

1 **MINUTES OF THE HELPER CITY COUNCIL MEETING**
2 **Thursday, February 6, 2025**
3 **at 6:00 p.m.**
4 **in the Council Chambers**
5 **19 South Main Street**
6 **Helper, Utah 84526**
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9 **ATTENDANCE:**

10 Mayor Lenise Peterman

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12 **Council Members:**

13 David Dornan
14 Robert Olson
15 John Serfustini
16 David Palacios
17 Edward Chavez

18 **City Staff:**

19 City Recorder: Billie Heilesen
20 Deputy Recorder: Shaley Vasquez
21 Community Administrator: Cole Stapley
22 Police Chief: Sean Draper
23 Police Officer: Newman
24 Public Works Co-Director:
25 DJ Romero
26 Museum Director: Roman Vega
27 City Attorney: Dominique Kiahtipes

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32 **CITIZENS:**

33 Harry Reddington, Brad Harmon, Charlene Burnham, Gary Bemha, Keith
34 Bateman, Nancy Elkins, Dave Katsuki, Brittanie Anderson, Ryan P, Kenna Haycock,
35 Angel Dalpiaz, Val Marietti, Ben Levinger

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38 **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

39 No Public Comment
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41 **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 2, 2025 MEETING AND**
42 **JANUARY 8, 2025 SPECIAL MEETING**

There were no corrections to minutes.

43 Council Member Dornan moved to approve the minutes from January 2, 2025 and
 44 special meeting January 8, 2025. Council Member Serfustini seconded the motion.
 45 Motion carried, the Council roll call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Dornan</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Serfustini</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>X</u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

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50 **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF A LARGER, FLAT HEADSTONE**
 51 **FOR A GRAVESITE - GARNETTE DALPIAZ**
 52

53 There was a lengthy discussion between Angel Dalpiaz, Val Marietti, and Council.
 54 Angel Dalpiaz proposed to Council a larger headstone for her plot that expands
 55 toward the length of the grave instead of the standard traditional grave for a flat
 56 stone. Mrs. Dalpiaz continues to explain to Council that her grandson’s headstone is
 57 separate from her daughter’s headstone. She would like to design a different style
 58 and length than what had been done for her daughter and grandson. Val Marietti
 59 contributes to the explanation of the headstone, stating that normally with the
 60 length of the plot, headstones go 24 inches max. Continuing, Mrs. Dalpiaz wants to
 61 have a single 4 foot stone instead of a 2 foot stone going length of the plot versus the
 62 traditional placement of the width of the plot.

63

64 Council Member Dornan refers to Public Works Co-director DJ Romero of any
 65 downsides and maintenance of laying a headstone in the way of length rather than
 66 width of the plot. Public Works Co-director Romero answered that there is concern
 67 with laying a headstone in the proposed way, as when they dig graves the crew tries
 68 to go between the stones for a lesser chance of breaking a headstone. Continuing
 69 that with a 4 foot stone the crew would then be running it over and risk the chance
 70 of cracking the stone.

71

72 City Attorney Dominique Kiahtipes brings to Mayor Peterman the updated changes
 73 of Helper City’s ordinance for headstone sizes made in 2022. Public Works Co-
 74 director also added that changes were made from only allowing flat headstone to
 75 allowing both flat and upright headstones.

76

77 Val Marietti added that Mrs. Dalpiaz’s concerns are that she had buried her
 78 daughter with a flat headstone and does not want to place an upright headstone
 79 next to her daughters. Mrs. Marietti also included to Council that typically when

80 digging a grave or placing a stone, the crews straddle the headstones as an attempt
81 to not drive over them and to decrease chances of cracking the stones; with the
82 proposed stone by Mrs. Dalpiaz, that will not be likely to do.

83
84 Council Member Serfustini voiced that his concern is the City's protection in
85 liability to the increased risk of damage to the stone. Suggesting that Mrs. Dalpiaz
86 knowledgably signs an exception stating her understanding of the increased risk of
87 damage to the headstone and will not hold Helper City liable for any damage. Mrs.
88 Dalpiaz responded that she understood and that she can't imagine there be much
89 damage because it will be a flat headstone.

90
91 Council Member Dornan asked if it is granite and Council Member Olson asked how
92 thick the stones are. Val Marietti answered both questions that the stone will be
93 granite incased in cement with a thickness of 6 inches of concrete on all sides and
94 bottom and 3 inches of granite.

95
96 Council Member Dornan also asked Public Works Co-director Romero how common
97 it is to drive over and crack a stone. Public Works Co-director Romero answered
98 damage has happened in the past but it does not happened very often as they try to
99 avoid any risk of damaging stones.

100
101 Council Member Olson asked how common a 48X36 headstone is outside of Helper
102 City. Mrs. Marietti informs that every cemetery is different and our local cemeteries
103 around Utah, typically max at 30 inches with Price and Helper maxing at 24 inches.
104 Also stating that plot sizes in other cemeteries are also around 10 foot plots versus 8
105 foot plots in Helper City.

106
107 Council Member Dornan asked if there would be a contractor hired for placing the
108 stone of this size. Val Marietti responded that it would be her headstone company
109 that would place the stone. Continuing to explain that the concern is how the grave
110 settles after the stone is placed depending on the weather the cemetery sees and the
111 maintenance to the cemetery to aid in settling.

112
113 Mrs. Marietti also explained that most the damage she sees is by human influence,
114 however, there are still instances where over time by mother nature, typically
115 around a 20 year time, cracks will start to develop and water will seep in
116 contributing to the breakdown and will need to be replaced. Council Member
117 Dornan asked Val Marietti if the granite stone could be easily removed from the
118 concrete to which Mrs. Marietti answered that the concrete is not hard to get off the
119 stone with a sledgehammer and is often done by her headstone company to fix
120 headstone foundations and generally last for 20 years if it's a successful concrete
121 pour.

122

123 Council Member Palacios asked for his understanding what kind of equipment is
124 prone to breaking or cracking a headstone. Council Member Palacios is answered
125 several times that the common times damage occurs is by trucks for vaults, digging
126 graves, trucks to place headstone, etc. Furthermore, Mrs. Marietti added that often
127 times that is why the center stone is placed specifically in the center so that
128 equipment can straddle the headstone to decrease the chance of damaging a
129 headstone.

130
131 Council Member Palacios asked how full the gravesite for her plot is being
132 answered that it is in a more populated area. Public Works Co-director Romero
133 noted that with it being in a fuller area, that lessens the likelihood of damage.

134
135 Council Member Dornan moved to approve a larger, flat headstone for a gravesite
136 under the condition of signed liability paperwork and further research approval by
137 City Attorney. Council Member Serfustini seconded the motion. Motion carried, the
138 council roll call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Dornan</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Serfustini</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>X</u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

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143 **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL TO PLACE A PLAQUE BY THE**
144 **CROSS LOCATED AT THE OLD CHURCH NEAR THE HELPER CITY**
145 **CEMETERY - BRAD HARMON**

146
147 Harry Reddington stood before Council and introduced Brad Harmon to give the
148 presentation of the plaque they are requesting to place at the first St. Anthony's
149 church near the Helper Cemetery. Brad Harmon went on to inform Council that
150 the plaque will acknowledge numerous religions practiced by the various
151 nationalities in the Carbon and Emery County areas. The plaque will also be
152 similar to the previous plaques along the Helper City walkway.

153
154 Mr. Harmon also informs Council that the dedication date is planned for September
155 13, 2025 at 11 am. There will also be a cleanup of the area prior to the dedication
156 date. Continuing, that there is also research being conducted to identify all the
157 different religions in the area for example, Episcopalians, LDS, Catholic, Greek
158 Orthodox, Buddhist, etc.

159

160 Mr. Reddington and Mr. Harmon went on to thank Roman Vega for his help of
161 contributing historical information and knowledge. They want the community to
162 gain historical knowledge, noting that they have noticed many people don't know
163 what the cross signifies or that there once stood the first Catholic Church in Helper
164 City before burning down.

165
166 Council Member Dornan's question was answered that the cross is located on
167 Helper City property. Mr. Reddington also answered Council Member Dornan's
168 question of how many signs they usually place a year, with the answer being
169 around 1 to 2 plaques a year while also repairing previous plaques and making
170 informative books to go along with each plaque that is placed.

171
172 Mayor Peterman commends the Clampers community group for their work, events
173 and contributions they make around the community.

174
175 Council Member Dornan moved to approve placing a plaque by the cross located at
176 the old church near Helper City cemetery. Council Member Olson seconded the
177 motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Dornan</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Serfustini</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>X</u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

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DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF LOCAL CONSENT FOR SHIVA INVESTMENT LLC CONVENIENCE STORE AND GAS STATION - VISHNU PATEL.

Kenna Haycock introduced herself to Council as the manager at The Last Chance Store. Kenna Haycock stated that she was asked by the new owner to attend the Council meeting for the local consent for selling beer in Helper City limits.

Council Member Dornan informs Council that the convenience is the shell gas station previously known as Swifts and has gone through new ownership. The business has already gone through Helper's Planning and Zoning meeting for their business license approval and are at the last step for the local consent approval by Helper City Council.

196 Council Member Dornan asked how many other stores the two gentlemen at the
197 Planning and Zoning meeting own. Ms. Haycock answered that they have a few up
198 in Northern Utah, one in Idaho, and some in Southern Utah.

199
200 Kenna Haycock also informed Council that all the employees are already all
201 certified in alcohol and tobacco sales for the store.

202
203 Council Member Palacios moved approve local consent for Shiva Investment LLC
204 convenience store and gas station. Council Member Olson seconded the motion.

205 Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Dornan</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Serfustini</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>X</u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

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210 **PRESENTATION BY THE HELPER PROJECT DETAILING A SHORT HISTORY**
211 **AND THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE COMMUNITY AND UPDATING**
212 **INFORMATION ON THE HELPER CORRIDOR PROJECT**

213
214 Keith Bateman presented himself before the City Council board as the Chair of the
215 Helper Project and introduced Ben Levinger. Mr. Bateman commended Council for
216 their hard work for the City and gave an overview of The Helper Project. Mr.
217 Bateman continued to state The Helper Project was founded by Roy and Anne
218 Jespersen, and one of the first projects worked on was to redo the railroad corridor.
219 Also stating that since its start, The Helper Project as raised and donated over
220 \$500,000, with most of the expenditures being based here in Helper with the
221 exception of scholarships. The rule for scholarships changed a couple years ago due
222 to the lack of candidates, expanding the qualifying area to all of Carbon County.
223 With that change, the total college scholarships amounted to nearly \$700,000 for
224 students.

225
226 Council Member Dornan asked if most or all the scholarships go to students who
227 attend USU Eastern, with the reply from Mr. Bateman that the scholarships can go
228 all over but can be based on particular subjects.

229
230 Furthermore, Ben Levinger explained to Council that back in 2016 a master plan
231 was started to talk about how to make the railroad in Helper safer and establish
232 less opportunity for people to walk on or along the tracks. That plan got done in

233 2017 and had a typically defined corridor and a well-defined right-of-way space,
234 along with defining and categorizing parking. Also noting that the railroad is a bit
235 of a struggle to work with when it comes to communicating and timing to get plans
236 and timelines, so the work has been done diligently from 2017, being fortunate to
237 receive funding from the state for phase one and phase two environmental
238 assessments of the corridor area. Phase one is doing the actual assessment and
239 phase two is sampling and seeing what contaminants there are. The state
240 consultant Teracon is the company who will conduct the testing. Once those tests
241 are done, estimated to be completed around 60 days, the results will be provided at
242 no cost as the State got a grant from EPA for the test and results to be completed.
243 Helper City and The Helper Corridor should receive the results at the end of
244 quarter two as shown, which will all be public knowledge.

245
246 Mr. Levinger goes on to state that this project is bigger than just The Helper Project
247 and Helper City as it will set a precedence for all the railroad communities along
248 the corridor. After the results are received, The Helper Project and Council will
249 have a meeting to discuss options to move the project forward, partnership with the
250 City, partnership with the State and potentially partnership with the Federal
251 government. Mr. Levinger added they have a draft piece from Union Pacific, which
252 has been already been reviewed.

253
254 Council Member Palacios asked for clarification on where the corridor runs through
255 Helper City. Mr. Levinger clarified via map where the corridor runs and stated that
256 the farther north, the narrower the railroad right-of-way becomes.

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258 Exhibit A

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263 **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF SPENDING \$5749 TO REPLACE**
264 **THREE POOL DRAINS WITH INSTALLATION FOR THE POOL.**

265
266 Public Works Co-director DJ Romero informed Council that last pool season an
267 inspector came and told him that pool drains have an expiration date, stating
268 plastic gets weak and wears over time. There have been reports over the past few
269 year of kids being sucked straight down and drowning due to drains and the new
270 drains are made to be compliant and will no longer be able sucked down. After
271 looking for an expiration tag, public works is unable to locate an expiration date and
272 by the time they were informed last year, the season was already over. Without that
273 tag and to be compliant, they need to replace the drains or the pool cannot open this
274 season.

275

276 Mayor Peterman informed Council that \$50,000 has already been budgeted for pool
277 maintenance and repairs. Mayor Peterman also mentions the Parks and Recreation
278 grant, which has the drain replacements included in its expenditure. However, if
279 Helper City does not receive the Park's and Recreation grant, the drains will still
280 need to be replaced.

281
282 Public Works Co-director DJ Romero told Council that he had already ordered the
283 drains per approval and he has been waiting for 2 months for the parts to arrive
284 from the distributor.

285
286 Council Member Dornan's question was answered that the concerns for the drain
287 replacements are more of a safety issue than functionality and that Public Works
288 should be able to replace the drains themselves rather than hiring out for the labor
289 work.

290
291 Council Member Dornan moved to approve spending \$5749 to replace three pool
292 drains with installation for the pool. Council Member Chavez seconded the motion.
293 Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Dornan</u>	<u>X</u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
<u>Serfustini</u>	<u>X</u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>X</u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

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298 **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF NEW FIRE CONTRACT WITH**
299 **CARBON COUNTY.**

300
301 Mayor Peterman states that the fire contract is a one year contract and questions
302 City Attorney Dominique Kiahtipes if she had a chance to look over the contract and
303 if she has any concerns. City Attorney Kiahtipes informs Mayor Peterman and
304 Council that the contract appears fine, her only concern is that the contract sounds
305 very broad in the terms of Helper needing to respond to calls past Wellington City.

306
307 Council Member Chavez voiced concerns for having Helper's Fire Department
308 responding to calls in lengthy distance due to taking immediate response times
309 away from Helper City residents. Mayor Peterman explained that it is common
310 with all the fire crews in the county to respond to larger fire calls as it's an all
311 hands on deck situation, and she has seen it firsthand.

312

313 Council Member Dornan asked for clarification on the term new contract, meaning
314 brand new or updating a current contract. City Attorney Kiahtipes answers Council
315 Member Dornan that it's a new contract in the terms that the previous contract has
316 expired but it appears similar, if not the same as the contract prior because there
317 are not any new changes.

318
319 Council Member Chavez moved to approve a new fire contract with Carbon County.
320 Council Member Serfustini seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call
321 vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Dornan</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Serfustini</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

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326 **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF UMCA CONFERENCE**
327 **EXPENSES AND PER DIEM FOR COLE AND BILLIE.**

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329 Community Administrator Cole Stapley informed Council that the conference is an
330 annual conference for City Recorders to attend. Community Administrator Stapley
331 also noted that Helper City's previous recorder also attended each year. With those
332 duties split between himself and the new City Recorder Billie Heilesen, the
333 conference would be beneficial for both to attend for the lessons that pertain to their
334 specific duties.

335

336 Mayor Peterman also pointed out that per Helper City's previous recorder, the
337 conference is also beneficial to build relationships with other City Recorders.

338

339 City Recorder Bille Heilesen added that there are also recertification's that City
340 Recorders have to renew every year and the conference helps go over and refresh
341 that material. Mayor Peterman included that the conference also goes over any new
342 legislation that the City will have to keep updated on.

343

344 City Recorder Heilesen also answered Council Member Dornan's question that the
345 conference is held in Cedar City.

346

347 Council Member Serfustini asked what UMCA stands for and City Recorder
348 Heilesen answered Utah Municipal Clerks association.

349

350 Council Member Chavez asked if the pricing shown is for a single person or both.
351 Community Administrator clarified the pricing reflects for one person. So the total
352 shown would be added together for two people to attend.

353
354
355 Council Member Chavez moved to UMCA Conference expenses and per diem for
356 both Cole and Billie. Council Member Dornan seconded the motion. Motion carried,
357 the council roll call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Dornan</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Serfustini</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

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362 **REPORTS ONLY FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS AND DEPARTMENT HEADS.**

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367 **CLOSED SESSION FOR LEGAL.**

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369 Council Member Chavez moved to a closed session for legal. Council Member
370 Serfustini seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as
371 follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Dornan</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Serfustini</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

372
373 Council Member Dornan moved to leave closed session. Council Member Chavez
374 seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Dornan</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>
<u>Serfustini</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>_____</u>	<u>_____</u>

<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

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379 **ADJOURNMENT:**

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There being no further business, Council Member Olson moved to adjourn. Council Member Palacios seconded the motion. Motion carried, the council roll call vote is as follows:

<u>Council Member</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Absent</u>
<u>Dornan</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Chavez</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Olson</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Palacios</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Serfustini</u>	<u>X</u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
<u>Motion passed</u>			

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387 I hereby certify that the foregoing represents a true, accurate, and complete record
388 of the Helper City Council meeting held on Thursday, January 2, 2025.

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393 Lenise Peterman
394 Mayor



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398 Billie Heilesen
399 City Recorder

400 Approved on March 6, 2025

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Exhibit A