



**AGENDA
CITY OF LAUREL
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
THURSDAY, JUNE 18, 2026
6:30 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

WELCOME . . . By your presence in the City Council Chambers, you are participating in the process of representative government. To encourage that participation, the City Council has specified times for citizen comments on its agenda -- once following the Consent Agenda, at which time citizens may address the Council concerning any brief community announcement not to exceed one minute in duration for any speaker; and again following Items Removed from the Consent Agenda, at which time citizens may address the Council on any matter of City business that is not on tonight's agenda. Each speaker will be limited to three minutes, unless the time limit is extended by the Mayor with the consent of the Council. Citizens may also comment on any item removed from the consent agenda prior to council action, with each speaker limited to three minutes, unless the time limit is extended by the Mayor with the consent of the Council. If a citizen would like to comment on an agenda item, we ask that you wait until the agenda item is presented to the Council by the Mayor and the public is asked to comment by the Mayor.

Any person who has any question concerning any agenda item may call the City Clerk-Treasurer's office to make an inquiry concerning the nature of the item described on the agenda. Your City government welcomes your interest and hopes you will attend the Laurel City Council meetings often.

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call of the Council

Approval of Minutes

Correspondence

Council Disclosure of Ex Parte Communications

Public Hearing

Consent Items

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

*The Consent Calendar adopting the printed Recommended Council Action will be enacted with one vote. **The Mayor will first ask the Council members if any Council member wishes to remove any item from the Consent Calendar for discussion and consideration.** The matters removed from the Consent Calendar will be considered individually at the end of this Agenda under "Items Removed from the Consent Calendar." (See Section 12.) The entire Consent Calendar, with the exception of items removed to be discussed under "Items Removed from the Consent Calendar," is then voted upon by roll call under one motion.*

Ceremonial Calendar

Reports of Boards and Commissions

Audience Participation (Three-Minute Limit)

Citizens may address the Council regarding any item of City business that is not on tonight's agenda. Comments regarding tonight's agenda items will be accepted under Scheduled Matters. The duration for an individual speaking under Audience Participation is limited to three minutes. While all comments are welcome, the Council will not take action on any item not on the agenda.

Scheduled Matters

1. Letter of Interest Larry McPhail.
2. Letter of Interest Kris Voegel.
3. Letter of Interest, Nathan Herman

Items Removed From the Consent Agenda

Community Announcements (One-Minute Limit)

This portion of the meeting is to provide an opportunity for citizens to address the Council regarding community announcements. The duration for an individual speaking under Community Announcements is limited to one minute. While all comments are welcome, the Council will not take action on any item not on the agenda.

Council Discussion

Council members may give the City Council a brief report regarding committees or groups in which they are involved.

Mayor Updates**Unscheduled Matters****Adjournment**

The City makes reasonable accommodations for any known disability that may interfere with a person's ability to participate in this meeting. Persons needing accommodation must notify the City Clerk's Office to make needed arrangements. To make your request known, please call 406-628-7431, Ext. 2, or write to City Clerk, PO Box 10, Laurel, MT 59044, or present your request at City Hall, 115 West First Street, Laurel, Montana.

File Attachments for Item:

1.

****Process for Thursday's Meeting****

For scheduled matters, each candidate will draw from a bucket to determine the order of participation (first, second, and third).

Candidates selected to go second and third will wait in the City Conference Room with a staff member. To ensure a fair and equitable process, candidates are asked to remain off their phones while waiting.

Each candidate will be given 3–5 minutes to introduce themselves. Candidates will then be asked eight questions, in addition to the eligibility criteria questions. Each candidate will have up to three minutes to answer each question.

Upon completing their interview, the candidate will return to the City Conference Room. The Council will be given time to finish recording their notes and observations. Once the Council indicates it is ready, the next candidate will be brought into the Council Chambers.

After all three candidates have completed the interview process, the Council will open the meeting for public comment. Candidates will remain in the City Conference Room during this portion of the meeting. The City Council will listen to public comments but will not respond to them.

Following the public comment period, the Council will begin its discussion. At the conclusion of that discussion, the Council will take a brief recess. Council Members will be instructed not to speak with anyone during the recess, as this time is intended for individual reflection and consideration before voting. Members of the public are asked not to approach Council Members during this time.

Candidates will then be brought back into the Council Chambers for the voting process.

Any Council Member may make a motion/second to appoint a candidate as Mayor. Council will then have discussion prior to voting. Each Council Member will be called upon individually to cast their vote. A candidate must receive five votes to be appointed Mayor.

If the motion fails, any Council Member may make a motion/second for any of the remaining candidates. Council will again discuss prior to voting.

File Attachments for Item:

2. Letter of Interest Larry McPhail.

Kelly Strecker

From: Larry McPhail <breakthrough2k2@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 8, 2026 11:04 AM
To: City Clerk; Ward 1A; Ward 1B; Ward 2A; Ward 2B; Ward 3A; Ward 3B; Ward 4A; Ward 4B
Subject: Mayoral candidate

I am writing this email as my formal declaration and request to be entered as a candidate for the vacant Mayor's seat. If further information is needed prior to interviews, please let me know as soon as possible so that all necessary information is present as needed. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Regards,

Larry McPhail
breakthrough2k2@hotmail.com
406-970-5251

File Attachments for Item:

3. Letter of Interest Kris Vogelee.

Kris R. Vogeles
306 E. 4th Street
Laurel, Montana 59044

June 12, 2026

Laurel City Council
City of Laurel
P.O. Box 10
Laurel, Montana 59044

Re: Letter of Interest - Mayor of Laurel, Montana

Dear Members of the Laurel City Council:

Please accept this letter as my formal expression of interest in serving as Mayor of the City of Laurel.

Laurel is not just where I live. It is home. It is where my wife, Beth, and I have invested our lives, raised our family, built businesses, served in schools and community organizations, supported local events, and watched our children and grandchildren become part of the life of this community. Our family gives me a daily reminder that the decisions made by city leadership are not abstract. They affect families, neighborhoods, schools, small businesses, public safety, city employees, and the future our children and grandchildren will inherit.

My interest in serving as Mayor is rooted in community and a sense of obligation. I believe Laurel needs calm, steady, practical, and unifying leadership during an important time in the city's history. The next mayor should be someone who understands that city government is not about personal ambition or politics. It is about service, trust, communication, fiscal responsibility, and making decisions that protect the long-term well-being of the entire community.

Over the past several decades, my life and work have centered on leadership, service, and people. I have served in leadership roles in education, youth services, residential care, behavioral health, nonprofit management, and small business. I have supervised large teams, worked through difficult personnel and budget challenges, supported children and families, helped strengthen organizational culture, and been responsible for practical decision-making in complex environments. I understand that leadership requires listening, patience, consistency, accountability, and the ability to make hard decisions without losing sight of the people those decisions affect.

My professional background and educational pursuits can be reviewed in the attached resume.

These experiences and coursework taught me that organizations function best when people are respected, expectations are clear, communication is honest, and leadership is present. Those same principles apply to city government. City employees need support and direction. Citizens need transparency and confidence. Council members need a mayor who will work with them in good faith. The community needs leadership that brings people together rather than driving them apart.

My family and I have also tried to support Laurel in practical ways. That includes community sponsorships, youth activities, school involvement, local events, sports, rodeo, chamber events, public safety organizations, and efforts that bring people together. I have served as a public school board trustee, a board member for Grace Montessori Academy, a coach, a youth leader, and a volunteer in programs serving children, families, and young people. These experiences have shaped the way I view leadership. A healthy community is built through service, relationships, accountability, and people willing to step forward when they are needed.

If appointed Mayor, my priorities would be straightforward:

To help restore trust, stability, and confidence in city leadership.

To support city staff and promote a healthy, respectful, and accountable workplace culture.

To work cooperatively with the City Council while respecting the role and voice of each council member.

To communicate honestly and openly with the public.

To approach city finances, contracts, staffing, infrastructure, planning, and growth with fiscal responsibility and common sense.

To protect Laurel's character while preparing responsibly for the future.

To help ensure that major decisions affecting the community are made transparently, carefully, and with meaningful public involvement.

I do not believe Laurel needs a mayor who comes in with all the answers. Laurel needs a mayor who is willing to listen, ask good questions, respect the people who live and work here, make decisions based on facts, and keep the good of the community at the center of every discussion. I would approach this role with humility, seriousness, and a strong sense of responsibility to the people of Laurel.

This is a city with a deep history, strong families, dedicated workers, generous volunteers, local businesses, churches, schools, youth programs, service organizations, and people who care deeply about where they live. Laurel deserves leadership that honors that foundation and helps move the city forward in a steady, respectful, and responsible way.

Thank you for considering my letter of interest. I would welcome the opportunity to visit with the Council, answer any questions, and discuss how I may be able to serve Laurel during this important time.

Respectfully submitted,



Kris R. Vogele

KRIS R. VOGELE

306 E. 4th Street, Laurel, Montana 59044

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Experienced executive leader, business owner, investor, and community servant with more than three decades of leadership experience in business operations, education, youth services, residential care, nonprofit management, staff supervision, budgeting, organizational culture, and community development. Background includes senior executive leadership in education, behavioral health, residential treatment, youth development, small business ownership, public & private school board service, and local civic engagement.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Member / Investor | 2017-Present

Portable Restroom Service, LLC dba URAPEEIN PORTA POTS, Laurel, MT

- Participate in ownership, strategic planning, and consultation for a portable restroom service company serving residential, commercial, industrial, construction, agricultural, and event customers.
- Provide consult to management and operations staff with business development, marketing, customer service, pricing, contracts, scheduling, and route-service planning.

Member / Investor | 2013-2025

VUE, LLC dba The VUE and BREW, Laurel, MT

- Participated in ownership and business operations of a local theater, coffeehouse, and community gathering space in downtown Laurel.
- Participated in local economic development by investing in a downtown Laurel business and supporting community activity in the city center.
- Worked through business challenges involving staffing, customer traffic, costs, facility needs, and changing market conditions.

Owner | 2013-2016

The Bargain Loft, Laurel, MT

- Owned and operated a retail and online arbitrage business, including customer service, inventory management, purchasing, pricing, sales, and daily online operations.
- Managed business finances, vendor relationships, marketing, merchandising, and customer relations.
- Oversaw scheduling, staffing needs, product display, store organization, and retail operations.
- Developed practical small-business experience in budgeting, cash flow, customer service, and local market conditions.
- Maintained responsibility for business decision-making, problem solving, and public-facing service.

Chief Operating Officer | 2008-2013

Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch, Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility, Yellowstone Academy, Billings, MT

- Served in a senior executive leadership role overseeing complex youth, behavioral health, education, residential treatment, group-home, and farm/ranch operations.
- Provided operational leadership for facilities and programs serving children, youth, and families with significant treatment, educational, behavioral, and residential needs.
- Supervised and supported senior staff, program leaders, department directors, and multidisciplinary teams.
- Assisted with budgeting, staffing, compliance, quality assurance, risk management, facility operations, and organizational planning.
- Helped maintain compliance with licensing, accreditation, safety, treatment, education, and regulatory requirements.
- Worked with clinical, educational, residential, administrative, and support departments to improve coordination and service delivery.
- Addressed personnel issues, fiscal stewardship, employee culture, organizational structure, program performance, and operational efficiency. Implemented organization-wide measures to eliminate a \$1.5 million deficit and the repayment of a fully drawn \$2 million line of credit in less than three years.
- Participated in strategic planning, policy development, leadership meetings, and problem-solving for a large service organization.

The Milton Hershey School – 1999-2008

The Milton Hershey School - Hershey, Pennsylvania

Senior Div Director for Home Life 2003-2008)

Houseparent (1999-2003)

- Served in a senior leadership role within the Home Life division of a residential school serving 1,400 children and youth.
- Performed Interest Based Bargaining in collective bargaining meetings and managed grievance processes and arbitrations.
- Responsible for oversight, supervision, and training of 128 full-time staff and 115 part-time staff.
- Oversaw residential-life programming, student support, houseparent/staff supervision, student development, and day-to-day living environments. Also collaborated with Career & Technical Education to broaden the classroom to the home, shop and farm.
- Provided leadership for staff teams responsible for student care, safety, discipline, personal development, and residential programming.
- Assisted with policy implementation, training, staffing, performance management, and program improvement.
- Worked with educational, counseling, residential, and administrative teams to support student success and healthy living environments.
- Addressed student behavior, family communication, staff development, crisis response, and residential-program quality.
- Also I served with my wife Beth as MHS Houseparents for 12 boys in a home year-round.

Dean of Student Development | 1997-1999

Central Methodist University, Fayette, MO

- Provided leadership in student affairs, career development, athletics, dining services, student government, intramurals, campus security, and campus activities. Served as guest pastor for engagement with local churches.
- Worked with students, faculty, staff, and administrators to support student success, retention, discipline, and campus culture.
- Assisted with policy development, student conduct processes, crisis response, and student support services.
- Helped create programs designed to strengthen student engagement, responsibility, leadership, and personal growth.
- Supervised 45 staff and 25 student leaders involved in residence life and student development functions for a campus of 2,400 students.

Executive Director | 1996-1997

Boys and Girls Clubs of Yellowstone County, Billings, MT

- Served as executive leader for a youth-serving nonprofit organization.
- Oversaw daily operations, staff supervision, youth programming, budgeting, fundraising, board communication, and community partnerships.
- Worked to provide safe, positive, structured programming for children and youth.
- Managed organizational priorities, donor relationships, public relations, and program development.
- Supported staff and volunteers in delivering youth development, recreation, mentoring, and after-school programming.
- Represented the organization within the community and helped strengthen relationships with families, schools, donors, and local partners.

Graduate Resident Director | 1995-1996

Montana State University, Bozeman MT

- Served in a residence-life leadership role while completing graduate-level work.
- Supervised student resident assistants and supported residential students in university housing.
- Assisted with student conduct, crisis response, conflict resolution, programming, and residence-hall operations.
- Helped develop community standards and supported student safety, accountability, and personal development.
- Worked with university staff to address student concerns, housing issues, and campus-life matters.

Director of Residence Life | 1992-1995

Rocky Mountain College, Billings, MT

Resident Director (1989-1992)

- Directed residence-life operations for a private college campus.
- Supervised residence-hall staff, student leaders, housing assignments, student conduct, and residential programming.
- Supported student development, campus safety, conflict resolution, crisis response, and community-building efforts.
- Developed and implemented residence-life policies, staff training, and student-support programs.
- Worked closely with college administrators, faculty, staff, students, and families to support student success and campus culture.
- Managed housing-related operations, student concerns, discipline matters, and residence-life planning.

EDUCATION

Duquesne University Graduate School - Leadership and Business Ethics | 2003-2006

Relevant or representative coursework and areas of study: Theories and Models of Leadership, Organizational Communication, Conflict Resolution, Leading People, Ethical Leadership, Business Ethics, Organizational Behavior, Executive Leadership, Change Management, Budgeting and Finance for Leaders, Innovation, Decision-Making, and Organizational Strategy, Leadership Character, Adversity, Ethical Decision-Making, Politics of Civic Problems and Social and Public Policy Analysis.

Temple University Graduate School - Educational Psychology | 2002

Relevant or representative coursework and areas of study: Educational Psychology, Development and Learning Across the Lifespan, Applied Research Methods in Educational Settings, Developmental Psychopathology.

Central Methodist University Graduate School - Adult Education | 1998-1999

Relevant or representative coursework and areas of study: Adult Learning Theory, Curriculum and Instruction, Assessment and Evaluation, Professional Development and Training, Leadership in Organizations.

Rocky Mountain College – B.S. Psychology, Religious Studies, and Business | 1989-1992

Relevant or representative coursework and areas of study: Psychology: Human Development I, Human Development II, Educational Psychology, Abnormal Psychology, Behavior Management, Social Psychology, Cognitive Psychology, Psychology and Law, Research Methods in Psychology, Psychological Testing and Assessment, Internship / Applied Psychology. Religious Studies / Philosophy: Introduction to Philosophy, Ethics, Christian Ethics, Theology and Culture, Values, Beliefs, and Cultural Identity, Moral Reasoning and Ethical Decision-Making, Business/Finance: Principles of Management, Probability & Statistics.

North Central Bible College - Theology and Youth Ministry | 1986-1989

Relevant or representative coursework and areas of study: Biblical Studies, Old Testament Studies, New Testament Studies, Biblical Interpretation, Theology, Church History, Christian Ministry, Pastoral Ministry, Youth Ministry, Children, Youth, and Family Ministry, Spiritual Formation, Christian Leadership, Church Administration, Ministry Internship / Practical Ministry Experience, Counseling and Helping Skills in Ministry, Sociology and Psychology of Youth and Family Systems, Ministry Leadership, Discipleship, and Mentoring.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Role	Location / Organization	Years
Board Member	Grace Montessori Academy	2026
Community Sponsorships	Fall Festival, Chief Joseph Run, Rock the Block, Laurel Chamber Brewfest, Battle of the Badges, Hometown Troops, Laurel Little League, Laurel Recreational Soccer, Laurel Dodgers, Laurel Fire & EMS, Burlington Little League, Holiday Nights at ZooMontana, Montana Renaissance Faire, NILE/Billings Rodeo, Jim Bridger Days Rodeo, Bridger Youth Rodeo, Bridger Little League.	2013-2026
Government Relations	Laurel C.A.R.E.D.	2025-2026
Public School Board Trustee	Laurel and Yellowstone Academy	2023-2024; 2010-2012
Legion and High School Baseball Coach	Hershey, Pennsylvania; Billings; Laurel	2000-2003; 1997; 1991-1993
Church Youth Leader	Moline, Illinois; Laurel	1988-1991
Inner-City Basketball Camps	Minneapolis, Minnesota	1986-1988
YMCA Summer Sports Camp Director	Billings	1990
Camp Counselor	Clydehurst Christian Ranch	1987

Brittney Harakal

From: Ward 4A
Sent: Saturday, June 6, 2026 8:40 AM
To: Brittney Harakal
Subject: FW: Big Decision - I want to encourage you...

For public comment records ...

From: The Front Porch <thefrontporchmt@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 4, 2026 10:04 AM
To: Ward 1A <ward1a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2A <ward2a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2B <ward2b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3A <ward3a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3B <ward3b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4A <ward4a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4B <ward4b@laurel.mt.gov>; Civil Attorney <civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov>
Subject: Re: Big Decision - I want to encourage you...

Good morning

I am following up to see if any council members were able to get and read through this email as well?

Thank you for your time
Cheryl

On Tue, May 26, 2026 at 3:15 PM The Front Porch <thefrontporchmt@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear City Council Members,

I wanted to share some thoughts and concerns regarding the process of filling the current mayoral vacancy and the importance of maintaining stability and leadership for our city during this transition.

My first concern is the question of leadership during this matter. This is a significant decision with long-term impacts, and I hope the Council approaches it with clear direction, transparency, and confidence. The city is facing important issues and decisions, and the community is looking to its elected leaders to provide steady guidance through this process.

My second concern relates to the method by which a mayor is selected. I understand there are differing perspectives on this issue and time is counting down for the council. If the Council appoints a candidate, there are clear advantages. Council members are actively involved in city matters and understand the challenges currently facing Laurel. They may be in a position to identify someone with the knowledge, experience, and leadership abilities needed for the specific circumstances the city is navigating right now.

Our laws and charter are very clear regarding vacancies, and I believe there is purpose behind those provisions — helping avoid costly and burdensome special elections while allowing for smoother transitions during the middle of terms.

Thirdly, I have concerns about selecting a mayor who does not already possess a strong understanding of how the city operates, how decisions are properly made, and how local government procedures must be followed. A lack of knowledge regarding city operations, the Laurel City Charter, Montana laws, and city codes can lead to unnecessary mistakes, procedural issues, and legal complications. Ultimately, those challenges can result in increased attorney fees and additional costs to taxpayers that are not currently accounted for within the city's budget. Strong leadership should not require the community to absorb avoidable financial consequences due to inexperience in municipal governance.

I know we have not heard from the state, which will determine what avenue you must take! I would encourage you to come up with some sort of interview process that would engage the council in finding the right fit for our community and not make this decision lightly or by a popular opinion. It is time Laurel had a leader that we can trust and has the knowledge we need for these upcoming challenges we are facing as a community.

With those thoughts in mind, I would encourage the Council to consider appointing Kris Vogel to serve as mayor through the remainder of the current term and until the next regular election cycle. If it is ultimately determined that an election is necessary, then the people of our community can decide among whoever chooses to run. However, during this period of transition, I believe stability, steady leadership and knowledge are critical. I personally feel Kris has several attributes that could help guide Laurel through the coming months:

- Knowledge of government processes, codes, laws, and the Laurel Charter
- Administrative and leadership experience
- Leadership grounded in integrity
- Respect for process and procedure
- Ability to work collaboratively while making difficult decisions when necessary
- Focus on continuity and stability during periods of transition
- Commitment to serving the community and the long-term interests of Laurel

Our city is facing important decisions, and strong leadership requires balancing relationships with responsibility, listening with action, and process with progress. My hope is that whatever path is chosen, the Council carefully considers what best serves Laurel as a whole — preserving stability, respecting the charter, maintaining public trust, and ensuring strong leadership moving forward. If there are other strong leaders that are also interested I ask the council to do their due diligence and interview these potential candidates, and make sure those people have the above qualifications!

I have seen Laurel in years past choose people just for having a good heart and willingness to lead ! Those are amazing qualities, however, with the important issues the city is facing. I think it's time to choose a leader that knows the process and is educated with these matters!

Thank you for your service and for the difficult decisions you are entrusted to make on behalf of our community.

Respectfully, Cheryl Hill

--

The Front Porch

Cheryl Hill

406.696.7678

thefrontporch.info

Brittney Harakal

From: Ward 4A
Sent: Tuesday, June 9, 2026 6:57 AM
To: Brittney Harakal
Subject: FW: Mayor appointment

-----Original Message-----

From: Ward 4A
Sent: Tuesday, June 9, 2026 6:53 AM
To: Brian Lubinski <brian.lubinski@gmail.com>
Subject: RE: Mayor appointment

Mr. Lubinski,

Thank you for sharing your thoughts.

CM Mackay

-----Original Message-----

From: Brian Lubinski <brian.lubinski@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 8, 2026 2:04 PM
To: Ward 1A <ward1a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2A <ward2a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2B <ward2b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3A <ward3a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3B <ward3b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4A <ward4a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4B <ward4b@laurel.mt.gov>
Subject: Mayor appointment

Hello,

While I have not been able to make all of the meetings in person, I have been able to watch them via the YouTube channel. The last special meeting had some strong opinions but they all had a commonality within them, to do better for the city. While anyone on the current council might have more "experience" in working with the city, I don't believe it would be the right choice. Many of us have truthfully not paid attention in the past but the severity of what has transpired has brought many of us citizens together. There will be much more scrutiny going forward and that is good for Laurel. Having an existing member become mayor will continue old thought processes and biases rather than a set of new eyes on issues which is what is needed. Many times the right person for the job is someone who initially does not want the job but steps up to sacrifice their time and talent for the good of the people. In my eyes this is Kris Vogele. He has been critical of processes but the first to stand up and apologize if something was misconstrued or misinterpreted. He has been level headed and spoke only on research done in order to be as accurate as possible. He has the citizens best interest at heart and will fight for what is voted on by the people. I hope the council will take him in high consideration for a fresh set of ideas to help our city grow responsibly.

Thanks,
Brian Lubinski

Sent from my iPhone

Brittney Harakal

From: Ward 4A
Sent: Saturday, June 13, 2026 4:39 PM
To: Brittney Harakal
Subject: FW: Letter of Recommendation

From: Laura Kirschenmann <laurakirschenmann@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2026 5:58 PM
To: Ward 1A <ward1a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2A <ward2a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2B <ward2b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3A <ward3a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3B <ward3b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4A <ward4a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4B <ward4b@laurel.mt.gov>
Subject: Letter of Recommendation

To the Members of the Laurel City Council,

It is with both great optimism and unwavering professional confidence that I formally recommend Kris Vogeles for appointment to the office of Mayor of Laurel. As our city navigates this critical transition, we require a leader who balances steady administrative rigor with an absolute commitment to transparency. Kris is uniquely qualified to serve in this capacity, offering the precise blend of experience, fiscal discipline, and collaborative vision needed to guide Laurel forward.

Kris is deeply committed to being a responsible steward of our taxpayer resources. Furthermore, he is dedicated to fostering a culture of open, effective communication—partnering closely with the City Council, city employees, and department heads to ensure our government operates as a cohesive unit.

My support for Kris is grounded in his proven ability to handle complex organizational challenges with a practical, community-focused approach. Kris is not merely a resident and local property owner who cares deeply about Laurel; he is an experienced business professional with a significant track record in operational leadership. Having managed large budgets and overseen diverse workforces, Kris possesses the executive capability necessary to guide city operations, support our city staff, and manage public resources with strict accountability. He brings a seasoned understanding of contracts, infrastructure, and public communication that is essential for restoring order and efficiency to the executive branch.

What truly distinguishes Kris, however, is his tireless dedication to doing things the right way. During recent challenges, he proved to be an indispensable resource for our community. He demonstrated a remarkable aptitude for navigating complex municipal and state-level governance—specifically the Montana Code Annotated and the Laurel City Charter. When faced with administrative ambiguity, Kris chose not to wait for direction. Instead, he led by researching the statutes, engaging with the legal process, and providing the clarity required to ensure our city remained compliant and protected. He has shown, time and again, that he is a leader who rolls up his sleeves, does the homework, and prioritizes the long-term well-being of the city over short-term political convenience.

Kris understands that the role of Mayor requires a balance of humility and firmness. He approaches governance with the philosophy of "getting it right together," and he is fully committed to rebuilding the

public trust that has been strained over the past year. He stands ready to work hand-in-hand with this Council to stabilize operations, improve morale, and tackle our growth, infrastructure, and safety issues with the foresight they deserve.

Laurel needs a Mayor who can provide immediate stability, work constructively with the Council, and communicate clearly with our residents. Kris Vogeles is prepared to step into this role with integrity, competence, and a genuine, unwavering commitment to Laurels future.

I strongly urge you to appoint Kris Vogeles as the next Mayor of Laurel. He has the vision, the experience, and the heart to lead our community through this transition and into a more stable, prosperous chapter.

Respectfully,

Laura Kirschenmann

939 W 4th St.

Laurel, MT 59044

Brittney Harakal

From: Ward 4A
Sent: Monday, June 15, 2026 5:07 PM
To: Brittney Harakal
Subject: FW: Mayor

From: Karl Dan Koch <kdan44@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 15, 2026 1:31 PM
To: Ward 1A <ward1a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2A <ward2a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2B <ward2b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3A <ward3a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4A <ward4a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4B <ward4b@laurel.mt.gov>
Cc: kdan44@hotmail.com
Subject: Mayor

Laurel CityCouncil members:

I strongly encourage the council to appoint and accept Kris Vogeles to the position of Mayor for the city of Laurel.

My name is Karl Dan Koch. I have lived at 320 Colorado Ave. for the past 30+ years. I retired in 2004 after 37 years in the Fire Protection industry with the last 12 years as the Union Business Agent.

In 2004 I applied for and was accepted as a member of the City County Planning Board. I served for 18 years representing Ward One. I enjoyed working with the City, the staff and the Council Member.

I've known Kris Vogeles as a friend and neighbor for many years. His knowledge and his business experience along with his dedication to the City of Laurel is certainly outstanding. Kris takes the time to research valuable Information in order to make the correct decision. I highly recommend the Council appoint Kris Vogeles as Mayor for the duration of the current existing term.

Thank you.

Karl Dan Koch.

Brittney Harakal

From: Ward 4B
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2026 9:22 AM
To: Brittney Harakal
Subject: Fw: Letter of recommendation for Kris Vogeles Mayor position

From: Sandi Whitman <wingwen10@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 15, 2026 5:28 PM
To: Ward 4A <ward4a@laurel.mt.gov>
Cc: Ward 1A <ward1a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2A <ward2a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2B <ward2b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3A <ward3a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3B <ward3b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4B <ward4b@laurel.mt.gov>
Subject: Letter of recommendation for Kris Vogeles Mayor position

Jodi Mackay and City Council Members,

I am writing this in regards to the mayor's position that is going to be filled for our city of Laurel. We are entering into a very critical time for the City of Laurel. We need someone that is willing to put in the time and effort needed not only to run our city efficiently but protect our city at the same time. We need someone dedicated to the City of Laurel and loves it like we all do! We need someone like Kris Vogeles! Kris Vogeles always presents himself in a very professional way and is always trying to help anyway he can to shape the successful future we all want for our city. He would represent all the citizens in a transparent, honest, open and fair way, listening to all that have an opinion regardless of whether he agrees or not. He will make responsible decisions and always abide by the laws and Charter of Laurel. Kris is the perfect choice for mayor because of his dedication and I feel he will accomplish many great things that will benefit our city and help it to prosper. He will serve the City and its citizens with his whole heart, and he will Protect us to the best of his ability. He will do all in his power to help our city grow and develop in a responsible way. Kris Vogeles will not think of this as just a job, he is trying to help our city get on the right track for economic development and protect us all at the same time. Our future of the City of Laurel is being threatened and we need a strong, intelligent and dedicated person to do this job. Please vote for Kris Vogeles for our Mayor of Laurel!

Thank you
Sandi Whitman
806 Wyoming Avenue
Laurel, Montana
Ward 4

Brittney Harakal

From: Ward 2A
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2026 6:55 PM
To: Brittney Harakal; Kelly Strecker
Cc: Kurt Markegard
Subject: FW: Mayoral candidates



Jessica Banks

Ward 2A City Council Member

Mobile: 406-690-7181

Email: ward2a@laurel.mt.gov

P.O. Box 10

Laurel, MT 59044

[Home Page | Laurel MT \(cityoflaurelmontana.com\)](http://cityoflaurelmontana.com)



From: Trish L. <me_is_t1@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, June 15, 2026 7:34 PM
To: Ward 2A <ward2a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2B <ward2b@laurel.mt.gov>
Subject: Mayoral candidates

Hello Ms.Banks and Mr. Edgmond: My name is Trish Little. I and my family live at 803 6th Ave, and have resided in Laurel for over 17 years. My husband is a 3rd generation Laurelite.

I am writing to support the candidacy of Kris Vogele for interim Mayor of Laurel. He is clearly the best candidate out of the three who have expressed interest in the position. He is not only well educated, but highly intelligent, hard working, and dedicated to uplifting and improving our community by working collaboratively with the city council, as well as members of the business community and the citizenry of Laurel.

I think it is profoundly important that you avoid appointing any "insiders" as mayor. We do not need another long term city employee with "good ol' boy" connections throughout our government to serve as mayor. we need someone who will bring to the table a desire to follow procedure, to behave with integrity, humility, honesty, and honor, and bring a new perspective to the business of running our small but precious little town.

I believe that Kris Vogele would be the right man for the job. He is a natural leader, and I genuinely believe he can help our town move forward with renewed vigor, and a greater sense of purpose.

Thank you both for your dedication and unflagging loyalty to the citizens of Laurel.

Trish Little

Brittney Harakal

From: Ward 4A
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2026 5:40 PM
To: Brittney Harakal
Subject: FW: Support for Kris Vogeles as Mayor

From: Jennifer Lorenz <montanahomesolutions@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2026 11:28 AM
To: Ward 1A <ward1a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2A <ward2a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2B <ward2b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3A <ward3a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3B <ward3b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4A <ward4a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4B <ward4b@laurel.mt.gov>; City Mayor <citymayor@laurel.mt.gov>
Subject: Support for Kris Vogeles as Mayor

Dear Acting Mayor Canapé and Members of the Laurel City Council,

I am writing to express my support for Kris Vogeles as you consider candidates for appointment as Mayor of Laurel.

I have had the privilege of knowing Kris both personally and professionally for several years. He has been a friend, a colleague, and someone I have worked alongside in the community. Through that experience, I have seen firsthand how deeply he cares about Laurel and the people who call it home.

As Vice President of Laurel CARED, small business owner of Montana Home Solutions, Member of the Laurel Chamber Board of Directors, and through my work with Beartooth Haven, I have had the opportunity to interact with many community leaders. Kris stands out because he consistently shows up, supports local organizations, and invests his time and resources into making Laurel a better place. He has sponsored and supported our nonprofit for the past three years, not because he had to, but because he genuinely believes in helping his community.

What has always impressed me most about Kris is that his commitment to Laurel is not limited to one issue, one organization, or one group of people. Whether it is youth programs, local events, small businesses, schools, public safety organizations, or community nonprofits, he is willing to step up and contribute. His record of community involvement reflects the same values he discusses in his letter of interest: service, accountability, communication, and putting Laurel first.

I have worked alongside Kris long enough to know that he approaches leadership thoughtfully and with a genuine desire to bring people together. He listens, asks questions, and takes the time to understand different perspectives before making decisions. In a time when our community needs stability, trust, and cooperation, I believe those qualities are especially important.

While I consider Kris a friend, my support is based on more than friendship. It is based on what I have personally witnessed over the years: a man who loves this community, supports it financially and personally, and has dedicated much of his life to serving others. His extensive leadership experience in education, nonprofit management, business, and community service has prepared him well for the responsibilities of mayor.

Thank you for your time and consideration as you move through this important process.

Respectfully,

Jennifer Lorenz

Montana Home Solutions Owner

Beartooth Haven Founder

916 5th Avenue

(406)670-9080

File Attachments for Item:

4. Letter of Interest, Nathan Herman

Dear Laurel City Council,

I am writing to express my interest in being considered for the appointment of Mayor for the City of Laurel.

As a lifelong resident of Laurel, this community has always been my home, and I care deeply about its future and continued success. I have had the privilege of working for the City of Laurel for 22 years, which has given me valuable experience and a strong understanding of city operations and the needs of our residents.

During my time with the city, I have served several positions, including Relief Dispatcher, Relief Operator at the Water Treatment Plant, Operator at the Water Treatment Plant, Chief Operator at the Water Treatment Plant, and Utility Plants Superintendent. These roles have allowed me to work closely with city departments, employees, and community members while gaining firsthand knowledge of the responsibilities and challenges involved in serving the public.

Public service has long been important to my family. Over the years, several members of my family have served the City of Laurel as members of the City Council and as Mayor. Their dedication to our community has inspired my own commitment to serving the people of Laurel.

Throughout my years of service, I have remained committed to helping our community grow while preserving the values that make Laurel special. I believe my experience, dedication, leadership, and deep roots in the community would allow me to serve effectively in the role of Mayor.

I would be honored to be considered for this appointment and appreciate your time and consideration. Thank you for your continued service to the City of Laurel.

Sincerely,

Nathan Herman
1128 7th Avenue
Laurel, MT 59044
406-690-6167