buehler reported that the Central Montana Foundation meeting is September 22nd.

Commissioner Day reported the Park and Recreation Board will meet on Wednesday, October 7th at 7 pm at the Civic Center. A tour of the renovated weight room is planned.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

City Manager Phelps reported on the following items:

The new Public Works Director Jordan Brusio was in attendance and was introduced. He has been here about a week and expressed his appreciation for the community.

City staff continue to work on several grants for different areas. The Library's Preliminary Architectural Report is underway. The design consultants were in town recently to walk through the Library. The consultants evaluated the system within the Library and conducted some 3D printing of the Library.

The work on the Downtown Master Plan continues to progress. The consultants are reviewing previous documents and will meet with a group of stakeholders later this week.

The consultants continue to work on the amendments to the zoning code. The 1st draft of the ordinance is ready and has been given to the ordinance committee for review.

Upcoming activities include drag races and continue Charlie Russell Choo Choo outings.

The fall soccer program has started and there are more than 130 participants and games are Tuesdays and Thursday at 5:30 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT – non-agenda items :

There were none.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Buehler made the motion to approve the consent agenda and commissioner Bowser seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The consent agenda was the acknowledgment of the claims that have been paid from September 1, 2026, to September 17, 2026, in the amount of \$95,974.61.

***REGULAR AGENDA – Resolutions, Ordinances & Other Action Items:**

1. Discussion on code enforcement process.

City Manager Phelps explained this item arose from the Ordinance Committee's concerns about enforcement of existing and proposed ordinances. The responsibilities for the following positions were reviewed: Code Enforcement, Animal Control Officer, Community Development Officer/Building Inspector, Planner, and Fire Marshal. The following enforcement areas were discussed: building and zoning codes, community decay, nuisance weeds, restricted parking, animals, fire codes and coordination with state and county programs for noxious weeds and junk

vehicles. There was discussion regarding concerns about unresolved complaints, inconsistent enforcement, and limited follow up with complainants. Commissioner Bowser commented that there does not seem to be any follow-through and there are no teeth behind the ordinances. Commissioner Bowser further commented she would like to see improvement in communication for those residents who submit complaints. City Manager Phelps explained that currently there is one full-time code enforcement officer supervised by the Police Chief. The enforcement is primarily driven by complaints. City Manager Phelps further explained that the snow related parking enforcement is shared by code enforcement and police officers as assigned by the Police Chief. There was discussion regarding the review of older ordinances, particularly community decay and looking at improving the definition and clarifying enforcement procedures. Commissioner Day commented that when talking to constituents and people in the community they have a very negative opinion regarding code enforcement. Commissioner Day reported that several of the Commissioners have received letters regarding cats and dogs and there seems to be a general feeling that things are not being enforced. City Manager Phelps commented that different ordinances and violations have different notice and correction periods. City Manager Phelps reported that a draft civil infraction ordinance will be brought forward after a City Attorney is hired. Commissioner Buehler suggested the Commission consider adopting enforceable ordinances and considering a more proactive enforcement. Commissioner Shaver stated his concerns about additional regulation, consistent application and uncertainty about the future City Court situation. Commissioner Hewitt asked whether residential parking permits could address parking concerns near the new apartments between Seventh and Eight streets. City Manager Phelps explained that type of permit would require an ordinance change and noted the apartment developer had indicated additional parking might be provided. Commissioner Day clarified that this agenda item concerned the enforcement process and that no ordinance was being adopted. Commissioner Day informed citizens there is an ordinance committee meeting that is being held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 11 am at City Hall.

2. Discussion and action on approving an electrical business license for Force Electric Inc

City Manager Phelps explained this is a business application for Force Electric Inc. City Manager Phelps stated this is a new electrical business located in Lewistown and all of the necessary documents have been received and reviewed. Commissioner Buehler made the motion to approve the electrical business license for Force Electric Inc and Commissioner Bowser seconded the motion. Commissioner Day asked for comments from the audience and Commission. There being none, the question was called or and the City Clerk took a roll call vote with all being in favor of the motion.

CITIZEN'S REQUESTS

Mr. Louis Harrell explained that they bought property up off Roundhouse Road and their property line goes $\frac{3}{4}$ across the road. Mr. Harrell would like to know why he is paying taxes on that piece of land. City Manager Phelps explained that upon review of the plat it is very clearly marked as a private access easement and not a public access road. City Manager Phelps explained the City does not determine property assessments. City Manager Phelps suggested

they go to the Department of Revenue regarding the property assessment and the possibility of protesting their taxes.

COMMISSIONER'S MINUTE

Commissioner Buehler welcomed the new Public Works Director.

Commissioner Robertson requested a formal proclamation review process. Commissioner Robertson would like to see the proposed written proclamation distributed to the Commissioners at least one meeting before approval.

Commissioner Shaver welcomed the new Public Works Director. Commissioner Shaver requested that a Commission representative be involved in future City Attorney interviews.

Commissioner Day thanked the City Manager and City Clerk for their work on the budget and the funding updates.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Day adjourned the meeting.

Dated the 21st day of September 2026.

Loraine Day, Commission Chairman

ATTEST:

Nikki Brummond, City Clerk