

Minutes of the 03.10.2026 regular meeting of the East Hope City Council was called to order at 5:30 pm by Mayor Deborah Field. Council members, Joyce Butler, Michael Wilcox, and Michelle Ward and Pam Brockus were present and constituted a quorum.

Audience Comments:

Heidi Vanderzee asked if she would be able to ask a question about the insurance received on the truck accident.

Approval of Minutes

Council member Butler moved to approve the meeting minutes of 2.10.2026, council member Wilcox seconded, and the motion carried 4-0.

Approval of Bills/Financial Report

Council member Butler moved to approve the February bills for \$35,845.87, council member Wilcox seconded, and the motion carried 4-0. The financial reports were reviewed.

Public Hearing:

New and Increased fee Schedule

Mayor Field introduced Kyle Meschko, the city's contracted engineer with Keller Associates and asked him to give his presentation on the water "new user fee" proposed increase. Kyle presented a slide show that summarized Keller's Water System Connection Fee Study. Connection fees allow new users to buy into the value of the water system and help water system managers keep the system viable. The existing connection fee is \$6,500 and was set up prior to 2004. Based on the existing East Hope bond, the water treatment and distribution system are valued at \$4,839,000 and \$2,027,000 respectively. Based on the valuation of the infrastructure, the maximum recommended connection fee is \$30,500. This is a substantial proposed increase. There have been two major upgrades to the water system over the years. In 2008 due to flooding the city installed a completely new water system intake structure and piping to the treatment plant. In 2018 the city passed a 1.4-million-dollar bond to upgrade the treatment plant, storage tanks, and some distribution lines. The proposed "new user fee" is a one-time fee for new users that covers the existing treatment and distribution infrastructure for a 1-inch connection. Also under water fees, the addition of new fees for delinquent notifications, certified return receipt fees and new fees for bulk water.

The City Clerk also explained the remaining increase and new fees that are also proposed with this combined fee schedule resolution. The city is proposing a new pre-application meeting fee to land use applications, floodplain, stormwater, erosion control and site development, and subdivision/platting. There were proposed increases to land use applications, floodplain, stormwater, erosion controls and site development, subdivision/platting, building permits, and other fees. A new section, engineering fees, proposed new fees for residential and commercial encroachment permits. New administrative fees, return check charge, public records request, transcriptions, and copy fees.

Mayor Field opened the public hearing for testimony. Ley Anne Merica stated that she was in favor of the increased "new user fee". David Rost asked if he did a lot line adjustment would he need to purchase a second water hook up and when these new fees take place. He was told if the city council passed the resolution, once it was signed by the mayor the fees would be enacted. David Rost acknowledged that, that made sense. No further public testimony was given and the hearing was closed.

During the meeting, the city council engaged in a detailed discussion regarding the proposed new and increased fees. Council member Wilcox expressed his support for the increase to the "new user fee" connection rate, emphasizing the importance of updating the fee structure to reflect current infrastructure values and needs.

Following the discussion, council member Brockus made a motion to adopt the proposed fee schedule as presented. The motion was seconded by council member Ward. The council then proceeded with a roll call vote. All members present—Brockus, Ward, Butler, and Wilcox—voted in favor of the motion. As a result, the fee schedule was adopted unanimously with a 4-0 vote.

Old Business:

Truck Donations and Truck Replacement

The city council received an update regarding the status of truck donations. As of the meeting date, the city has collected a total of \$18,100 in donations dedicated to the truck replacement effort. In addition to these contributions, the city has received \$10,705 from insurance proceeds. When combined, the total amount available for the truck purchase stands at \$28,805.

The council was also informed about the opportunity to utilize the State of Idaho's vehicle replacement contract, which allows municipalities to "piggyback" on the state's purchasing agreements. Currently, the state holds contracts with six automobile companies, all of which are located in southern Idaho. Through these contracts, the price for a new Ford Ranger 4x4 has been set at \$33,623.

At this time, the city council plans to continue seeking additional donations to meet the funding goal. No final decisions regarding the vehicle purchase will be made until further funds are secured. The topic will be revisited for discussion at the city council's April meeting.

New Business:

Proclamation Proclaiming April 11th-17th, 2026 as Week of the Young Child

The city council discussed supporting this proclamation since we have a preschool in our city. Ley Anne Merica, vice chair of the Memorial Community Center which houses the Hope Preschool, talked about the preschool and how it fills a vital need in this area. City council member Butler moved to adopt the proclamation, city council member Wilcox seconded the motion, and it carried 4-0.

Discuss Letters Received from Betsy Tidwell Concerning the Street Committee and her 501c3, Building Hope Foundation
Mayor Field discussed the two letters that she and the city council received from Betsy Tidwell. One of the letters was inquiring about what the qualifications were for being on the street committee. Mayor Field stated that this was included in the city's monthly newsletter. She also discussed Betsy's letter concerning her 501c3, Building Hope Foundation and stated that if her foundation wanted to donate dollars to the city for projects that would be great however, if the foundation wanted to write grants representing the city, then the foundation would need to come before council for their approval before doing so.

Staff Report

Planning and Zoning:

BUILDING ACTIVITY: Advisory: The City received one building permit application for a home deck repair/replacement on Aspen Lane. The total number of permits is one for the year thus far. Staff planners have also fielded calls and emails for a pending permit for a single-family dwelling. **LAND USE ACTIVITY: Advisory:** Landowners Mike and Kristin Hauger submitted an application for a variance to the front yard setback on Lookout Boulevard for the construction of a garage on a future homesite. The variance application will be considered by the City Council at a future public hearing. Consideration of this application is under the quasi-judicial procedures of Idaho, meaning the decision makers cannot visit the site, receive or seek information outside of the public hearing process, or discuss amongst the Council members outside of the hearing. Staff will provide a report and application materials to the Council prior to the public hearing. **Legislative Update:** The Legislature has passed H583, which restricts the ability of cities and counties to regulate short-term rental/vacation homes. While East Hope city code meets most of the requirements of the pending state law, a few changes would be needed, including repeal of the city requirements for registration of these uses. As of this date, the bill has not been signed into law. The effective date would be July 1st. Planners have added the topic to the code update discussion list for City Council.

Streets/Water:

Preparing for spring, getting equipment ready, and getting ready to flush hydrants.

Clerk:

Green Mountain Electric submitted some quotes for electrical work at the park and would like to make a formal presentation to the city council. Eric, the owner of the company lives here in East Hope and observed all the extension cords that the city uses during the holiday lights down at the park. He thought the city may be interested in installing outlets throughout the park to help simplify this process and make it safer. The city council is willing to hear his proposal at their May meeting. The Association of Idaho Cities will be holding their spring training in Couer d'Alene on April 14th from 9-3, registration is open until March 27th.

Mayor/Council:

City council member Wilcox gave a brief update on the BCATT monthly meeting. He identified several projects that ITD is planning for the near future.

Announcements

The next regular city council meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 14, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m. on a motion by Council Member Brockus and second by Council Member Wilcox, 4-0.

Deborah Field, Mayor

Attest:

Christy Franck, City Clerk