

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS,
COLUMBUS, MONTANA HELD May 4, 2026, AT 7:00 P.M.**

COUNCIL PRESENT OFFICERS PRESENT	The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Mayor Joe Morse began the meeting with the pledge of allegiance. The council members present were Rick White, Dennis Holten, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Kelly Ault and Danen Johannes. Staff members present were City Judge Lee Cornell, Chief of Police Aaron Uecker, Public Works Director Peyton Brookshire, City Attorney Ryan Addis, and Deputy Clerk Cassidy Thompson. Also present was District Fire Chief Rich Cowger.
SIDELINE IN PERSON	Kirk Ivankovich, Koleman Garrett, and Joel Moranton
PUBLIC HEARING	Public Hearing changing Council Meeting start time to 6:30pm. The mayor opened the public hearing at 7:00pm and asked if there was any public comment. There were none and meeting was closed.
REGULAR MINUTES APPROVED	The mayor asked Council if they had reviewed the minutes of the April 20, 2026, regular meeting, and if there were any additions, deletions, or corrections. Rick White made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting, seconded by Tim Mayo; roll call for vote, Rick White, Dennis Holten, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Kelly Ault and Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Motion passed.
SHUT OFF LIST	NONE
APPROVAL OF CLAIMS	The claims list for the 2 nd half of April was presented to the Council. Cole Waltner made a motion to approve the claims as presented, seconded by Tim Mayo; roll call for vote, Rick White, Dennis Holten, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Kelly Ault and Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Motion passed.
PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS	Joel Morantan from the Stillwater Chamber of Commerce gave a presentation to discuss bringing back the Columbus boat float. Joel said he did not have anything official but wanted to get council's opinion on the pros and cons. Rick White mentioned that Reed Point had taken over the 2 nd night of the event. Tim Mayo confirmed it was the 3 rd night of the event. Tim said that they have the party in Livingston, then Friday night they continue in Big Timber, and then Saturday night they continue in Reed Point. The event used to be in Columbus on Saturday night and people stayed at Itch-kep-pe Park, then continued to Park City and Laurel. They used to have a shuttle service to prevent drunk driving and food trucks. Joel asked if council was interested in the Chamber of Commerce pursuing the boat float for Columbus. Cole Waltner said that the boat float is a big thing in Reed Point, but he would like to see the Chamber promote it for Reed Point. Tim Mayo stated Columbus used to hold the event before there was an incident with someone throwing a beer bottle through a business window, so Reed Point took it over. Dennis Holten said that he wouldn't have a problem with the float continuing to Columbus on Sunday night with food trucks available for the public. Chief Uecker recommended that the city should close the lower part of Itch-kep-pe, if the boat float is going to utilize the park as a stopping point, to prevent fights and other incidents. Cole Waltner said that a third of the traffic pulls out in Reed Point every year. Kelly Ault said that she has spoken to the community, and they said that they enjoyed the Saturday night event in Columbus. Aaron mentioned that most people have to work after Sunday night, so most people would not be interested in participating that night.
FIRE DEPT.	The Fire Chief was present and provided a report. Rich Cowger mentioned that May 4 th is national Fire Fighters Day. Rick White said that the community dinner Rich put on was excellent.

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POLICE	The Police Chief was present and provided a report.
PUBLIC WORKS	The Public Works Director was present and provided a report. Kelly Ault asked Peyton why he chose these particular water fountains for replacement. Peyton said that they are vandalism proof and because of parts availability. The older ones were discontinued. Peyton looked for similar products, but the freight charges were cheaper for the other model. Peyton also mentioned they were easier to work on. Dennis Holten said we can look closer during budget time. Dennis also said that we need more parts for leaks and would like to see them fixed. Tim Mayo asked what the fence at the park was for. Peyton replied it was to keep people out of the pipeline at Heritage. Dennis asked about parking lines on Pike Avenue and Peyton said they were in the works.
ATTORNEY	The City Attorney was present and provided a report.
CITY JUDGE	The City Judge was present and provided a report.
CLERK-TREASURER	The Clerk-Treasurer was not present and provided a report.
PUBLIC COMMENT ON CURRENT AGENDA ITEMS:	NONE
DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND EX PARTE COMMUNICATION	NONE
COMMITTEE REPORTS-	NONE
UNFINISHED BUSINESS	NONE
NEW BUSINESS	<p>Approval of Special Use Permit for the Christian Motorcyclists Bike Night on E Pike Ave on June 24, 2026, from 4pm to 9pm, sponsored by Christian Motorcyclists Association. Cole Waltner made a motion to approve the permit, seconded by Rick White; roll call for vote, Danen Johannes, Kelly Ault, Cole Waltner, Tim Mayo, Dennis Holten and Rick White, all yea votes. Motion Passed.</p> <p>Approval of the Special Use Permit for Rope Rescue Operations Training on May 15-18, 2026, 200 Lagoon Road and Property N of 16 Sheep Dip Road, sponsored by Stillwater County Search and Rescue. Dennis Holten made a motion to approve the permit, seconded by Kelly Ault; roll call for vote, Rick White, Dennis Holten, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Kelly Ault and Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Motion passed.</p> <p>Approval of the Special Use Permit for Rope Rescue Technician Training on May 29-June 1, 2026, 200 Lagoon Road and Property N of 16 Sheep Dip Road, sponsored by Stillwater County Search and Rescue. Dennis Holten made a</p>

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motion to approve the permit, seconded by Rick White; roll call for vote, Danen Johannes, Kelly Ault, Cole Waltner, Tim Mayo, Dennis Holten and Rick White, all yea votes. Motion Passed.

First Reading of Ordinance 373 – Changing regular meeting time from 7:00pm to 6:30pm Cole Waltner made a motion to waive the reading, seconded by Tim Mayo; roll call all yea votes. Motion carries. Tim Mayo made a motion to approve the ordinance, seconded by Kelly Ault; roll call for vote, Rick White, Dennis Holten, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Kelly Ault and Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Motion passed.

Approval of the Interlocal Agreement between the City of Columbus and the Stillwater County Sheriff's Office to provide dispatch services in the amount of \$82,320.00. Rick White made a motion to approve the agreement, seconded by Cole Waltner. Dennis Holten asked if the cost went up. Chief Uecker said that the cost did go up because the percentage went up. Roll call for vote, Rick White, Dennis Holten, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Kelly Ault and Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Motion passed.

Approval of the appointment of Kirk Ivankovich to the City-County Planning Board term ending 12/31/27. Dennis Holten made a motion to approve the appointment, seconded by Kelly Ault; roll call for vote, Danen Johannes, Kelly Ault, Cole Waltner, Tim Mayo, Dennis Holten and Rick White, all yea votes. Motion Passed.

Approval of the appointment of Seth Russell to the City-County Planning Board term ending 12/31/27. Tim Mayo made a motion to approve the appointment, seconded by Cole Waltner; roll call for vote, Rick White, Dennis Holten, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Kelly Ault and Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Motion passed.

Approval of the Franchise Agreement between the City and Nemont. Dennis Holten made the motion to approve the agreement, seconded by Cole Waltner; roll call for vote, Rick White, Dennis Holten, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Kelly Ault and Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Motion passed.


Approval of revisions made to the City Personnel Policy. Tim Mayo made a motion to approve the revisions, seconded by Rick White; roll call for vote, Danen Johannes, Kelly Ault, Cole Waltner, Tim Mayo, Dennis Holten and Rick White, all yea votes. Motion Passed.

Approval of the Professional Services Agreement for Zoning Officer. Dennis Holten made a motion to approve the agreement, seconded by Danen Johannes; roll call for vote, Rick White, Dennis Holten, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Kelly Ault and Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Motion passed.


Approval of Change Order No. 1 for the Heritage Park Well Project. Dennis Holten made a motion to approve the change order, seconded by Rick White. Tim Mayo asked what went up in cost. Peyton replied it just shows a

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	<p>breakdown of cost. Roll call for vote, Danen Johannes, Kelly Ault, Cole Waltner, Tim Mayo, Dennis Holten and Rick White, all yea votes. Motion Passed.</p> <p>Approval of Pay Application #3 for the Heritage Well Project in the amount of \$27,281.43. Cole Waltner made a motion to approve the application, seconded by Tim Mayo; roll call for vote, Rick White, Dennis Holten, Tim Mayo, Cole Waltner, Kelly Ault and Danen Johannes, all yea votes. Motion passed.</p>
COMMENTS NOT ON THE AGENDA	<p>Cole Waltner wanted to bring up lifting the fireworks ban on the 3rd and 4th of July. He wants to encourage community involvement and purchasing local. Cole mentioned that he knows there is concern about fires breaking out and it is not a good use of resources for law enforcement to restrict people in the neighborhood from lighting off fireworks. Rich Cowger said that there is no point in forcing people out of the city limits to another location with a higher potential for catching fire, but then there is still a risk of a fire starting in town. Joe Morse mentioned that there are other states where everyone will go to a specific spot to enjoy fireworks together as a community. Kirk Ivankovich said that he is all for keeping things in the community and bringing more events back to Columbus. Kirk also said there is a possible concern of garbage being left everywhere. There was talk of having a location for everyone to light off fireworks in one contained spot, such as the ball fields, for everyone to congregate in a controlled area. Ryan Addis said there will need to be an ordinance modification with readings to implement this lift.</p>
ADJOURNMENT	<p>Joe Morse requested a Motion to Adjourn. Rick White made the motion to adjourn at 7:36 p.m. seconded by Dennis Holten, roll call all yea votes.</p>



 JOSEPH MORSE II, MAYOR



 CHERRIE L MCALEXANDER, CLERK-TREASURER

