

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MOUNTAIN HOME, ELMORE COUNTY, IDAHO,  
HELD ON April 8<sup>TH</sup>, 2025, AT 5:00 P.M.

The Council of the City of Mountain Home, Elmore County, Idaho, met at the Mountain Home City Hall Chambers, 160 South 3<sup>rd</sup> East, Mountain Home, Idaho on April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025. A quorum was established with, Councilman Harjo, Councilwoman Wirkkala, Councilman Brennan, Councilwoman Garvey and Mayor Sykes being present.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

1) Pursuant to Idaho Code Section 74-206(1)(b) - to consider the evaluation, dismissal, or disciplining of, or to hear complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member, or individual agent.

Councilwoman Garvy made the motion to enter into Executive Session pursuant to Idaho Code 74-206(1)(b) and 74-206(1)(f) at the beginning of the meeting. Councilman Harjo seconded the motion.

The following vote was recorded:

Councilwoman Garvey	AYE
Councilman Brennan	AYE
Councilwoman Wirkkala	AYE
Councilman Harjo	AYE

The vote being unanimous, the motion was carried and so ordered.

The Council went into Executive Session at 5:01 P.M.

The Council came out of Executive Session at 5:34 P.M.

2) Pursuant to Idaho Code Section 74-206(1)(f) -to communicate with legal counsel for the public agency to discuss the legal ramifications of and legal options for pending litigation or controversies not yet being litigated but imminently likely to be litigated.

Councilwoman Garvy made the motion to enter into Executive Session pursuant to Idaho Code 74-206(1)(b) and 74-206(1)(f) at the beginning of the meeting. Councilman Harjo seconded the motion.

The following vote was recorded:

Councilwoman Garvey	AYE
Councilman Brennan	AYE
Councilwoman Wirkkala	AYE
Councilman Harjo	AYE

The vote being unanimous, the motion was carried and so ordered.

The Council went into Executive Session at 5:01 P.M.

The Council came out of Executive Session at 5:34 P.M.

RECOGNIZING PERSONS IN THE AUDIENCE

- Jake Dudley came forward to respectfully request the Council consider unfreezing the police lieutenant position in light of the upcoming Police Chief's resignation. He continued to speak on all of the positive changes that have taken place under the Chief during his time here. He said that unfreezing the lieutenant position would allow vital support, and it would allow for a smooth transition and to train and prepare the new lieutenant under the guidance of the current Chief and ensure that the Chief's

input is part of the selection process.

PUBLIC HEARING

1)Public Hearing establishing a fee for Missing and/or Replacement Keys for City Golf Carts.

The public hearing opened at 5:34 P.M.

The public hearing closed at 5:35 P.M.

Has any Council Member received information pertaining to, or otherwise had any contact with any person regarding any items on this City Council agenda? If so, please set forth the nature of the contact.

- Councilman Harjo said that he had emails from Matt Menine and Melba Drenning regarding Old Business 2 and received a phone call from Decker Sanders, but they never synced up regarding Old Business 5.

- Councilwoman Wirkkala said that she also received an email Matt Menine on Old Business 2 and a call from Decker Sanders on Old Business 5, but was unable able to match up schedules.

CONSENT AGENDA

All matters listed within this Consent Agenda section require formal Council action, but are typically routine or not of great controversy and will be enacted by one motion. Questions for the purpose of clarification may be asked about a particular item before the motion is voted on. However, for lengthy discussion or separate motion a Councilmember or citizen may request an item be removed from the Consent Agenda section and placed on the Regular Agenda. ALL CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS LISTED BELOW ARE ACTION ITEMS.

- A. Approval of Minutes
  - Planning & Zoning Commission- March 4, 2025
  - Regular City Council- March 25, 2025
- B. Bills from 3/26/2025 to 4/11/2025 in the amount of \$583,336.04
- C. Payroll for the period ending 2/22/2025 to 3/21/2025 in the amount of \$767,063.08
- D. Approve Amendment 1 with GUHO for City of Mountain Home Railroad Park Plaza and authorize the Mayor to sign.

Councilman Harjo asked to update through interlineation the City Council Meeting minutes for March 25, 2025, regarding Nisha Merryman's testimony, she said it was illegal, not legal, to feed cats outside of property.

Councilwoman Garvey asked what the amendment was for Item D.

Tiffany Belt, City Clerk said that she might have placed it on the desk right before the meeting as it did not make it into the packet. She said that GUHO declared the land group as the architect for the railroad project, but they are not. She said it was just a name change for clarification.

Councilman Brennan made a motion to approve the agenda and make the correction through interlineation on the minutes. Councilman Harjo seconded the motion.

The following vote was recorded:

Councilman Harjo	AYE
Councilwoman Wirkkala	AYE
Councilman Brennan	AYE
Councilwoman Garvey	AYE

The vote being unanimous, the motion was carried and so ordered.

OLD BUSINESS

1)Action Item: Deliberation/Decision regarding approved resolution #08-2025 clarification of 2025 Golf fees, City staff is seeking further clarification regarding the approved resolution.

Councilman Brennan asked Tiffany Belt when season passes went on sale this year.

Tiffany Belt said sometime after the 1<sup>st</sup> of January.

Councilman Brennan said he was confused because he saw a post on social media saying that said season passes are now for sale, and that came after the March 25, 2025 meeting.

Tiffany Belt said that they have allowed people to purchase their 2025 passes at the end of 2024 as some people purchase them as Christmas gifts. She said that the City did put a post out once the resolution was cleaned up from the last meeting to clarify the changes that have been made.

Councilwoman Garvey asked what clarification that City staff is looking for as that's how the Item is written.

Tiffany Belt said that there are still some contradictions between the old resolution and the new one. She asked if the Council's intentions are for the greens fees to be Monday through Thursday across the board and then the weekend is Friday through Sunday; or is the greens fees Monday through Friday.

Councilwoman Garvey said that she thought the greens fees were Monday through Thursday and that weekend rates were Friday through Sunday.

Tiffany Belt said that is how Staff interpreted it, however the way the resolution that was voted on at the March 25, 2025 meeting said that greens fees would be recognized as Monday through Friday, and that Saturday, Sunday and holidays were weekend.

Councilwoman Garvey said yes, and season passes are Monday through Friday.

Tiffany Belt asked if the greens fee is throughout all of them, military, senior, etc.

Councilman Harjo said that defining the application of Monday through Friday for the season pass and for the weekday pass and that the greens fees for non-pass holders would be Monday through Thursday.

Councilwoman Garvey and Tiffany Belt discussed possibly getting a machine to print cards out at the golf course as well.

Councilman Harjo asked if this clarified well enough and asked Legal if there needed to be a motion made.

Paul Fitzer, City Attorney said no motion needs to be made.

2) Action Item: Deliberation/Decision regarding draft agreement with Race to Empower LLC to operate an oval and straight track at Optimist Park and authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to sign.

Mayor Sykes informed the Council that the current agreement is for an oval track only and wanted to make sure the agreement accounts for what Race to Empower will be adding and he said there was also a name change.

Tiffany Belt said that this originally came forward back in November, that there was a motion on the table to do a name change and grant a 10-year extension. She said they had intentions of adding a straight track back then, however after looking into the lease agreement amending it to adding a straight track needed to come back to edit and make a clean draft agreement. She said that was what this was for today.

Councilman Harjo said that several of the Race to Empower folks were here and asked Eric Barsness and Ronnie Bergh could come forward.

Eric Barsness asked if the \$45 park fee per event would need to be paid up front for the year based on the schedule of events.

Tiffany Belt said that they could be paid for at the time of the event, like a day prior, they don't have to be paid for all up front. She went on to explain the lease formula for lease agreements, but for the sake of ease, they decided to go with a flat rate for the days that the group plans a race.

Councilman Brennan said that also applied to any scheduled practices for the races would also count as part of the fee per day of events.

Eric Barsness said that they had switched names from Mountain Home Speedway LLC to Race to Empower Inc, a 501-C3 non-profit organization. He said that when they had the land use discussion, they had it written in as the whole facility. He said that because they are non-profit, they are working on grants and asked if in the future they are able to fund a fence around the whole facility, would they be required to come back and rewrite the lease.

Tiffany Belt said not if it's in 10-years. She said that it would be nice to know on the planned improvements, however.

Councilman Brennan said that they would still have to follow all City ordinances, like getting building permits and such.

Councilwoman Garvey made a motion to approve the deliberation/decision regarding draft agreement with Race to Empower LLC, adding Race to Empower Inc., 501(c)(3) to the language. Councilman Harjo seconded the motion.

Councilman Brennan said that he fully supports this, but there is one that will be a deal breaker for him, Paragraph 3 on Page 6 which said that the City could continue to grant approval for any kind of equipment. He said they need to operate their own heavy equipment, not City owned. He said his request for the Council was not to allow, under any circumstances, the use of City equipment for the operation of the facility.

Councilwoman Garvey said that the Council tabled this discussion several months back based on this, and she said that she agreed with Councilman Brennan and requested to amend her motion until the Council can further discuss this topic, and that it could always be added back on as an addendum after the fact.

Councilwoman Garvey made a motion to approve the deliberation/decision regarding draft agreement with Race to Empower LLC, adding Race to Empower Inc., 501(c)(3) to the language, striking "without prior written approval of the Mayor or his delegate". Councilman Brennan seconded the motion.

Councilman Harjo said that the use of City equipment had been a major topic across all City matters. He stated that he recognized previous users had introduced some level of concern. He noted that this group were all capable heavy equipment operators. He mentioned that the City did not have a policy regarding the public's use of City equipment. He said that he would refrain from subtracting from the contract until there had been a more thorough review of all aspects of what the "use of City equipment" entailed, and a policy had been created around that.

Councilwoman Garvey said that she understood what Councilman Harjo was saying, but there was nothing saying that it can't be added back on later. She said that they have not been able to discuss allowing individual people that are not vetted through the City to use heavy equipment.

Eric Barsness said that it would be equipment like the tractor with the auger to put in the fence poles. He said that they bring in their own equipment often, but there are a lot of times when the City equipment was already there.

Councilwoman Garvey asked Legal where the City stands if Ronnie or Eric were using equipment and they or someone else got hurt, were we okay with our

insurance because we were allowing them to use the equipment.

Paul Fitzer said that he would like to hear the answer from ICRMP.

Councilwoman Garvey said that from a City stand point, they were not on the City's insurance policy, and that her motion stands.

Tiffany Belt asked Paul Fitzer if this would be any different than the City's COPs that were listed on the City insurance, if the City were to list them as well.

There was a discussion between Paul Fitzer, Tiffany Belt, and Eric Barsness about how previously a list of approved operators had been provided.

Councilman Harjo asked Councilwoman Garvey if that meant she was willing to include this language back into the contract that was previously motioned out.

Councilwoman Garvey amended her motion to approve the deliberation/decision regarding draft agreement with Race to Empower Inc, 501-C3 to operate the oval and straight track at Optimist Park, amending the in paragraph 3 on page 6 to read that Race to Empower Inc, will within 15 day to get a list to the City of the individuals that are to be authorized and added to City insurance in order to operate the City equipment, still with the approval of the Mayor. Councilman Harjo seconded the motion.

Councilman Brennan said that he still didn't like it and asked where we draw the line.

Councilwoman Wirkkala and Eric Barsness discussed in-kind work that he had done for the City.

The following vote was recorded:

Councilwoman Wirkkala	AYE
Councilwoman Garvey	AYE
Councilman Harjo	AYE
Councilman Brennan	NAY

The majority of the vote being in favor, the motion was carried and so ordered.

3) Action Item: Deliberation/Decision regarding the cooperative agreement between Elmore County and the City regarding the Animal Control Center and authorize the Mayor, City Clerk, and Chief of Police to sign.

Councilwoman Garvey said that she read over the copy that Chief Thompson sent over and the only change that she would have requested was to 5-A, as it still did not allow for any designated spaces for County dogs.

Councilman Harjo said that he had a brief discussion with Danniele Strain, Animal Control Center Supervisor about her edits. He said in that brief discussion she identified that while it was not expressly stated, that through their operation, they can manage very well and have not encountered capacity issues. He said the only request that he had was citing some sort of billing and invoice cycle.

Councilman Harjo made a motion to approve the cooperative agreement between Elmore County and the City regarding the Animal Control Center adding through interlineation stipulation for quarterly billing cycle. Councilwoman Wirkkala seconded the motion.

Councilman Brennan asked if a clarification via reduction on Section 5-B, by eliminating during normal operating hours.

Jon Thompson, Chief of Police, said that he'd like the language to

remain included to clarify what normal operating hours were.

Councilman Brennan stated for his own understanding that Chief Thompson wanted the normal operating hours listed, but 24-hours a day the County can still transport dogs.

There was continued discussion among the Council regarding different sections of the agreement for clarification and understanding.

Councilman Harjo said that he would like to see the language remain as it currently is in the agreement.

Councilman Brennan asked the Council on Sub B, if it could be made into two sentences; "Normal operating hours are Monday through Friday 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M." and "ECSO will provide pick up and transportation services of dogs to Animal Control Center."

Councilman Brennan and Councilman Harjo continued the previous discussion on Paragraph A for further clarification.

Councilman Harjo amended his motion and made through interlineation on Section 5-B, which is broken into two sentences as requested, and added a passage for the business and billing for quarterly. Councilwoman Wirkkala seconded the motion.

The following vote was recorded:

Councilman Brennan	AYE
Councilwoman Garvey	AYE
Councilman Harjo	AYE
Councilwoman Wirkkala	AYE

The vote being unanimous, the motion was carried and so ordered.

4) Action Item: Deliberation/Decision regarding Police Chief's resignation letter and effective date.

Councilwoman Wirkkala said that the Council received the Chief's resignation letter on April 1, 2025, and that it was dated for March 14, 2025, and there had been a Council meeting since then. She asked the Mayor what the plan was moving forward.

Mayor Sykes said that he and the Chief were working on a plan currently. He said that they have reached out to ICOPA and Post and that they were trying to figure it out.

5) Action Item: Deliberation/Decision on the golf course concessionaire contract and pay schedule.

Councilwoman Wirkkala said the concessionaire came in to pay on January 30, 2025, to make his first payment, and he was told that he would not need to make a payment until April 1, 2025. She asked the Mayor why that was not run by the Council first.

Mayor Sykes said that he would defer his answer in Executive session. He said that the payment had been made for April.

Councilwoman Wirkkala said that the contract stated that payment would be made on February 1, 2025, and if it was up to the Council to hold the purse strings and to approve the contract, she thinks that was something that should have been brought up to the Council for discussion.

Councilwoman Wirkkala made a motion to have the golf course concessionaire pay per contract for February and March rent and utilities. There being no second, the motion died.

Councilman Brennan said that no disrespect, but he disagreed with that. He said that the City decided, while the building was vacant, to continue with some construction projects. He said he doubted much electricity was used during the renovation, and since he wasn't in business during this time, the City was not subsidizing him. He said in the end he thinks the City made the right decision.

Councilwoman Garvey said that she was pretty clear about her stance on this on Thursday. She said that \$3,200 is nothing compared to what he put in personally.

Councilman Brennan asked Tiffany Belt about the concessionaire paying over \$4,000 for doors for the new facility.

Tiffany Belt confirmed that he had paid for all the doors and the bathroom upgrades, as the partitions were falling off the walls.

Councilwoman Wirkkala made a motion for the concessionaire to pay at least the utilities for February and March. There being no second, the motion died.

#### NEW BUSINESS

##### 1) Items removed from the Consent Agenda

There were no Items removed from the Consent Agenda for consideration.

##### 2) Action Item: Deliberation/Decision to approve Resolution #09-2025R establishing a fee for missing and/or replacement keys for City Golf carts.

Councilman Brennan made a motion to approve Resolution #09-2025R establishing a fee for missing and/or replacement keys for City Golf carts. Councilman Harjo seconded the motion.

The following vote was recorded:

Councilwoman Garvey	AYE
Councilman Brennan	AYE
Councilwoman Wirkkala	AYE
Councilman Harjo	AYE

The vote being unanimous, the motion was carried and so ordered.

##### 3) Action Item: Deliberation/Decision regarding MHSD Stephensen Elementary Letter of Support 2026.

Councilman Harjo made a motion to approve the Deliberation/Decision regarding MHSD Stephensen Elementary Letter of Support 2026. Councilwoman Garvey seconded the motion.

The following vote was recorded:

Councilman Harjo	AYE
Councilwoman Wirkkala	AYE
Councilman Brennan	AYE
Councilwoman Garvey	AYE

The vote being unanimous, the motion was carried and so ordered.

#### FINAL COMMENTS

Councilman Harjo said that he recognized Councilman Brennan's concern about equipment use and said that there was merit behind developing some policies. He asked if they could work on this together to present when ready.

Mayor Sykes asked about the lieutenant position and if the Council would

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be willing to open the position back up sooner rather than later.

Councilwoman Wirkkala said she wanted to open that position. She said that the hold was put on this position for the Mayor and the Chief to figure out what the alternate plan for the dispatch agreement is going forward. She commended Councilwoman Garvey and Councilman Harjo on their efforts with the Animal Control MOU, as that was one of the things that the County said was holding up going back onto the dispatch agreement.

Councilwoman Garvey and Councilman Harjo both support this decision as well.

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 6:42 P.M. by orders from Mayor Sykes.

  
Rich Sykes, Mayor

ATTEST:   
Tiffany Belt, City Clerk

