

**** Page 1** A SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL
MEETING CITY OF THREE FORKS, MONTANA, MARCH 31ST, 2026**

MARCH 31ST, 2026, The Three Forks City Council met at the Three Forks City Hall at 206 S. Main Street and via Zoom. (Zoom is a virtual meeting tool which the City began using due to COVID-19 and social distancing guidelines and continues to use to encourage participation from the safety of one's home.) The meeting was chaired by Mayor Randy Johnston, who called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL: City Council members Alex Blackburn, Reagan Hooton, Gene Townsend, Ed Tharp, (Warren) Garret Buchanan, and Robert Buchholz were present. City Attorney Susan Swimley and City Treasurer Kelly Smith were present at City Hall; Gallatin County Sheriff Captain Kelly Sprinkle and Sergeant Desmond Doonan attended at City Hall; no staff attended via Zoom. City Clerk Crystal Turner was excused.

The record reflected a quorum with the attendance of six (6) Council members and the meeting was held.

The **Pledge of Allegiance** to the American Flag was led by Mayor Johnston. Mayor Johnston reminded the audience that this meeting was audio- and video-recorded and may be streamed via Zoom and on our Facebook page.

GUESTS: George Chancellor, Gloria Howland

PUBLIC COMMENTS/CONCERNS (For items not on the agenda)

There were no public comments or concerns about items not on the agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Claims Paid to L&L Site Services in 3/10/2026's Stack of Claims for Approval, but was not on the Claims Approval List due to it not being "Posted" (\$418)
- b. Three Forks Rodeo Arena Claims Paid due to Timeliness on 3/19/2026 in the Amount of \$150,181.04

Councilman Buchholz moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Councilwoman Hooton seconded the motion.

Motion Passed Unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were no public hearings.

REPORT OF OFFICERS

City Treasurer Kelly Smith did not give any report.

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REPORTS FROM COUNCIL COMMITTEES (if any)

Reagan Hooton reported she and the Parks Committee met and would like to plant the Arbor Day trees at the Library, but are waiting approval from the Library. Ed Tharp asked if there would be two or three trees; Reagan replied two will fit better. Mayor Johnston said he know Jonna Boys (Library Director) is excited for the addition and is supportive of the trees being on the north side of the building.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

Gallatin County Sheriff Office Request to Amend Language within the Interlocal Agreement for Law Enforcement, Specifically Article V, Section C.a

Mayor Johnston read Sgt. Doonan's request into the record.

City Attorney Susan Swimley said her previous questions have been answered. "My concern was that we are talking about changing the shifts and not money too, and that was answered in the email from Sgt. Doonan. I would discourage you all from being sidetracked to talk about Code Enforcement at this time, although I know it is a provision of this agreement. I don't think anyone is too excited about how that is working out, but it is being fine tuned and can be a discussion at the next round of negotiations. So I take this as a discussion of man to man hours for coverage," she said.

Sgt. Doonan thanked the Council for scheduling this additional meeting on short notice. "Like Susan said, we are really just changing the number of deputies assigned to the "Three Forks beat" so there is equal coverage throughout the week. As it stands now, we are doubled up on Saturday through Tuesday night in the evening shifts, and then wide open on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. If you look at the handouts, these were the total calls for service for 2025. Of that 2,200 calls, Wednesday and Thursday nights account for over 800 calls for service. Seems like a better allocation our resources to have someone here all seven days a week," Sgt. Doonan said.

Alex Blackburn clarified the City has Tuesday would be an overlap day? Sgt. Doonan said yes, "Agency-wide that is our day to overlap for training." Ed Tharp thinks it is a great idea to have someone here all the time to give us coverage. Garret Buchanan clarified there will be no change in the number of manhours provided by the Sheriff Office? Sgt. Doonan agreed, "With four deputies, we would have a day and night shift." Mayor Johnston stated, "This has been in the contract since 2013?" Sgt. Doonan said yes, and feels it is a necessary update to the contract.

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Susan Swimley said she would not have realized Wednesday and Thursdays would be such busy days. Ed Tharp said this may quiet those in town who say *There's nobody in town*. Garret asked if this needed to be a re-written ordinance or how will it be documented? Susan answered she will write something up to amend the contract and the Council would consider that at a regular meeting.

Councilman Buchanan moved to change our policy and the wording in our Interlocal Agreement so that we have coverage from the Sheriff Office for seven days a week, eliminating the gap. Councilmen Tharp and Townsend seconded in unison. There was no public comment.

Motion Passed Unanimously.

Captain Sprinkle thanked the Council for holding this meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS/CONCERNS (For items not on the agenda)

There were no public comments or concerns that were not on the agenda.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

The next meeting will be on April 14, 2026, and will have the following items:

- Surplus property resolution
- Possibly the Wastewater PER presentation

Gene Townsend asked about the Wednesday night rodeo being added, "Will that create a lot of problems for you?" Sgt. Doonan said without a street dance it may not be as big of a deal, but it did spark discussion about getting this language clarified so I think it will be good to have someone here."

ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Buchholz motioned to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Councilman Tharp. The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 6:18P.M.

Randy Johnston, Mayor

Crystal Turner, City Clerk