Moscow City Council

Regular Meeting
~Minutes~

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Laurie M. Hopkins
City Clerk

208.883.7015

Monday, August 18, 2025 **7:00 PM** **Council Chambers 206 E. Third St.**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.
PRESENT: Mayor Art Bettge, Drew Davis, Sandra Kelly, Hailey Lewis, Julia Parker,
ABSENT: Bryce Blankenship, Gina Taruscio
STAFF: Bill Belknap, Cody Riddle, Kelli Cooper, Laurie M. Hopkins

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Council Vice President Davis led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. **All Consent Items (ACTION ITEM)**

   A. **Approval of Moscow City Council August 4, 2025 Minutes - Laurie M. Hopkins**

   B. **Approval of Payment of Claims - Sarah Decker**

   C. **Disbursement Report July 2025 - Sarah Decker**

   Staff presented the July 2025 Accounts Payable Report to the Public Works / Finance Committee on August 11th, 2025. The Committee received the report and recommended approval of the disbursement report.

   ACTION: Accept the Disbursements Report for the month of July 2025.

   D. **Moscow-Pullman Airport Grant Agreement Approval - Bill Belknap**

   The Moscow-Pullman Airport (PUW) has been awarded two Airport Improvement Program grants. One grant will fund the purchase of a new Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting vehicle and extraction tools (AIP 72) with a grant award of $1,096,979, and the second will fund the expansion of the existing airport apron (AIP 73) with a grant award of $550,316. All required local match funding will be provided by PUW, with no additional funding required from the airport sponsors. Additionally, the Idaho Transportation Department, Division of Aeronautics, has awarded the City a grant for the airport apron project of $225,000 with no local match required. Staff has prepared two resolutions authorizing the acceptance of these three grant awards for the Council's review and approval. This was reviewed by the Public Works/Finance Committee on August 11, 2025, and recommended for approval.

   ACTION: Approve the two resolutions authorizing acceptance of the three grant awards.

   E. **Development Agreement Amendment for 2216 S. Main St. (Fountain's Business Park) - Bob Buvel**

   On December 2, 2024, City Council approved a development agreement with Joel Cohen, the owner of 2216 S. Main also known as the Fountain Business Park. As part of the agreement, the City of Moscow agreed to pay the cost to upsize the existing 6-inch water main located in US95 to a 10-

inch main. The water main was oriented in a way that it could be continued east when Nelson Avenue is extended. During preparations for construction, 4G realized they had misread the plans and that the work was going to extend all the way across the highway rather than half. 4G re-negotiated with Mr. Coen to reflect that cost. During the construction of the 10-inch main in the highway, the contractor discovered several unforeseen conditions that impeded production and required additional time and materials. Unforeseen conditions like a buried retaining wall, unmapped utilities and city-directed design revisions required the contractor to procure and install additional fittings, perform additional delicate excavation and implement traffic control for a longer period of time. The contractor tracked time and equipment for these issues and that document has been included. Mr. Cohen has requested the city's contribution to the project be increased from $57,000.00 to $79,737.00 to reflect the true cost to install the 10-inch line. Prior to the original agreement, staff reached out to a third party contractor for a quote to do the work. M.L. Albright's responded with a quote of $67,880.00 to bore this pipe and $83,930.00 to trench install this pipe. That bid has been included. The revised cost with Mr. Cohen and 4G is still less than the third party bid to trench this work. The Development Agreement Amendment reflects the revised price to complete the work. This item was reviewed by the Public Works and Finance Committee on August 11, 2025 and recommended for approval.

ACTION: Approve the Development Agreement Amendment.

F. Third Amendment to Solid Waste Franchise Agreement Exhibit G - Tyler Palmer

Fees associated with the services provided under the Solid Waste Franchise Agreement between the City of Moscow and Latah Sanitation, Inc., dba Inland North Waste, are adjusted each fiscal year to reflect changes in the cost of operations, as reflected by fluctuations in the Consumer Price Index (CPI), as published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The statistics used are for a one-year period and represent the end-of-year adjusted figures for the annual change in the calendar year, as published in January of each year. The figure for 2024 was 2.86%. Staff has prepared an amended Exhibit G to reflect these changes for the Council's review and approval. This was reviewed by the Public Works/Finance Committee on August 11, 2025, and recommended for approval.

ACTION: Approve the Third Amendment to Exhibit "G" of the Solid Waste Franchise Agreement.

Kelly moved and Parker seconded to approve the consent agenda as presented. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Unanimous. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

REGULAR AGENDA

2. Public Comment (limit 15 minutes)

Cody Barr (Moscow), owner of Refuge Cigar Lounge spoke on Moscow City Code Title 10 Chapter1 Section 23. The stated purpose is to protect patrons of a bar from unwanted secondhand smoke. His business is different as smoking is the primary activity. The ordinance treats his business the same as a typical bar as the circumstances are fundamentally different. He often hears patrons say it will be great when the business gets a liquor license but the ordinance prevents patrons from enjoying a cigar with a good whiskey. He asked the Council to consider an amendment to the City Code, specifically to allow alcohol in a business where smoking is the central purpose. He said this is his first brick and mortar business and said has been a pleasure working with the Council and staff.

3. Citizen Commission Report - Sustainable Environment Commission - Kyle Steele / Steve McGeehan

Cooper introduced Steve McGeehan who presented the report. The water conservation program began with device, toilet and wisescape programs and has evolved to include irrigation audits, new construction recommendations and developing a site-specific commercial rebate program. Other programs the Commission discussed are the electronic waste program, pesticides in parks, and the energy grid capacity. Future events include an electric transportation fair and an energy efficiency and electrification fair.

4. **East City Park Stage Project Update (ACTION ITEM) - Cody Riddle**
   On May 6, 2024, City Council approved a contract with Design West Architects to develop a 30% conceptual design and cost estimate for replacement of the East City Park Stage. The design was to build upon a previous design and outreach effort that concluded in 2012, and the subsequent construction of the existing restroom building that was completed in the spring of 2013. The original design effort, and restroom construction, was based on an extensive public outreach effort that dates back to 2010. Staff and the Project Architect, Ned Warnick with Design West Architects, provided the Council with project updates on June 3 and December 16, 2024. Council directed staff to complete the 30% design effort and emphasized the importance of additional public outreach. Staff will provide a summary of outreach, the feedback received, and present the resulting concept design and cost estimate.

   PROPOSED ACTIONS: Accept report and provide feedback as appropriate.

Riddle went through the background of the project which dates back to 2010 and many public engagement meetings, both public and single citizen. Highlights from the public meetings include 1) overall support for the project; 2) strong desire for a public art component; 3) desire to incorporate wood highlights; 4) inclusion of color in the stage and paving; 5) better integration for storage and lighting rooms; 6) careful balance of paving and landscape areas; and 7) preservation of existing trees.

Ned Warnick presented the updated stage design, noting adjustments based on previous feedback. Changes included an enlarged storage room to function as a changing room, addition of a stairway for direct audience-level access, and a step along the stage front. The stage is now four feet wider, while maintaining the current depth. The design incorporates the colors, materials, and roof slope of the adjacent restroom building to create a cohesive appearance, with artwork and color integration planned in sheltered areas. A detailed cost estimate for the base project is $800,000. Options reviewed included increasing both roof and stage size, with one option expanding the stage by 50% to better accommodate large ensembles. Rendezvous in the Park representatives expressed support for both stage size options.

Riddle stated staff are seeking Council support to issue an RFQ, pursue grant funding, and prepare construction drawings for a spring/summer start.

Davis noted this project reflects how staff has been responsive to public input, providing ample opportunities for engagement. Parker echoed Davis's comments, expressing appreciation for stakeholder involvement, and asked whether the Council's decision would move forward with the smaller or larger stage. Riddle said staff believes a single shed roof integrates best with the restroom building and supports the larger stage, which could be bid as an alternate. The FY2026 budget includes $885,000 for design and construction. Belknap added that grant opportunities have not yet been explored, so funding will influence stage size.

Lewis expressed continued concerns with load-in/load-out logistics, overall cohesiveness, and safety. She raised concerns about unlit areas at night, questioned the use of materials, and asked about police input. Warnick responded that he is coordinating with David Schott on reusing wood from the existing stage without creating maintenance issues, and confirmed adequate power would be available, though users would need to bring their own lighting. Lewis voiced support for the new location but characterized the current design as lacking character. She encouraged exploring creative alternatives such as a portable stage and expressed concern about construction timing disrupting next year's events.

In answer to Kelly's question, Riddle said the pathway would need changes but the opportunity to travel through the park was a priority at the public meetings and would be reconfigured. Kelly asked about the disabled parking stall by the restroom and Warnick said it would be maintained.

Parker responded to Lewis, emphasizing that stage design work has been underway for over a year and that artistic elements, such as murals, will add vibrancy. She stated a portable stage would not meet long-term needs and stressed the importance of moving forward. Belknap said construction timing could be managed by starting after the last scheduled event, with completion in the fall and spring cleanup.

Lewis reiterated interest in comparing Pullman's approach and exploring stage functionality at Friendship Square but expressed appreciation for the amended construction schedule.

Parker moved to accept the report. Davis seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Unanimous. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

5. **Street Banner Policy Update (ACTION ITEM) - Bill Belknap**
   The City of Moscow has long maintained a program for the placement of banners in the downtown area for the display of government banners as well as public notification of special events. The program, administered by the Streets Department, has been updated several times over many years, with a formalized policy adopted by the City Council in 2013. Since the adoption of the 2013 policy, the location and use of light pole banners within the City has changed such that it requires an update. The revised policy provides the policy purpose, permitted uses, banner standards, application process and fees, and prioritization criteria to address when multiple requests are received for the same period of time. The policy establishes that the use of light pole banners and over-the-street banners are restricted for governmental use and is not intended to establish or be utilized as a public forum. This item was reviewed by the Council during the August 4, 2025 Council meeting and at which time the Council requested amendments to the draft policy. This is back for the Council's review and further consideration.

   PROPOSED ACTIONS: Approve the updated Street Banner Policy and associated Resolution, or take other action deemed appropriate.

Belknap provided a background on the item as written above. The council directed staff to modify the policy to restrict it to only City and governmental event advertising and eliminate the city sponsored community event use of the spaces. He detailed the changes page by page of the policy.

Davis appreciated staff's edits. After discussion at committee, the Council had no questions. Davis moved to approve the updated street banner policy and associated resolution. Parker seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Unanimous. Nays: None. Abstentions: None. Motion carried.

REPORTS

City Council

Fair and Affordable Housing Commission – Parker said they discussed affordable housing authority and the Commission is moving forward with drafting a letter to council.
Moscow Urban Renewal Agency – Davis said the Agency had the hearing on the FY2026 budget and are moving forward with a couple projects.
Planning and Zoning Commission – Kelly said the Commission had a public hearing on an application that will come before the council.
Moscow Volunteer Fire Department – Kelly said the new volunteers attended the meeting. There will

be a new giant American flag at the first MHS football game.
Parks and Recreation Commission – Kelly said they tabled at the market and are recruiting for referee's and coaches.

Council members spoke on other meetings and events they attended.

Mayor

Mayor Bettge said he attended the CI/CO/MSD/UI meeting and met with AIC regarding areas north of McCall.

ADJOURN

It was mutually agreed upon to adjourn at 8:10 p.m.

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Arthur D. Bettge, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Laurie M. Hopkins, City Clerk

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