

CITY OF MONTAGUE CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA MINUTES

April 3, 2025

6:30 P.M.

- I. **CALL TO ORDER: @ 6:30 PM**
- II. **ROLL CALL: Vela, Dooley, and Murakami present. Jackson absent, excused. Will attend later.**
- III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**
- IV. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** “This time is set aside for the public to address the City Council on matters listed on the Consent Agenda as well as other items not included on the Regular Agenda within the authority of the City Council. If your comments concern an item noted under New Business or Old Business on the Regular Agenda, please address the City Council when that item is open for public comment.” (The Brown Act requires the public be given the opportunity to address the City Council before action is taken. If there is a Consent Agenda, there is no other opportunity for public comment on items on the Consent Agenda.) The City Council has the right to reasonably limit the duration of each speaker to three minutes. Speakers may not cede their time. The City Council may ask questions but may take no action during the Public Comments portion of the meeting, except to direct staff to prepare a report, or to place an item on a future agenda.

Micah Nichols of Webb Street would like to make some points about Jen Dooleys statement at last month's meeting, which in his opinion wasn't truthful on various accounts. He is not a part of a group and did not pledge a vote for Council Member Vela. Whomever that information was received from was lying and he wants everyone to know about this publicly and that he is very disappointed in Dooley and Murakami. He tried to contact Dooley and Murakami numerous times and reached out. He was never asked if it was true, so he feels that it is a sign of gratitude. Gratitude is shown when someone shows support and it is his opinion that as both a council member and fire chief he has not been shown any support. He has been belittled and called names by his own fire chief. How is he supposed to excel as a firefighter if his own chief is talking down upon him? To say that he is biased because he has a different opinion than them and to not vote on something like that because somebody said something. So this is where the money is going to go instead of to the community. They should have voted, it is as simple as that. He didn't know he was part of any group. He also goes on about OES stating that OES does not invite to strike teams they are in charge of it. It gets handed down to CalFire and they delegate aids which should go to a local fire chief, from there it is on rotation. There were past conversations between Nichols and Murakami and he stated it many times and he never got any support. He has heard every excuse why they weren't going on strike teams, but that is the first he had heard of that. Murakami knows our conversations and Nichols feels he has had no support.

Tara Pipkins. In regards to Dooley's "rant" last meeting, like Nichols said, she does not know where you got your information from, but not one person that submitted their letter of interest had anything to do with the recall. Not one person. You two (Murakami and Dooley) showed your real colors. And when they voted to not get a fifth person in and Dooley's rant, which did not pertain to anything as a commissioners report. As the fire commissioner she knows Dooley received a phone call because the acting fire chief notified a volunteer that he was removing him and the volunteer requested it in writing and the acting fire chief refused that to him. The volunteer contacted Dooley to get some assistance or to notify her to see if she was aware of it and she had no idea. She feels that the fire commissioner should step up to the plate and do what's right on behalf of the volunteers. She goes on to say that Murakami and Dooley are making everyone that works for the city look like idiots. And the recall is moving forward.

Theresa Newton. She noticed on the February meeting there was a discussion of the March 2025 rate increase. She said on the rate sheet it was a proposal not a demand. As council you all increased the water and sewer and not one of you voted on it. She wants to know why. She is also

upset over Dooley's statement at the end of last meeting and points out that Dooley should follow the rules of the council meeting which state that members of the council can not make brief announcements, report, or request staff report to the council on any matter that is subsequent to a meeting.

Kate Mcully. Wanted to take a minute to express her gratitude to everyone that works for the city and community. She thanked everyone for taking on such positions and the obstacles they are trying to overcome. She said that a positive difference was being made and that the community stands behind them and the positive future they are working toward.

Rick Deavela, West Webb. Was worried about Webex not working properly at the last meeting and expressed his concerns about people not being able to ask questions. He is hoping it is working properly today so people can ask questions and voice their comments.

V. AGENDA APPROVAL: Motion to approve agenda as is by Vela. Seconded by Dooley. All Ayes.

VI. CONSENT CALENDAR: Discussion/possible action - All matters listed under the consent calendar are considered routine and will be enacted by one motion unless any member of the Council wishes to remove an item for discussion. The City Clerk recommends approval of the following consent calendar items:

1. Approval of City Council Meeting minutes for 3/6/2025-Approved. Motion made by Vela. Second by Dooley. All Ayes.

VII. DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

1. Sheriff's update for March 2025-Presented by St. Yates. Report in packet.
2. City Engineer's update for March 2025-Presented by Dunn. 12th Street paving.
3. Planning Commission's update for March 2025-Presented by Dunn. City Planner had a workshop for safety element and land use element. Next meeting they will have a public meeting and probably in May Dunn will come to council for approval.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS:

1. Second Reading of an Ordinance Amending Title 2 Administration And Personnel to Clarify Duties of the City Administrator, City Clerk, City Attorney and Director Of Public Works, and Amendment of Section 2.32 Personnel System Employee Handbook relating to City Administrator, City Clerk City Attorney and Director of Public Works. Andrew presenting. The updated amendment in packet. Council did not have any questions. Public comment by Theresa Newton. She wants to know how this is going to affect the pay of the city administrator due to him "wearing many hats". When he is no longer doing multiple jobs, and his job description decreases, is it legal to take away pay? Motion to waive the full reading of the proposed ordinance amending Ordinance 15-01 (Pg 15 of packet) Amending Title 2 Administration and Personnel to Clarify Duties of the City Administrator, City Clerk, City Attorney and Director Of Public Works, and Amendment of Section 2.32 Personnel System Employee Handbook relating to City Administrator, City Clerk City Attorney and Director of Public Works made by Dooley. Seconded by Vela. All Ayes.

IX. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Consideration of amending Resolution 17-36 section 7.1.1 to a simple majority vote-Presented by Vela. This brings us into compliance with State Laws. Dooley asked Andrew if Jackson needed to be here to vote on this. Andrew replies yes. Andrew continues "What this

resolution will do it will specify that the vote can pass with in motion such as tonight with only three members present. Adopting a simple motion not a resolution for money, not an ordinance, but a just regular minute order type action. It can be done with three members present, it can be done with two members of the council.” Andrew continues saying that a Resolution or Ordinance will still need 3 affirmative votes. Motion to amend Resolution 17-36 Section 7.1.1 to a simple majority vote made by Dooley. Second by Vela. All Ayes. Will be effective in 30 days.

2. Consideration/approval of Community Development Block Grant-Presented by Brandy of Great Northern. Grant provides protein and produce for moderate income individuals throughout the county. Asking for a MOU to be signed so they can distribute food in Montague. Motion to approve Community Block Grant MOU made by Vela. Seconded by Dooley. All Ayes.
3. Adoption of The Siskiyou Child Abuse Prevention Council Collaborative Proclamation- Presented by Karen Pautz, president of First 5. Asking for Montague to again adopt a proclamation to support building efforts around ensuring more children in our community are provisioned to spaces that are caring, supportive, and educational. Motion made to approve proclamation made by Vela. Seconded Dooley. All Ayes.
4. Consideration of Spay and Neuter services in Montague-Presented by Jamie Essex. Wanting approval for a spay and neuter pop up clinic. 7:24 PM Jackson arrives. Essex is asking for donation of space (a room) for surgeries. Council approves use of the rotary room in Community Hall and parking for spay and neuter clinic. Motion made by Vela. Seconded by Jackson. All Ayes.
5. Introduction and First Reading of an Ordinance Regarding Fire Hazard Severity Zones- Andrew presenting. He states that we are required by state law to develop the recently published fire hazard zones. It was published by the state in January of this year. There has been some confusion due to recent fires. We do not have any very high zones within the city of Montague which was the only hazard zone with changes. The focus on making these designations has to do with ember prevented fires. It is not a reflection on anything else. The only change that is being recommended is the Amended City Code under Chapter 15.38, adding that section and 15.38020 adding a statement that when there are multiple zones on one lot, then the higher zone would apply. Just to prevent any type of confusion at either staff level or at the resident level and prevent any type of confrontation later on. This way of designating the higher zone on a multiple designation lot is consistent with what the state does with areas that they manage that are not under the local responsibility areas, but are under the state responsibility areas. It will require a second reading next meeting to adopt both the City Code and to adopt a map. The criticism and complaints should be directed towards the legislature and not the council. This council has no choice in this matter to adopt this. It is required by the state. He goes on about a debate about insurance rates. He states that these maps are not what insurance agencies look at to make their decision. They look at similar data and that is what they are reacting to. Public comment made by Theresa Newton. Wanting to know about who is responsible for the boundaries when a home is on the line of city property. Whose responsibility are the weeds on those boundaries and who is to clear them with this new ordinance. Motion to approve Ordinance 25-02 for the first reading of the Fire Ordinance Hazard Variance Zone Map waiving the full reading of this Ordinance 25-02 in Ordinance of the City of Montague, CA adopts the Fire Hazard Severity

Zone Map and amending Title 15 of Fire Hazard Severity Zone made by Vela. Seconded by Dooley. All Ayes.

X. COUNCIL AND STAFF REPORTS for March 2025

1. Fire Department: Murakami presenting. Report in packet.
2. Public Works/City Administrator: Report in packet.
3. Animal Control/ Code Enforcement: Report in packet.
4. City Clerk: Report in packet.
5. Treasurer: Report in packet.
6. Library: Presented by Susie. Report in packet.
7. Commissioner/ Council Statements and Requests: Members of the council may now make brief announcements, reports, or request staff to report to the council on any matter at a subsequent meeting. Vela has a prepared statement. "I would like to address the comments made by council member Jen Dooley at our March 6th council meeting. Council member Dooley stated she received information on a recall group member without proving who she spoke with. She then stated that some recall group members were part of the group we interviewed for the fifth council members seat. She went as far as to say that certain people had been appointed to the seat, I would have their vote to become Mayor and in turn I would fire the City Administrator, the City Attorney, and I'd reinstate Jasen Vela. I voted for John Mearthy for the fifth council seat, and I stand by that view. He was obviously unbiased and qualified for the position. So I am unaware why council member Dooley acted like we didn't have an option for an unbiased council member. I am disappointed in such untruths would be stated from a council member. I have never once spoken about Mayoral Votes with anyone who was interviewed. As for dismissal of employees. These are council decisions. Not Mayoral decisions. As for reinstating Jasen, this is also a council decision. This is an ongoing investigation and charges have been brought forward. At this point we have to let the investigation be completed to make any type of decision. As for when Jasen was put on administrative leave, I asked the City Attorney if I had to recuse myself from the vote. He informed me I did not have to recuse myself and had to have a full vote from council. My vote was to put him on administrative leave. Council member Dooley also stated that I was allowing the recall committee to bully the council. I have no idea who the recall committee consists of and as a single council member I do have any power over the community committees. Her statement was not true. Council member Dooley also stated that there was a community question as to why I have not recused myself from voting about fire department issues. Alluding to community's desire that I should step down altogether. As I already stated, I have been acting under the advice of the Attorney. I would like to know how Council Member Dooley feels about a member of the Fire Department and Acting Fire Chief not recusing himself from voting on Fire Department issues. I was also asked by some citizens of Montague to look into the turmoil of the Montague Fire Department during open council meetings. This was held in a closed session employment evaluation. No action was taken at that time. Something that has been quite common on this council. I joined this council to help the city in any way I can. I have never had any intent to disrupt the city business, and as for claiming that I have, as you have claimed that I have. I would like to know and see the report

of the proof of the statement and I would also like to read from Resolution 17-36414.3 regarding council of city members, fifth member is vacant of city council. City council shall refrain from abusive conduct, personal charges, or verbal attacks upon the character or motivation of others. When I got on this council this council was unison, worked together and it was cohesive. Tak asked me to be on this council and I respected his wishes. I got on this council to do the right thing. I have done a lot for the city as being the Financial Commissioner to get financials, to look at our books. I have done a lot of things for the city, and I don't feel that those comments were appropriate driven at me with no proof or backing." Jackson asked if we are going to do this every time. Vela said no, he just needed to get that off his chest. Murakami follows with the commissioner's statements. We have the egg hunt on April 19th. Murakami would appreciate anyone that wants to participate in an egg stuffing party on the weekend before and anyone that wants to volunteer to help put out eggs and lay out the spaces for the eggs during the Easter egg hunt on the morning of the 19th. A decision was made to stuff eggs on Thursday the 17th at 6:30 PM. Still working on Fireworks stuff. Donations are being made for the fireworks currently.

ADJOURN: @ 8:18 PM

Motion made by Vela. Seconded by Jackson. All Ayes.