

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING ----- FEBRUARY 17, 2026

The Regular Council Meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Mayor Karst. The following Council members were present: Ozark, Schindler, Heitman, Brabeck, and Koski. Council member Austin arrived at 5:02 p.m. City Clerk Amundson, City Grant Writer Byers, and City Attorney Pekovitch attended via Google Meets. There was no media representation.

Mayor Karst led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment on any Agenda Item: NONE

Council member Koski made a motion approving the consent agenda including the payment of claims for February 17, 2026 in the amount of \$70,481.97, the Valley Court Apartment claims in the amount of \$1,442.67, and the minutes of the February 2, 2026 Regular Council Meeting. The motion was seconded by Council member Brabeck, and carried unanimously.

Council member Koski made a motion approving the November and December 2025 financials. The motion was seconded by Council member Heitman, and carried unanimously.

Unfinished Business – Levee Safety Committee Report – Mayor Karst mentioned the committee hasn't met, but the quarterly meeting will be held next month.

Committee Reports: There were no reports for Personnel, Water, Cemetery or Grant. City Attorney Pekovitch said the nuisance letters for lots will be mailed out this week.

Department Head Reports:

City Attorney Pekovitch mentioned it's been regular work in the office and will be working on going through and scoring the police chief applications tomorrow. The council talked about who had all the applications scored and which ones were about done.

Mayor Karst asked City Grant Writer Byers if she wanted to report on any of the grants that she has submitted. She has submitted another growth policy application and one for the fire department. Mayor Karst said that the city was awarded a Montana Coal Endowment Program Grant in the amount of \$30,000.00 for the stormwater preliminary engineering report. The city is trying to find out if this grant can be applied to the W.E.T. contract for the rate study. City Grant Writer Byers asked if that was the contract that was just cancelled. City Clerk Amundson said that wasn't the one, it was for the Morrison-Maierle contract for the Wastewater Treatment Facility Evaluation.

City Clerk Amundson told the council that she received an email from W.E.T. requesting information to start the rate study, and she uploaded them the information they were requesting.

Mayor Karst asked Council member Ozark if he was able to attend the worker's comp meeting. He did attend and it was informative. Mayor Karst explained that MMIA is phasing out their workman's compensation program and United Insurance will be taking that on. Council member Brabeck asked if the city was then going to go through State Fund. Council member Koski said that United goes through State Fund. Council member Ozark updated the council on what he had taken away from the meeting, if an employee gets injured on the job, it's important to get them back to work as soon as possible, even if it's just sitting behind a desk working.

Mayor Karst said there is an individual who is interested in annexing property into the city and possibly building a new hotel, he directed him to contact Cobblestone, since they were looking at building a hotel in the city. Council member Schindler said he is not interested in doing that. Council member Koski stated that he would like to build a 16-room hotel and wants water and sewer services to the property. There is also another entity that is wanting to come into town on the west end, there is currently city water that runs to that property, but no sewer. There's been discussion on if a drain field can be done instead of running a sewer line. Mayor Karst talked about the work that is being done by Lee Riddick at the Valley Court Apartments. He has also sent a letter to Rural Development regarding the apartments, outlining our situation and that the city doesn't have the resources to keep up with everything that needs to be completed on them. If a response isn't received from the letter that was sent, then another letter will be sent to the federal office. He then talked about some of the other issues that are going on at the apartments with some of the current and past tenants. Discussion continued on the multiple times the city has tried to sell the apartments, the debt that is on it, and that it needs to remain as section 8 housing. Mayor Karst also stated that the rent has never been increased since the city has taken over. The amount of rent that each tenant has to pay is based off of their income and adjusted on an annual basis.

Public Comment: NONE

Mayor Karst asked City Clerk Amundson when she wanted the score sheets in by for the Chief of Police applications. She said Friday February 20th by 5:00 p.m., then she will compile the numbers and let them know who the top three (3) candidates are to begin the interview process.

Council member Koski made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Council member Austin the meeting adjourned at 5:18 p.m.

ATTEST:

Stacey A. Amundson

Stacey Amundson
City Clerk-Treasurer

Rod Karst
Mayor