



CITY OF ELY

501 Mill Street Ely, Nevada 89301
City Hall (775) 289-2430
Cityofelynv.gov

ELY CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

January 22, 2026, 5:00 p.m. – Ely Volunteer Fire Hall – 499 Mill Street – Ely, Nevada

1. Mayor Robertson called the regular meeting of the Ely City Council to order at **5:00 P.M.** Pastor Daniel Gbundema offered an invocation. Mayor Robertson led in the Pledge of Allegiance and asked for Roll Call.

Members present:

Mayor Nathan Robertson
Councilman Terrill Trask
Councilwoman Melody Van Camp
Councilwoman Michelle Yeoman
Councilman Dennis Perea
Councilwoman Jerri Lynn Williams-Harper

City Officials and staff present in the building or via video conference:

City Clerk Jennifer Lee
City Treasurer Janette Trask
City HR Director Desiree Ramirez
Public Works Director Mike Cracraft
City Engineer B.J. Almberg
City Attorney Chris Arabia
City Police Chief Scott Henriod
City Administrative Assistant Patti Cobb

Also, in attendance: Members of the public in attendance at the Ely Volunteer Fire Hall signed in (appears below) and the following people attended via video conference: Geri Wopschall; Eugene Harper; Ab; Wyatt Cox, KELY; Patrick “Chris” Flannery; Lena Ocasio, USDA; and Rochelle Lewis, SAFEbuilt.

ELY CITY COUNCIL ATTENDANCE LIST

DATE: JANUARY 22, 2026

Print name below

Dean Reynolds
Michelle McEntosh
Brandon Hill
Rev. Daniel Gbundema
George Chachas
JENNIFER DREWESHE
Shemayne P.Hs (GBC)
Tony Locke-Arcia Power

Print name below

EXHIBITING DEPT

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Jennifer Drew-Lesher stated I work in the Building and Planning Department and I'm here again to ask for your support for agenda item B-2 for Chris Flannery. I have spoken to you a couple of times now about the level of professionalism that I feel Chris would bring to the table, as well as the vast amount of knowledge that he has. As we've seen many times over the past several years, this is not a position that just anyone can handle. I am confident that Chris is a perfect fit for this position, the building official, and will likely remain in that position for many years to come. I ask for your support on this agenda item and look forward to working with Chris again. Thank you for your consideration.

George Chachas stated on your agenda item 4 regarding the City Clerk's report, there's nothing in writing regarding my items brought to the Council. On item 4, regarding the Building Official's report, there's nothing in writing, again, regarding items brought forth to the Council in particular regarding the building at 292 Aultman Street qualifying as a commercial building and meeting building codes. I did not see a foundation constructed; this is important and required by Code. Nothing has been brought forward in regard to the erosion that I'm suffering at 622 High Street under the Engineer's report or the Clerk's report. There is nothing reported in regard to RVs being licensed. I'm on the Planning Commission and I haven't seen one application. There is nothing in those reports reflecting what is being done regarding a request that I put in for a refund on a permit. I paid to re-roof my property at 692 and because of illness I am not going to do it at this point. I want my refund, and I will take it out when I am ready to go. There is nothing in the reports on who authorized the 6-foot fence on the 1200 block of Mill Street. Again, either we have rules and regulations, or we don't. My brother got cited for a 3-foot picket fence by your inspector and I was noticed on so-called violations on my property. You have a violation within one block. My property's clean and fenced off. I'd like some answers, Mayor.

3. Mayor – Discussion/For Possible Action – Approval of Agenda, including removal of agenda items.

Councilwoman Van Camp moved to approve the agenda as presented. Councilwoman Williams-Harper seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

4. CITY DEPARTMENT REPORTS

➤ CITY CLERK

City Clerk Lee stated on January 9th, I swore Administrative Assistant Cobb in as Deputy City Clerk and I would like to congratulate her on that. For those planning to run for a City office this year, February 11th is the deadline to establish residency and to have registered to vote in the City of Ely. If those two things aren't done by February 11th, then you won't be able to file under the current NRS.

➤ CITY ENGINEER

City Engineer Almberg stated the Morley Water Project we talked about last time is into the State. We got our comments back and they were trivial in nature, and we have already electronically submitted them back in earlier today and we should have it out to bid very soon. The Morley sewer portion of this project is complete, and we hope to have it in front of you at the first meeting in February to accept the project. Other general office things we are working on are compiling all of the pumping coming out of each of our individual wells, so that we understand which wells are cheapest to pump and strategically plan some things to see if we can save a few dollars in pumping costs over time. We have been working with Chris on water rights and hopefully we will get our water rights deeded from the County soon.

5. REPORTS

➤ COUNCILMAN PEREA

Councilman Perea stated I was able to attend the Railroad Board meeting, and the financials are in terrific shape, but that's kind of a mixed bag, because one of the reasons it looks so good is we don't have steam engines running and they are more expensive

when they are running. They are getting very close, as I understand it, to rolling out a steam engine and getting that going. The financials really do look good, steam engines or no steam engines.

Mayor Robertson asked, “Does the cost for repairs not offset the cost they had for running them?”

Councilman Perea stated no, it is interesting.

➤ **COUNCILWOMAN YEOMAN**

Councilwoman Yeoman stated I attended some of the Fire and Ice events this past weekend, and that was a successful weekend and successful event.

➤ **COUNCILWOMAN VAN CAMP**

Councilwoman Van Camp stated on Tuesday, I attended the Natural Resources Advisory Meeting Committee. We had an update from the Center of Biological Diversity folks on the Greenlink Transmission Line and other expansions concerning the impacts on the sage-grouse habitat, wildlife and landscape. There was a discussion on BLM removing many of the habitat restrictions. There was a presentation on the Southwest Intertie Project (SWIP) North Transmission Line and the Robison Summit Substation Expansion Project, and that's going to start in our area this spring. This project is 285 miles long, and it brings about 300 construction jobs. It will end in Twin Falls, Idaho, and will be in commercial operation in 2028. There were discussions on the different water resources. Many of the agencies were not in attendance to give a report, but the Department of Wildlife did give an update. They said there was no ice at Cave Lake, and the Fishing Derby was cancelled. Many of the antelopes in the different herds located south of Highway 50 have been collared as those areas down there are eyed for some development; and the Department of Wildlife is testing bats in our area for the white nose syndrome.

➤ **COUNCILMAN TRASK**

Councilman Trask stated I attended the Fire and Ice concert at the Convention Center and that was a fun night with some really fun space trivia. Last night, I was able to briefly attend the Main Street Mixer for small businesses on Main Street, and I think there was some good discussion and concerns that came out of that, that can be addressed with some of our business licensing that we've been talking about.

➤ **MAYOR ROBERTSON**

Mayor Robertson stated I attended some of the Fire and Ice events with our Fire Department. I appreciate everybody's work on everything they do. I know it takes a lot of hands to make things like that happen, and also appreciate everybody's participation.

6. THE MAYOR WILL RECESS THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING FOR A MEETING OF THE ELY LIQUOR LICENSING BOARD.

1. Board Members – Discussion/For Possible Action – Approval of Class II Liquor License to Rajbir S. Bathla for *Bathla Inc DBA Danny's Place Discount Liquor* located at 1301 E. Aultman St., Ely, Nevada.

Councilwoman Perea moved to approve of a Class II Liquor License to Rajbir S. Bathla for *Bathla Inc DBA Danny's Place Discount Liquor* located at 1301 E. Aultman St., Ely, Nevada. Councilwoman Yeoman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

THE MAYOR WILL RECESS THE ELY LIQUOR LICENSING BOARD MEETING FOR A MEETING OF THE ELY CITY COUNCIL.

7. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION ONLY OF THE ELY CITY COUNCIL.

A. CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Robertson disclosed my husband is a member of the Ely Volunteer Fire Department and is not treated any differently than any of the others so I will not be abstaining, and I also don't vote.

Councilwoman Van Camp stated I would like to disclose my granddaughter is an employee of the City of Ely Fire Department.

MOTION: Move to approve the Consent Agenda item 7A-1 Minutes and 7A-2 Bills.

Moved by: Councilman Trask Second by: Councilwoman Williams-Harper Vote: Unanimous

1. Discussion/For Possible Action – Minutes.
 - January 8, 2026
2. Discussion/For Possible Action – Bills.
 - January 9, 2026
 - January 14, 2026

B. NEW BUSINESS

1. Mayor Robertson – Discussion/For Possible Action – Approval to enter into Professional Services Agreement between the City of Ely and SAFEbuilt, LLC for as needed building inspection and plan review services.

Mayor Robertson stated this was lightly discussed at the last meeting that having a firm on hand that we could use anytime we are between building officials or anytime we need outside building services for larger projects would be a good idea. We appreciate, Jennifer Drew and City staff for working on getting this put together and here before you, as quick as they did. We do have a representative from SAFEbuilt on Zoom.

Rochelle Lewis with SAFEbuilt LLC stated it's a pleasure to be here and connect with all of you. I'm available for any questions. It is an as-needed, on-call, building support service so when you are short-staffed or have a gap between staff we are here to help and assist. We don't charge you when you don't utilize our services. If and when you do need a plan review, a remote video inspection, or potentially need us on the ground for some on-site inspections, then you can utilize us, and then we will bill you for that. We are excited for the opportunity if this passes tonight.

Councilman Perea stated I believe you mentioned it's this outfit that serves other municipalities in Nevada.

Mayor Robertson stated I am aware that SAFEbuilt serves the City of Fernley. Is that correct?

Rochelle Lewis with SAFEbuilt LLC stated yes, we serve about five municipalities in Nevada, including Fernley, Henderson, and a few others. We are in conversations with the County of Elko right now. In general, we do support over 2,000 municipalities throughout the United States. We have a big presence in California, as well as, throughout the mountain states just to the east of Nevada.

Councilman Perea approved to enter into a Professional Services Agreement between the City of Ely and SAFEbuilt, LLC for as needed building inspection and plan review services. Councilman Trask seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Council Members – HR Director Ramirez – Chris Flannery – Discussion/For Possible Action – Determination of possible start date as City of Ely Building Official after January 22, 2026.

Mayor Robertson asked, “Chris do you have an update for the Council?”

Chris Flannery stated I do. We have some dates scheduled and set, and it looks like I could be up there, and take over the seat on February 23rd if that works for everybody.

Mayor Robertson stated since the agreement with SAFEbuilt was approved, they plan to have a kickoff meeting on Monday to fill in the interim time and how that would work, so we do have coverage until the 23rd.

Councilman Trask stated there was an original agreement of a moving bonus and different things like that, but now we're taking on another service, and we've had gaps we've had to pay for. I don't know if there is an appetite of readdressing that piece?

Mayor Robertson stated I think since we're not paying for a building official, that's kind of been offset by the contract services we have been paying, and I don't know exactly where we are on one versus the other, but is there anything you could add on that, Janette?

City Treasurer Trask stated yes, because we haven't paid any wages or benefits since Don has been gone.

Councilman Trask stated that makes sense to me, but I am just concerned if we get to the 23rd and....

Mayor Robertson stated Chris, how confident are you in the February 23rd start date?

Chris Flannery stated it is a solid date.

Councilman Perea moved to approve February 23, 2026 as a start date for Chris Flannery as City of Ely Building Official and if there is any pushback the position will be readvertised, not disqualifying Chris. Councilwoman Yeoman seconded the motion.

Mayor Robertson asked, “Chris, does that motion work for you?”

Chris Flannery stated absolutely, and I apologize for this inconvenience. I wish it was a little better outcome in the beginning, but we are there now and things are going to be okay.

The motion carried unanimously.

3. Councilman Trask – Councilwoman Williams-Harper – Discussion Only – Update on Porter Group efforts on the City of Ely’s behalf to secure federal and State funding.

Activity Report for The City of Ely

FOR THE MONTH OF December 2025

Appropriations Requests

- First Responder Communication Equipment Upgrade was fully funded at \$5,000,000 in the Senate CJS Report Language.
- Senate is considering CJS as part of minibus legislation planned to add to must pass legislation at end of January to fund the government.

Additional Grants

- Reaching out to the delegation to begin working through the Bureau of Reclamation to address the Water Meter Project
- Targeting the WaterSmart grant program with Bureau of Reclamation
- Had a discussion with FRA staff regarding our revised strategy for submittal of our CRISI Grant, scheduling a follow up meeting in early December to go over additional details and get feedback.

Additional Activities

- Provided federal updates on a variety of topics important to the City of Ely, including pending action in the House and Senate, potential legislative updates, and updates on grant award announcements.
- Bob Lucey visited with the Ely team in mid-December in order to check in in person

City Clerk Lee stated as Brian is out on extended family medical leave, Bob Lucey set up a meeting with the BLM Branch Chief, Matt Fockler and I to discuss receipt of the rest of our Green Up funding. Bob is locating another FRA contact for us, because the former one didn't respond to our meeting request at the end of last year. He is working on that so we can still visit with the FRA before they notice the CRISI funding opportunity. The last bit of news is our first responder earmark in the Commerce/Justice/Science Appropriation passed the Senate last Thursday, so we are getting close to having that funding.

Mayor Robertson stated I was unable to attend the meeting but did have a conversation with Congressman Porter. Our contract for Porter Group is going to be up for renewal in March and in discussions with staff we have been throwing around the idea, do we want to apply for more CPFs or not? If we don't, what would Porter's role be, if any? I was up front with Congressman Porter about where we were. They're putting together a proposal of possible things they would recommend doing. We'll have that conversation internally with staff to bring some recommendations to the Council, and of course, Councilman Williams-Harper and Councilman Trask can be part of that. We will then have the open conversation here in a council meeting, deciding how we'll be doing that going forward, and planning during this budget season what we'll be doing for the next year. If you have any thoughts or ideas in the meantime, please funnel those to your fellow council members, or Jennifer, and we'll incorporate those.

Councilwoman Williams-Harper stated I would just like to say the federal updates we get are very thorough.

Mayor Robertson stated having them to run down some things like our Green Up grant and other stuff has certainly been valuable. There's no such thing as a free lunch when it comes to federal dollars, and with administration changes, and with federal government shutdowns and this and that, the ground kind of shifts quite a bit, and making sure that we've been working, to keep those, projects going has been no small task. Maybe you've noticed some of the cameras going up around City Hall and some of the other public places and that is happening from these grant dollars. We have started to get some of that funding reimbursed, which has been great, but it has been a herculean effort by our staff and having the Porter Group there to help with that has certainly proved valuable at some junctures.

4. Councilman Perea – Discussion/For Possible Action – Approval of the Second Lease Amendment (Renewal) between the City of Ely and the State of Nevada for the lease of 545 Mill Avenue.

Councilman Perea moved to approve the Second Lease Amendment (Renewal) between the City of Ely and the State of Nevada for the lease of 545 Mill Avenue. Councilwoman Van Camp seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Councilman Perea – Public Works Director Cracraft - Discussion/For Possible Action – Approval to purchase 2026 Chevrolet Medium Duty Dump Truck with Rugby 3-4 Yard Dump/Tow Pack and Western 10/6 MVP3 Plow/Spreader for the Streets Department in the amount of \$134,074.25, to be expensed out of the City of Ely’s Public Transit funding.

Public Works Director Cracraft stated we learned on the one storm we had this year that the bigger plows in the canyon and on the terrace just aren't working and the little one we have now has been in the shop for just about a year. It is a 2000 and has seen its life. We would like to order this and get it before the next fiscal year.

Mayor Robertson asked, “The funds for this, will be expensed next year, when it comes, or this year?”

Public Works Director Cracraft stated this year. The funds will be coming out of the Public Transit funds which has \$210,000. After talking to the Treasurer, we will have \$80,000 left. We will need \$30,000 for utilities and engineering, so that'll leave \$50,000 for a small project or something by the end of the year.

Councilman Perea stated in talking to him, I was actually kind of surprised that the unit itself was only \$65,000, that's cheaper than a pickup these days.

Mayor Robertson asked, “Does that come through state purchasing?”

Public Works Director Cracraft stated yes.

Mayor Robertson stated we usually get some pretty good prices through them.

Councilman Perea stated it is twenty-six years old and it is time to replace it.

Councilman Trask asked, “Was this in the original budget?”

Public Works Director Cracraft stated no, it was not. We thought we would have the little red International truck back and it is still sitting in the shop, so this is a need.

Councilman Trask stated out of the \$210,000 budget this is a pretty substantial amount. Are we giving up projects to do this, or what's happening there?

Public Works Director Cracraft stated that puts projects into the next fiscal year through RTC and public transit, but we can still do some small ones.

Councilwoman Van Camp asked if this is approved tonight when will you get it.

Public Works Director Cracraft stated we have to have it here by June 30th.

Councilwoman Williams-Harper moved to approve purchasing a 2026 Chevrolet Medium Duty Dump Truck with Rugby 3-4 Yard Dump/Tow Pack and Western 10/6 MVP3 Plow/Spreader for the Streets Department in the amount of \$134,074.25, to be expensed out of the City of Ely’s Public Transit funding. Councilwoman Van Camp seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Director of the Great Basin College Ely Center Shemayne Pitts stated I am just here tonight to talk to you about the new and exciting Construction Technology Skills Certificate that we have been waiting for, and that you requested. The Mayor asked for it, the Superintendent asked for it, and we are excited to listen to you and answer that call. The program starts tomorrow. We are launching that in partnership with White Pine County School District. I want to tell you a little bit about it. It's open to the public, high school students fifteen years and older. Those completing this program will receive ten college credits. This skill certificate was developed in this format to support high school students and working adults, so they could try to fit it into their regular life. Some of the key details of this certificate are that any high school student aged sixteen and older is eligible to enroll in the program free of charge, thanks to EmployNV. High school students who complete the course will earn dual credit, both in the high school and at the college. The program is open to all residents, including high school students and adult learners. Credits are transferable to NSHE institutions for further education in construction management for those who wish to go on in that field. The classes introduce students to essential construction concepts, including job site safety, blueprint reading, proper use of hand and power tools, and basic framing techniques for floors, walls, ceilings, and roofs. So, it's a good basic foundational program. This initiative supports workforce development in our community and provides valuable educational opportunities for White Pine County and Eureka County residents. We encourage your support in promoting this valuable program, so if you know of anyone who's interested, please send them to the college. They can still enroll. We can still get them in. I appreciate your time and look forward to working together to benefit our community. On a personal note, thank you for the support that you give to Great Basin College; I appreciate each one of you.

Councilwoman Williams-Harper stated Great Basin College is really working hard to keep our kids here and give them the skills they need for things here, so I know what you do over there, and thank you so very much.

George Chachas stated ongoing concerns regarding his request for the address and a contact name regarding the Bell Avenue Water Main Upgrade Project CDBG 22/pf/04 and who inspected the project; the Contract Change Order for the Bell Avenue Project and the damage to his property not being addressed; not receiving a copy of letters that the City sent to Ralph Jones, Tina Templer, Jeremy Lilly, Doug Lilly, Kelly Gubbine, Elaine Blackham, Chris Walker, and Jane Montgomery stating standards they needed to meet to get a refund; who authorized the City crew to work on the sewer line at 785 Bell Avenue; the sewer problem he took care of at his residence located at 681 Parker; who authorized a 6-foot metal fence installed on the 1200 block of Mill Street; someone removing debris from the White Pine Mobile home park and it is not fenced off and is an attractive nuisance; encroachment at 408 High Street; selective enforcement; and the improper disposal of asphalt and large pieces of concrete behind 2113 South Street and if it was taken to the Landfill or a hazardous waste facility and what they paid to dispose of it.

9. ADJOURNMENT: THE MEETING MAY BE ADJOURNED BY APPROPRIATE MOTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL.

Councilwoman Williams-Harper moved to adjourn the regular meeting of the Ely City Council at 5:36 p.m. Councilman Perea seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.



MAYOR



ATTEST