

CORRECTED
City Council Meeting
April 15th, 2026 @ 7:30 p.m.

The meeting was conducted by Mayor Ted Slivinski at 7:30 p.m. at the Montpelier City Hall.

Present:

Ray Henrie
Shane Johnson
Brady Shultis
Quin Pope
Bobbi Leonhardt-excused
Dan Fisher

Others:

City Clerk Michelle Singleton
Fire Chief Ed Preston
Chief Blake Wells
Superintendent Chris Bruce
Deputy Clerk Seilina Gull
MPD Evidence Tech Brooke Bates

Approval of Agenda:

Councilmember Dan Fisher moved to approve the agenda as written.
Councilmember Shane Johnson seconded. The voting was unanimous in the affirmative.

Approval of Minutes:

Councilmember Shane Johnson moved to approve the April 1st, 2026 minutes as written.
Councilmember Ray Henrie seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Approval of Bills:

Councilmember Quin Pope moved to approve and pay bills in the amount of \$58,498.56 with \$25,150.02 being miscellaneous bills and \$33,348.54 being payroll. Brady Shultis seconded.
The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Public Hearing Gridplex Landholding Annexation/Rezone & Ordinance 689:

Councilmember Shane Johnson moved to go into Public Hearing for the Gridplex Landholding Annexation/Rezone & Ordinance 689. Councilmember Dan Fisher seconded.
Roll call vote was taken; Dan Fisher- yes, Ray Henrie-yes, Quin Pope-yes, Shane Johnson-yes, and Brady Shultis-yes.
The motion passes unanimously.

Mayor Slivinski reported that on March 12, 2026, the Planning and Zoning Commission conducted a public hearing on Gridplex Landholdings LLC's request for annexation and a rezone from agricultural to R-4 for the property located at 946 N 8th, situated within the city's impact area. Councilmember Dan Fisher inquired whether this was the same property previously associated with DEQ concerns, and the mayor confirmed that it was.

The mayor then yielded the floor to Isaac Tafoya of Planning and Zoning. Mr. Tafoya informed the City Council that the Commission voted to forward a recommendation to approve both the annexation and the rezone. He explained that no significant issues were identified during the public hearing, noting that the property lies within the city's impact area adjacent to the industrial park. However, some concern was expressed regarding the U-shaped configuration surrounding county-owned property. He also reported that the Commission received two written comments in opposition and one neutral verbal comment. Mayor Slivinski further stated that no written comments had been submitted to the City Council either in support of or in opposition to the proposal. He noted that two verbal comments were made in opposition and proceeded to read the Bear Lake County letter in full.

Lillas Ipsen-Opposed:

Lillas Ipsen stated that she was also representing Mark Ipsen, who was unable to attend the meeting. Ms. Ipsen clarified that she is not opposed to the expansion of the City of Montpelier, but she does oppose this particular annexation due to concerns involving the adjacent Woods property. She explained that the neighboring property owners may be unable to irrigate their land, or if they do, it could result in flooding on the subject property due to the high-water table in the area, which she noted has caused flooding on at least four occasions.

Councilmember Dan Fisher asked Ms. Ipsen whether she had attended the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting and raised these concerns. Ms. Ipsen responded that she had, stating that she discussed issues related to sewer, the high-water table, and flooding.

Isaac Tafoya responded that Ms. Ipsen did not mention the specific concerns she raised this evening during the Planning and Zoning meeting. Mayor Slivinski added that such matters are generally the responsibility of the developer. Ms. Ipsen then asked how those concerns would be addressed, and the mayor explained that they would be handled through the subdivision ordinance, reiterating that the high-water table is also a developer responsibility.

Councilmember Quin Pope noted that Gridplex's application referenced low-density housing and proceeded to read the definition into the record, pointing out that it did not include any reference to affordable housing. Mr. Tafoya added that while future plans were discussed in general terms, no formal development plans were submitted with the application. He emphasized that the current consideration is limited to annexation and rezoning, and that any subdivision proposal would be subject to a separate review process.

Dani Woods-Opposed:

Dani Woods stated that she opposes the proposed rezone and annexation. She provided background on the history of her property and read an article from the Farm Bureau magazine discussing the differences between residential, agricultural, and commercial land uses. Ms. Woods emphasized that her primary concern is irrigation on her property, stressing that the developer should be responsible for completing the irrigation system. She also expressed a desire to see a fence constructed around the development. Councilmember Dan Fisher asked Ms. Woods whether the proposed project would impede irrigation to her property, and she responded that it would not.

Trevor Neal:

Trevor Neal, representing Gridplex, stated that the application is for annexation into the city along with a rezone from agricultural to R-4 and annexing ten acres at 946 n 8th. He explained that the property borders the city limits and is located within the city's impact area. Mr. Neal indicated that he had consulted with Chris Bruce, the city's superintendent, regarding the availability of water and sewer services. He was informed that the property is capable of being served by city utilities, with a couple of potential connection points identified. Mr. Neal further stated that the developer would address issues related to flooding and groundwater. He also asked Dani Woods if she would be willing to meet with him to discuss her concerns regarding irrigation.

Councilmember Dan Fisher makes a motion to move out of the Public Hearing, back to the regular schedule meeting. Councilmember Shane Johnson seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

The mayor asked the councilmembers if they had any additional questions or concerns regarding the annexation and rezone. The council would need to approve the annexation, the rezone, and the ordinance, which would then need to be read if approved. Alternatively, the councilmembers could choose to table the annexation and rezone.

Councilmember Quin Pope asked Superintendent Chris Bruce if there can be sewer infrastructure with out there being a pump, Chris said that it is possible but the developer would have to have the engineer decide for sure. Councilmember Quin Pope said he does not want to approve the annexation if the city can't get utilities to the property line and have the same issues the city has at moose loop.

The mayor, councilmembers, and the Superintendent discussed potential routes for the sewer infrastructure, including running it down 8th Street to the pump or routing it through city property at the industrial park to the Hunter Subdivision, where infrastructure already exists. Councilmember Dan Fisher noted that the city would be responsible for paying for the water and sewer infrastructure up to the annexation property line. Mayor Slivinski questioned whether annexing the property would be in the city's best interest, stating that he believes it would be, as there are currently few duplexes or fourplexes in the city.

The mayor would like the councilmembers to table the Annexation/Rezone & Ordinance 689 to give the city time to get an estimate of what it would cost the city to take the water and sewer infrastructure to the property line.

Councilmember Quin Pope moved to table the Gridplex Landholding Annexation/Rezone & Ordinance 689 until the city gets estimates to run the water and sewer infrastructure to property line.

Councilmember Ray Henrie seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Austin Budge-Industrial Park:

Austin Budge was present to discuss a lease agreement with the city council. He noted that he had been on the agenda for two previous city council meetings to propose a business plan. He stated that he has been leasing the lot for the past ten years and received an eviction notice in January 2026. Austin provided an update on his development plan, which includes installing nine storage units on the industrial park lot. He explained that the project would require only a maintained road and no city utilities. He expressed interest in continuing under a lease agreement similar to the one he has operated under for the past decade. He outlined to the councilmembers both the benefits and drawbacks of entering into a lease agreement with him versus not doing so. Mayor Slivinski responded that the industrial park was established to bring jobs to the city and that storage units would not significantly contribute to job creation. He added that lease payments could potentially be higher than what Austin had been

paying. However, the mayor emphasized that the primary concern involved falsified documents presented at a prior city council meeting, stating that this issue alone was sufficient reason for the city not to enter into an agreement. Councilmember Dan Fisher stated that Austin had been convicted of a crime related to the falsified documents and clarified that there had been no formal lease agreement in place, only a month-to-month arrangement. Councilmember Quin Pope added that if the city cannot provide utilities or the necessary infrastructure to the lot, it should not enter into any agreements until it is prepared to complete those improvements. Following discussion, the mayor and city council agreed to terminate the lease with Austin Budge and granted him until October 1, 2026, to remove all personal property from the industrial park.

Councilmember Quin Pope moved to end the lease with Austin Budge on lot 1 in the Industrial Park with a deadline of October 1st, 2026 to remove his personal property. Councilmember Ray Henrie seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

SaniStar Water System-Wells C Stock Park:

The Mayor and City Council discussed a proposal from SaniStar to install a SaniStar water system that would allow the city to charge for fresh water use at the Wells C Stock location. During the discussion, councilmembers raised concerns about ongoing issues, including encampments outside city limits, cabin users filling storage tanks, and the use of city water for agricultural purposes without payment, all of which place a financial burden on city taxpayers. The council was informed that the city may have difficulty recovering the cost of installing the SaniStar system. It was also noted that the city is not required to provide fresh water at the RV dump site and could choose to cap the freshwater spigots, while still maintaining water access for cleaning purposes at the dump station. Councilmember Dan Fisher expressed concern about individuals using the clean-out hose to fill water containers and suggested the city install signage indicating the water is for clean-out use only. The mayor stated that City Attorney Doug Wood would be asked to draft an ordinance making it enforceable—either as an infraction or misdemeanor—for anyone using the clean-out water for purposes other than servicing RVs, along with appropriate signage referencing the ordinance. Following discussion, the Mayor and Council agreed to deny the SaniStar water system proposal and to wait for guidance from the City Attorney regarding the ordinance before making a final decision on whether to cap the freshwater spigots.

Councilmember Shane Johnson moved to deny the SaniStar water system at Wells C Stock Park. Councilmember Quin Pope seconded. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Superintendent Chris Bruce-Rocky Mountain Power Street Lights:

Superintendent Chris Bruce provided an update to the City Council regarding street lighting in the City of Montpelier. He explained that Rocky Mountain Power is in the process of phasing out high-pressure sodium (orange-colored) and metal halide (yellowish) lights in favor of LED fixtures. As part of this transition, Rocky Mountain Power is currently unable to repair or replace 15 streetlights that are out in the city, contributing to darker and potentially less safe conditions. Chris reported that there are 173 streetlights in Montpelier that need replacement with LED units. Rocky Mountain Power has offered to complete the upgrades at a total cost of \$40,924.98. He noted that if other cities in the county also participate in similar upgrades, the cost to Montpelier could be reduced by approximately \$4 to \$5 per light. He further explained that converting all streetlights to LED would result in an estimated annual savings of \$14,723, with a return on investment of approximately 2.78 years. In response to questions from the council, Chris clarified that the project would involve replacing only the head units of the streetlights, not the entire poles, and that the new fixtures would be dark-sky compliant and have a ten week turn around. Chris also stated funds are available in the city's street lighting fund to cover the cost of the upgrades.

Councilmember Shane Johnson moved to approve the Rocky Mountain Power streetlight conversion to LED fixtures at a cost not to exceed \$40,924.98. Councilmember Brady Shultis seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Brandon Wells-Letter For 530 Wells Dairy Rd Approval to Build on Non-Conforming Lot & Approval Septic Tank:

Stephanie Wells was present to speak on behalf of her husband due to a work obligation. Stephanie explained to the City Council that they had previously met with Planning and Zoning at their meeting on April 9, 2026, and were advised to attend the City Council meeting to request an approval letter to build on their property located at 530 Dairy Road. She stated that their property lies within city limits and is zoned AG. According to city zoning codes, a lot must be at least 2 acres to be eligible for building; however, their lot is 1.5 acres, making it a non-conforming lot. Stephanie explained that the lot was legally split in 1950, prior to the adoption of current zoning regulations, which qualifies it as a legal non-conforming lot. Stephanie also requested approval to install a septic system, as the sewer line in that area is not deep enough to accommodate a connection. Mayor asked Superintendent Chris Bruce about the sewer, and Chris confirmed that the sewer line is only approximately 5 feet deep, making a septic system necessary. After discussion, the City Council agreed to approve the Wells' request to build a residential home and to install a septic system.

Councilmember Quin Pope moved to approve Brandon and Stephanie Wells to build a home on their 1.5-acre lot at 530 Wells Dairy Road and to pursue installation of a septic system. Councilmember Ray Henrie seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

P&Z Recommendation-Laeth Hillier Conditional Use Permit:

Planning and Zoning Chair Heidi Christensen presented the Planning and Zoning Commission's recommendation to the City Council regarding a conditional use permit request from Laeth Hillier for one shipping container at 454 Clay Street. A public hearing was held on April 9, 2026. No written comments were submitted either for or against the request, and one neutral verbal comment was received. Christensen noted that the container is already on the property, has been sided and painted, and is not being used to store flammable materials. The Planning and Zoning Commission recommended that the City Council approve the request.

Councilmember Dan Fisher moved to approve the Conditional Use Permit for Laeth Hillier at 454 Clay Street for one storage container. Councilmember Shane Johnson seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Shane Johnson:

Councilmember Shane Johnson reported that the Chamber has 60 members and will be holding its Fall Festival on September 19, 2026.

Brady Shultis:

Councilmember Brady Shultis reported that the Montpelier Community Foundation is close to securing all matching funds for the restroom project at Heritage Park and noted that the foundation has postponed its meeting until next week. He also provided an update from the Montpelier Golf Commission, stating that they purchased a used 2017 Jacobsen greens and tee box mower for \$25,000 to replace outdated equipment.

Superintendent Chris Bruce

Superintendent Chris Bruce informed the City Council that the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is proposing to increase fees from \$4.00 per connection to \$8.00 per connection. He noted that the city currently has approximately 1,400 water connections. The proposed increase is due to federal funding cuts, and the DEQ has not raised these rates since 1993.

Fire Chief Ed Preston:

Fire Chief Ed Preston asked the City Council if they would be monitoring water use in the City of Montpelier due to Governor Brad Little signing an emergency drought declaration for Idaho.

Public Comments:

Dani Woods reminded the City Council that April 18, 2026, is the feral cat spay and neuter drive at Bear Lake Animal Hospital.

Destin Hennick asked if the city has a disturbing the peace ordinance, noting that he found information online listing quiet hours from 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. Chief Wells responded that the city ordinance does not specify set quiet hours and that enforcement also follows Idaho state statute, which requires the disturbance to be malicious. He added that residents should contact the city if they have a complaint. The mayor stated that all city ordinances are available online at montpelier.id.gov and said he would have Chief Wells look into the issue further.

Mayor Ted Slivinski adjourned until the next regularly scheduled meeting on May 6th, 2026 at 7:30p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Michelle Singleton
City Clerk