Transparency in Action: Staying Connected with Your City Government

The City of Holden believes that good government starts with open communication. That's why transparency is more than just a buzzword—it's a commitment to keeping residents informed, involved, and engaged in the decisions that shape our community.

One of the ways we demonstrate that commitment is through our public meetings. Throughout the month, City Council **Committees** meet to discuss projects, review policies, evaluate community needs, and make recommendations on a variety of topics. These meetings provide an opportunity for residents to see how ideas are developed and how decisions move from concept to action. We have several City Council Committees that meet monthly including:

1. Public Safety Committee – this is where some of the council members will meet to discuss topics presented by the Holden Fire Department and/or Holden Police Department. They will discuss needed changes to ordinances – always focused on keeping the residents of Holden safe and secure.
2. Budget, Finance and Administration Committee – this committee discusses changes to the Employee Handbook; reviews ordinance changes; reviews contracts with vendors; and everything having a financial or administrative component.
3. Public Works and Infrastructure Committee – this committee meets to discuss all things having to do with our streets, the city's buildings, stormwater, and alleys/sidewalks.
4. Community, Economic & Industrial Development Committee – this committee looks for ways to improve the economic health of the community and works closely with the Johnson County Economic Development Corporation. This includes ways to attract new businesses and residents; how to remove obstacles; and the general health of the community overall.

City Council Committees are where the real work of the City happens – through discussions, review of documents, and consideration of alternatives. They can then make recommendations to the full City Council to approve or deny any request, but all recommendations MUST come before the full council for a vote.

Other city-related committees and commissions (usually made up of Holden area residents), and which have a City Council member in attendance:

1. Board of Public Works – water and wastewater utility board
2. Planning & Zoning Commission – works on the overall city plan; and addresses zoning issues
3. Merit Board – for law enforcement overall management
4. Parks and Recreation Board – for all things related to the Holden City Park(s)

In addition to committee meetings, the Holden City Council meets monthly to consider city business, review recommendations, discuss important issues, and make decisions on behalf of the community. These meetings are open to the public, giving residents a firsthand look at how local government

works and providing an opportunity to stay informed about city projects, budgets, infrastructure improvements, public safety initiatives, and other matters that affect daily life in Holden. We meet on the third Thursday of every month at 7 pm.

Transparency is important because it builds trust. When residents have access to information and can observe the decision-making process, they gain a better understanding of the challenges, opportunities, and priorities facing the city. Open meetings also help ensure accountability, allowing elected officials and city staff to conduct business in a way that is visible and accessible to the public.

We encourage all residents to attend committee meetings and City Council meetings whenever possible. Whether you attend regularly or occasionally, your involvement helps strengthen our community. Local government works best when citizens are informed, engaged, and connected to the process.

At the City of Holden, we are proud of our commitment to openness and transparency. By keeping our doors open and our discussions public, we strive to ensure that residents always have the opportunity to see how decisions are made and how their local government is working to serve the community.

Together, we can continue building a strong, informed, and connected Holden.