

**CITY OF MANITOU SPRINGS
CITY COUNCIL**

Regular Meeting Minutes
606 Manitou Avenue
March 4, 2025

The City Council of Manitou Springs met in Regular Session on Tuesday, March 4, 2025, at 606 Manitou Avenue, in the City of Manitou Springs, County of El Paso, and State of Colorado.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT FOR ROLL CALL:

Mayor John Graham
Mayor Pro Tem Natalie Johnson
Councilor Judith Chandler
Councilor John Shada
Councilor Julie Wolfe
Councilor Nancy Fortuin
Councilor Michelle Whetherhult

A. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Graham called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

C. ROLL CALL

All members of the City Council were present for the roll call.

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilor Chandler moved to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Shada. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

E. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

There was no public comment.

F. CONSENT CALENDAR

1. February 11 2025 City Council Special Meeting Minutes

Note for the Record – this item was pulled from the consent calendar as requested by Councilor Chandler.

2. February 18, 2025 City Council Regular Meeting Minutes
3. Consider Reappointing Ann Nichols to the Historic Preservation Commission
4. Consider Reappointing Anthony Maltese to the Open Space Advisory Committee
5. Black Canyon Open Space Master Plan Final Approval

Councilor Whetherhult moved to approve the consent calendar as amended with item F1 removed. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Johnson. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

F1. February 11, 2025 City Council Special Meeting Minutes

Councilor Shada moved to approve the February 11, 2025, City Council Special Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wolfe. The motion was carried (6-0), with Councilor Chandler recusing herself due to the fact that she was not present for the February 11, 2025, City Council Special Meeting.

G. PRESENTATION

1. Proclamation No. 0225, a Proclamation to Recognize Manitou Springs' Commitment to Valuing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in our Community

Councilor Fortuin made a statement regarding the proclamation, the community's values, and the current political environment.

The City Council read Proclamation No.0225 into the record, recognizing Manitou Springs' commitment to valuing diversity, equity and inclusion in the community.

H. BUSINESS

1. Formal Action on Parking for Soda Springs Park Events

Parks and Recreation Director, Gillian Rossi shared additional parking options for Soda Springs Park, including parking lots at the Mate' Factor Café, the Post Office and potentially the Cliff House. She noted that the area behind Bud Ford Pavillion is not available for parking going forward and that this is beneficial for the trees to avoid compaction on the roots from parked vehicles.

Sally Fitzgerald, 143 Deer Path Avenue, expressed appreciation for the consideration of the trees in the matter.

Jenna Gallas, Event Manager with Visit Manitou Springs, thanked the city for considering the agreement and stated that the Gumbo Tasting at Soda Springs Park during the Mardi Gras event successfully utilized the guidelines outlined in the

agreement. She added that the delivery vehicle is not always a truck, but in some cases, may be a personal delivery vehicle.

There was a brief discussion regarding the verbiage in the agreement, in which Councilor Chandler suggested clearly stating in the agreement what type of vehicles would be allowed or not allowed, such as tour buses.

Councilor Chandler moved to amend the parking agreement to change “delivery truck or equipment trailer” to “delivery vehicle”. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Johnson. The motion was carried unanimously (7-0).

Councilor Shada suggested striking sections four and six from the agreement, so that the agreement would not expire.

There was a general discussion about the wording in the agreement related to long term use of the form, in which it was suggested adding language to the beginning of the document, specifying who the agreement is between, what the event is and the timeframe for the agreement.

City Attorney Jeff Parker advised adding a statement to the agreement that the agreement may be terminated by either party.

Councilor Shada moved to approve the agreement as amended with the beginning of the agreement adjusted to “This agreement is made and entered in to by and between the City of Manitou Springs hereinafter (“City”) and [Event Organizer] regarding [Specify Event]”, sections four and six removed from the agreement, and “This agreement may be terminated by either party in writing at their will” added to the end of section five, which will be renumbered to section four. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wolfe. The motion was carried unanimously (7-0).

2. Consider Appointing Patsy Sitzman to the Urban Renewal Authority Board

Patsy Sitzman shared that she loves Manitou Springs and expressed a desire to help in the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) where she currently resides.

Councilor Shada moved to approve the appointment of Patsy Sitzman to the Urban Renewal Authority Board. The motion was seconded by Councilor Chandler. The motion was carried (7-0).

Councilor Fortuin congratulated Ms. Sitzman and made a statement regarding the Mayor’s authority to appoint members to the URA Board and his decision not to appoint Councilor Fortuin to the board. She stated that there is precedence for a councilor to serve on the board and expressed disappointment in the decision not to appoint her. She added that she willingly and enthusiastically will continue her role as Council Liaison to the board.

3. Consider Appointing Karl Stang to the Pikes Peak Area of Council Government's Citizens Advisory Committee

Mayor Graham stated that Manitou Springs currently has two representatives on the Citizens Advisory Committee, Alan Delwiche and Barbara Winter. He shared that Mr. Delwiche has expressed interest in stepping down.

Councilor Shada moved to approve the appointment of Karl Stang to the Pikes Peak Area of Council Government's Citizens Advisory Committee. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wolfe. The motion was carried (7-0).

4. Consideration of and Potential Decision to Engage an Employment Consultant to Provide Professional Services Related to the City's Employment Environment

Mayor Graham stated that the agenda item is primarily intended to update the City Council. Based on a previous request from the City Council, he shared four options provided by the City Attorney for management training or consulting services to review various city practices. He requested feedback from the Council regarding the scope of work and cost.

Councilor Shada stated that he likes the Civic Canopy 360 evaluation for \$3,000.

Mayor Pro Tem Johnson suggested that if the Council was going to invest in a culture piece that the City Administrator should be part of the conversation. She commented that she believes that the Council is looking for a systemic change that goes beyond just one or two people.

Councilor Chandler stated that she is not concerned about personality types or an overview of the work culture and that she is interested in focusing on any issues with retention, hiring and employee environment.

Councilor Fortuin stated that she is in favor of the Civic Canopy option so that the City Council could start with a 360 evaluation to help guide them towards a more specific contract related to work culture.

Councilor Wolfe expressed concern about retention and stated that she believes this is separate from a 360 evaluation. She added that she would like to prioritize employee retention.

Councilor Chandler stated that she would like a clearer understanding of the specific work product and reports that the City Council would like to receive from any of the chosen services before approving any option.

Mayor Pro Tem Johnson noted that the City Administrator had previously requested that the Council invest in the culture of the community and the city.

Mayor Graham suggested a meeting with Human Resources for an overview. He added that he does not think the issue is unique to Manitou Springs.

City Attorney Parker advised that general personnel policies would have to be discussed publicly, and only specific employee issues could be discussed in an executive session, which would require employee notification.

Councilor Whetherhult stated that she does not think the City Administrator needs a 360 evaluation at this time. She shared that she would be in support of focusing on culture.

There was a brief discussion about discussing former employees with Human Resources in which City Attorney Parker advised that former employees do not fall under executive session because they are non-employees.

Councilor Chandler stated that she would like to ensure that the employees are working in a safe and encouraging environment with potential for growth.

City Attorney Parker advised going back to the consultants with more specificity, including the work product and timeframe desired.

Mayor Pro Tem Johnson suggested that the City consider using the consultants to evaluate staff that the city is retaining and why they are staying too.

There was a brief discussion regarding the information the City Council is looking for, including identifying if there is a problem, what the problem is, and a solution in which it was determined that Mayor Graham would gather more information from the consultants.

I. RECEIVE OR ACT ON COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE

Councilor Fortuin shared that there is a new executive director with the URA, Electra Johnson, and that Executive Director Johnson would like to walk the URA with the Councilors. Additionally, she shared that the URA requested to be included in the city's annual report.

J. CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

City Administrator Howell reported on the following items:

- The City of Manitou Springs is designated as a Tree City USA by Arbor Day Foundation for the fifth consecutive year.
- The Burns Road Properties have been fully processed and are now owned by the city.
- She attended a meeting about federal funding last week and it is still unknown what is happening with funding going forward.
- It appears that the city is not expected to receive the Congressional direct funding of \$500,000 for the Water Meters Project, but the decision has not been made. She stated she will reapply.
- Paving on Manitou Avenue for the Water Main Break is going to be \$88,000.
- The city received the dump truck approved by the City Council.

- Backflow Water testing is completed.
- The Fire Department grant program is expected to roll out April 1, 2025.
 - Mayor Pro Tem Johnson suggested offering a community information meeting regarding the fire mitigation grants.
- The city has applied to the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) for a \$250,000 grant for the Creekwalk Project.
- City Administrator Howell will be presenting to the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) tomorrow for funding that would pay for half of the Water Tank Project.
- The city garden contract has been awarded to Mary Ellen Montgomery and Becky Elder.

K. EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. An Executive Session to determine positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations; developing strategy for negotiations; and instructing negotiators, pursuant to Section 5.1(d) of the Manitou Springs Municipal Charter, concerning the reimbursement agreement between the City and Cog Railway

Mayor Graham read the purpose of the Executive Session into the record at 7:31 p.m.

Mayor Pro Tem Johnson moved to enter the Executive Session for the stated purpose. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wolfe. The motion was carried (7-0).

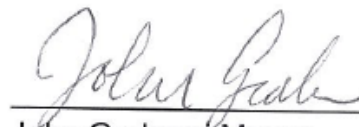
The City Council moved back to Regular Session at 8:18 p.m. Mayor Graham confirmed the Executive Session was held solely for the stated purpose and that no formal decision was made.

L. ADJORN

With no other items to discuss, Councilor Chandler moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Wolfe. The motion was carried unanimously (7-0). The meeting was adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

Attest:


Elena Krebs, City Clerk


John Graham, Mayor