

MINUTES

CITY COUNCIL MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY HALL
JANUARY 27, 2025
5:30 p.m.

VIA ZOOM/ IN PERSON

PRESIDING: Mayor Richard Mays

COUNCIL PRESENT: Ben Wring, Tim McGlothlin, Rod Runyon, Scott Randall, Dan Richardson

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Matthew Klebes, City Attorney Jonathan Kara, City Clerk Amie Ell, Interim Deputy Public Works Director Dale McCabe, Police Chief Tom Worthy, Finance Director Angie Wilson, Community Development Director Joshua Chandler

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Mays at 5:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL OF COUNCIL

Roll Call was conducted by City Clerk Ell. Wring, McGlothlin, Runyon, Randall, Richardson, Mays present.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Mays invited the audience to join in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Mays noted approval of the October 3, 2024 Planning Commission and City Council Joint Work Session meeting minutes would be added to the consent agenda and the executive session would adjusted to be in accordance with ORS 192.660(2)(h).

It was moved by Randall and seconded by McGlothlin to approve the agenda as submitted. The motion carried 5 to 0, Randall, McGlothlin, Wring, Richardson, Runyon voting in favor; none opposed; none absent; none absent;

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PRESENTATIONS

FY 23/24 City Audit Presentation, KDP Certified Public Accountants

Andrew Sherwood of KDP Consulting presented highlights from the City of The Dalles and Columbia Gorge Regional Airport fiscal year 23/24 audit reports.

Sherwood presented the results of the audits for the City, Airport, and Urban Renewal Agency, which were conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing and government auditing standards. The audits confirmed that the financial statements were materially correct and in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles. No material weaknesses, significant deficiencies, or noncompliance were identified. The City's major federal program, the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, were complying. The City was not classified as a low-risk auditee due to the absence of annual single audits. Both the City and Airport audits had no findings or issues. Special recognition was given to the finance department for their excellent support during the audit process, ensuring timely and sufficient responses to all requests.

Runyon asked if they work with information from both The City and Klickitat County when completing the Columbia Gorge Regional Airport audit.

Sherwood clarified that the City is responsible for managing the day-to-day accounting functions, including making payments and tracking all administrative activities related to financial operations.

Household Hazardous Waste, Kristina Fiebig-Solid Waste Coordinator

Kelly Howsley-Glover, program director for Tri-County Household Hazardous Waste and Kristina Fiebig, Solid Waste Coordinator presented program updates and an overview.

Richardson asked what the ultimate destination was for the triple washed containers.

Howsley-Glover said that Agro Plus, located in the Willamette Valley, processes and repurposes various agricultural plastics. She noted that the agricultural community had highlighted the challenge of accumulating triple-washed containers, despite progress in reducing hazardous waste. Additional funding from the Oregon Department of Agriculture supported this effort.

Mayor Mays asked for clarification on Senate Bill 532 and how it relates to increasing recyclables, specifically whether it authorizes more materials for pickup.

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Fiebig explained that the RMA is a statewide initiative aimed at simplifying recycling in Oregon by creating a uniform list of recyclable materials. The program will significantly expand the types of plastics accepted, including plastic film and clamshell containers. Implementation will occur in phases, with Wasco County in Phase 3, expected between 2027 and 2029. Funding will come from producer responsibility fees, requiring companies that manufacture or sell plastics to contribute to the program's costs.

Mayor Mays asked if there were events planned in The Dalles in 2025.

Howsley-Glover stated that three annual events were held at The Dalles Transfer Station, typically on Saturdays. To accommodate more residents, the May 16 event was scheduled for a Friday, while the August and November events remained on Saturdays. A newsletter with event details was set to be mailed in March, and residents could also sign up online for email reminders.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

There was none.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

City Manager Matthew Klebes reported;

- Assisted the Cascade Locks City Manager with a strategic retreat, in partnership with the Hood River City Manager.
- Met with Port of The Dalles representatives to discuss waterfront development and historic docks.
- Held a meeting with local veterinary clinics to gather feedback on proposed Animal Control ordinances; two clinics attended.
- Deferred updates on the Federal Street Plaza to Councilor Richardson or the Mayor.
- Public Works Director job recruitment closed, and application review will proceed.

CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilor Runyon reported;

- Met with Liz Lance, new Q-Life Director; attended a Q-Life meeting.
- Joined the Mayor on the KODL Coffee Break talk show.
- Met with Veteran Service Officers at their new Third Street office.
 - Noted active advertising for veteran services.
- Traveled to Salem with the Mayor and City Manager for outreach.

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Councilor Richardson reported;

- Thanked the Mayor and Councilor Runyan for their work in Salem for the community.
- Acknowledged concerns from constituents regarding federal administration issues and suggested using the Oregon Department of Justice Community Toolkit for resources.
- Started a personal project to visit every establishment on Second Street downtown, with about 120 businesses to go.
- Helped a person who had been evicted by directing them to the Gloria Center, run by Mid-Columbia Community Action Council (MCAC), and emphasized the importance of supporting MCAC.
- Noted that draft designs for the downtown Plaza are available online and will be posted in downtown for public feedback.

Councilor Randall reported;

- Met with the City Manager and Councilor McLaughlin for a briefing.
- The Historic Landmarks Commission approved an application for the demolition and new construction of a vehicle storage building at the Fort Dalles Museum to house historic wagons. The current building, constructed from reused materials, is due for replacement.

Councilor Wring reported;

- Attended the Federal Street Plaza committee meeting last week and mentioned the open house at Freebridge on February 12 at 5:30 PM.
- Met briefly with the City Manager on January 21 to discuss onboarding and feedback as the newest City Council member.
- Had various meetings with department heads, including Finance, Community Development, and The Dalles Police Department.

Councilor McGlothlin reported;

- Was out due to illness, dealing with kidney stones but managed to attend meetings by Zoom
- Was on the radio with KODL alongside Mayor Mays.
- Meeting with the Columbia Gorge outreach team to cover for Councilor Runyon in his absence.
- Attended a briefing with Councilor Scott Randall and the City Manager.

Mayor Mays inquired if any council members had been contacted by a Klickitat County commissioner regarding the possibility of a joint meeting with the Klickitat County and City of The Dalles City Council. He confirmed that he had been contacted.

Klebes shared that the outreach was related to strengthening relationships with newly elected

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county commissioners and fostering collaboration, particularly concerning the airport. He engaged with Commissioner Zoller, the airport board representative, to organize a work session. The timeline for this work session was still being discussed, as it needed to fit with other scheduled work sessions.

Mayor Mays said that he had already met with Ms. Zoller and would get back to her soon, informing her that the City Manager would be in contact to arrange a meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

It was moved by Randall and seconded by McGlothlin to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion carried 5 to 0, Randall, McGlothlin, Wring, Richardson, Runyon voting in favor; none opposed; none absent.

Items approved on the consent agenda were: 1) The minutes of the January 13, 2025 Regular City Council Meeting; 2) Resolution No. 25-005 Concurring with the Mayor's Appointments to Various Committees and Commissions; 3) Accepting Council Committee, Commission, and Board Assignments for Years 2025-2027; 4) Resolution No. 25-007 Establishing an Ad Hoc Tourism Services Contract Review Committee; 5) Resolution 25-009 Temporarily Waiving Improvement Requirements for Certain Parcels to Be Used for Dry Camping and Parking During the 2025 Oregon District 5 Little League All-Star Tournament; 6) Approval of the October 3, 2024 Planning Commission and City Council Joint Work Session meeting minutes

CONTRACT REVIEW BOARD ACTIONS

Authorization to Purchase a New 10-yard Dump Truck for the Public Works Wastewater Collection Division

Dale McCabe, Interim Deputy Public Works Director reviewed the staff report.

It was moved by McGlothlin and seconded by Richardson to authorize the purchase of a new 2025 Kenworth Model T880 10-yard dump truck from Kenworth Sales Company in an amount not to exceed \$296,270. The motion carried 5 to 0, McGlothlin, Richardson, voting in favor; none opposed; none absent.

ACTION ITEMS

Resolution No. 25-005, a Resolution Adopting the City of The Dalles 2025 Housing Production Strategy

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Joshua Chandler, Community Development Director reviewed the staff report and introduced Lydia Ness and Alex Joyce of Cascadia Partners the firm that helped complete the Housing Production Strategy.

Ness presented the strategy highlight slides.

Councilor Richardson inquired about the time frame for convening a housing working group and suggested discussing it at an appropriate time.

Chandler shared that the goal was to pull the housing working group together in the first and second quarters of the year, with a target of holding one or two meetings by the end of the year.

Ness continued presenting the plan actions.

Councilor Wring asked how much of this would involve changes to land use codes or other municipal codes to facilitate the process.

Chandler explained that most of the items on the list would likely require changes to zoning codes. He noted that many municipal codes across the state make it difficult to develop certain types of housing, particularly middle housing like duplexes and triplexes. He added that expanding housing types would likely require zoning ordinance amendments.

Ness continued presenting more plan actions.

Wring asked if the new construction tax proposal was a replacement for the vertical housing exemption, which he believed was set to end in 2026.

Ness explained that the vertical housing tax program was sunseting in 2026, and while there had been potential for an extension, the recommendation was to shift to the multi-unit property tax exemption. This new program offered more flexibility and allowed the city to better shape housing incentives. She also clarified that the construction excise tax and urban renewal area programs were still being explored, acknowledging the work required and input needed from other taxing jurisdictions. Additionally, she confirmed that if the city implemented a construction excise tax and a portion went to the state program, that money would be returned to the community.

Wring asked if there were examples of the construction excise tax being implemented, noting that the City of Hood River had already adopted it. He expressed interest in understanding the pros and cons of such a tax for The Dalles, suggesting that while the survey might not reflect the views of non-developers, it would be helpful to assess how it might impact the area. He also

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mentioned that, based on some of the documentation, it didn't seem like the tax would be favorable for The Dalles.

Ness explained that both the city and county of Hood River had implemented a construction excise tax program. She noted that eight other jurisdictions across the state had similar programs, including cities like Cannon Beach, Newport, Milwaukie, Medford, Eugene, and Bend. She recommended talking with these jurisdictions to better understand how the program impacted development and the benefits they had observed from the funds being reinvested in their communities.

Chandler added that while the construction excise tax mechanism had been proven effective in other parts of the state, it remained uncertain whether it would be a good fit for The Dalles. He mentioned that during their joint sessions, the topic had been discussed, and the decision was made to move forward with exploring it later in the process, after some other projects. This allowed time to assess whether the program truly suited the needs of the city.

Ness explained that if the City started implementing actions but later determined they were not suitable, there was flexibility. The City could approach the state to inform them that the program no longer worked but could suggest alternative actions that would meet the same needs. She emphasized that the state understood these changes could occur over time. Ness then transitioned to presenting the final section of actions.

Runyon expressed concern about the number of projects the City is managing and hoped that some of the tasks outlined in the report could overlap with other ongoing efforts. He acknowledged the limited staff resources and emphasized that it felt like the City was continually tasked with new requirements from the state. He wished the Community Development Director and staff well in managing these challenges.

It was moved by Randall and seconded by Richardson to adopt Resolution No. 25-005, as presented. The motion carried 5 to 0, Randall, Richardson, Wring, McGlothlin, Runyon voting in favor; none opposed; none absent.

Chandler acknowledged that while the housing initiative was mandated by the state, it also provided a framework for the City to commit to addressing the housing crisis. He expressed that although the requirement was imposed, it presented an opportunity for the City to make meaningful strides in easing housing development and catering to a broader population. He noted that this requirement allowed the City to explore new housing types, such as tiny homes and modular houses, which were not previously allowed, making it a unique opportunity for The Dalles.

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Richardson acknowledged his earlier omission in the discussion and stated that while he understood the concerns raised by Councilors Runyon and McLaughlin, he wanted to emphasize that the housing shortage and homelessness are significant issues affecting the local community, not just others. He recognized that although the state's mandate added to an already heavy agenda, addressing these challenges was necessary.

Resolution No. 25-006, a resolution amending the City Fee Schedule (effective February 1, 2025)

Jonathan Kara, City Attorney reviewed the staff report.

Runyon asked for clarification regarding the fifth bullet point on the list, which discussed increasing the Lewis and Clark Festival Park user fee for multiple-day events from a flat rate of \$500 to \$300 per day. He inquired if there was a specific reason for such a significant change in the fee structure.

Kara deferred the question to the City Clerk.

Amie Ell City Clerk Ell explained that the adjustment to the Lewis and Clark Festival Park fee schedule was driven by the increased workload for the facilities and maintenance crews required to clean up and prepare for larger events. The previous flat \$500 fee for multiple-day events did not account for the added work, so the change to \$300 per day better reflected the resources needed for such events.

Runyon suggested that another option could have been to set a limit on the number of days the flat rate applied to, such as a two- or three-day limit. He acknowledged the reasoning behind the change and appreciated the clarification.

McGlothlin asked for clarification on what a non-permitted public right-of-way use would be, specifically in relation to the proposed addition of a security deposit.

Kara explained that the term "non-permitted" referred to situations where an entity occupied the public right of way without a permit, not necessarily an impermissible action. He clarified that this specifically applied to cases like telecom companies using the right of way without a permit, where the city granted permission through various instruments. The proposal for a \$1,000 security deposit was intended to encourage corporations to engage in negotiations for franchise agreements. The deposit was meant to help cover the city's administrative costs involved in the process. He said that the deposit was intended to address the time and resources spent negotiating with industry executives, not just telecom but various utilities. He noted that the process often involved extensive back-and-forth with legal counsel and senior leadership. The goal was to

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ensure that companies were serious about working with the city and not wasting time. The \$1,000 deposit would be applied to the first franchise payment once an agreement was reached, encouraging companies to engage in good faith and start the process.

Mayor Mays clarified that, according to the water master plan, the city had agreed to lower the base rate volume from 10,000 gallons to 7,500 gallons. He noted that many older water meters still read in the thousands of gallons, and asked if the staff recommended further lowering the base rate by 500 gallons, bringing it to 7,000 gallons.

Kara confirmed that was correct.

Mayor Mays inquired about the timeline for the first water bill reflecting the rate increase and the lowering of the base rate, following the February 1 implementation.

Kara deferred the question to the Finance Manager.

Angie Wilson Finance Manager said that the City bills in arrears, so customers would see the new rates reflected in the month following the implementation.

Runyon pointed out that customers using less than 7,000 gallons per month would not see an increase in their bill. Only those exceeding that amount would be affected by the rate change.

Mays acknowledged that the City would likely hear from residents who experience an increase in their water bills due to the rate change and expressed hope that staff would be prepared for those inquiries.

Richardson stated that, whether prepared or not, the rate changes needed to be implemented. He added that, for the most part, the increases would not be dramatic but rather modest.

McGlothlin emphasized the importance of effectively communicating the rate changes to the public, suggesting methods such as newspaper, radio, and community outreach. He noted that even moderate increases should be clearly communicated.

Richardson highlighted that increasing outreach is one of the City's goals and noted that staff is already active on social media, providing an opportunity to directly address the rate changes. He expressed confidence that staff would seize this opportunity to communicate effectively.

Randall added that reducing the base rate from 10,000 gallons to 7,000 was still quite generous compared to other municipalities. He noted that The Dalles was the only one with a 10,000-gallon base rate, and most other municipalities had a 5,000-gallon base rate or none at all.

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Mayor Mays expressed concern that many people would be surprised by the changes in their water bill. He suggested that the bill sent out in March could include a note informing customers that they would see a change in their water bill amount starting in the following month.

Wilson suggested that a flyer could be included with the water bills for customers who receive them, informing them of the changes. However, she noted that customers enrolled in Express Bill Pay would not receive a bill, but efforts would be made through other channels, such as Facebook, to notify the community.

Mays said a lot had been done to inform already including public meetings, radio interviews, and presentations to local groups such as the Rotary Club.

Wring, inquired about the percentage of customers whose water meters still read in 1,000-gallon increments, as opposed to those with meters that read in hundreds of gallons. Wring noted that the group using 1,000-gallon increments seemed smaller and asked about the complexity of changing these meters, assuming it would require full meter replacements rather than simple SCADA system updates.

McCabe responded that he did not have the exact percentage off the top of his head but believed it was a smaller number. He mentioned that there is an ongoing meter replacement program aimed at updating meters and offered to look up the specific number if needed.

Wring asked if there was any input on why the target was reduced from 7,500 gallons to 7,000 gallons and whether it would be possible to round the target back up to 8,000 gallons.

McCabe explained that the reduction from 7,500 gallons to 7,000 gallons was based on past history when Dave was seeking grant funding for the projects. The 7,500-gallon threshold had previously posed challenges, and increasing it again would create the same issues and limit the City's ability to secure funding. Therefore, the decision was made to lower the threshold.

Wring noted that reducing the threshold to 7,000 gallons could potentially open doors for additional funding in the future. Wring emphasized that while 1,000 gallons may not seem like much, it could make a significant difference in the summer, particularly when people begin watering lawns.

Mayor Mays asked if there was anyone in the audience or on Zoom who would like to comment on the topic.

Rodger Nichols provided additional background for listeners, explaining the changes in the water rate structure. He noted that by reducing the threshold from 10,000 gallons to 7,000 gallons, the

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base fee is lowered from \$55.30 to \$53.21. However, the per-gallon usage rate increases from \$1.68 to \$1.87. For customers using 10,000 gallons, the first 7,000 gallons would be charged at the base rate, and the remaining 3,000 gallons would be charged at the new per-gallon rate, resulting in a total monthly cost of \$58.82. The net increase is just over 10%, which translates to an additional \$4 per month.

Richardson added it was the first adjustment in over 10 years and the City had not been keeping up with cost of operations or maintenance.

It was moved by Richardson and seconded by Wring to adopt Resolution No. 25-006, a resolution amending the City Fee Schedule (effective February 1, 2025), as presented. The motion carried 5 to 0, Richardson, Wring, McGlothlin, Randall, Runyon voting in favor; none opposed; none absent.

2025 City Council Goal and Action Plan Adoption

Klebes reviewed the staff report. He included a list of highlights of successes from the 2024 goals in the presentation. These included:

- Successful recruitment and retention of police officers, leading to a fully staffed department.
- Creation of an IT department with appropriate staffing and resources to maintain a robust IT system.
- Entered into a new contract with the Columbia Gorge Humane Society for animal control.
- Formation of an ad hoc committee to facilitate the design and development of the Federal Street Plaza.
- Continued support for the sidewalk and ADA program, resulting in numerous city-wide projects.
- Held a Local Government Academy with 12 participants, three of whom volunteered for city committees and commissions.
- Completion and adoption of the Housing Production Strategy.
- Awarding of contracts for the 12th Street and 6th Street projects to extend city infrastructure.
- Addition of a second code enforcement officer.
- Completion of the Water Master Plan update.
- Adoption of a new ordinance for transient lodging tax.
- Signing of a new Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the library.
- Passage of a resolution detailing policy-level budget guidance for the use of Strategic Investment Program dollars.

McGlothlin asked who SSW Consulting was and where they were based out of.

Klebes said this was Sara Singer Wilson and they were in Oregon.

Mayor Mays said that this was the second consecutive year working with SSW Consulting. He said everyone was very pleased not only with how the goal-setting session in November was conducted but also with the final product.

It was moved by Wring and seconded by McGlothlin to adopt the 2025 City Council Goal Setting Document. The motion carried 5 to 0, Wring, McGlothlin, Randall, Richardson, Runyon voting in favor; none opposed; none absent.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

In accordance with ORS 192.660(2)(h) to consult with counsel concerning the legal rights and duties of a public body with regard to current litigation or litigation likely to be filed.


Mayor Mays recessed Open Session at 7:25 p.m.

Mayor Mays reconvene Open Session at 8:02 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Submitted by/
Amie Ell, City Clerk

SIGNED: 
Richard A. Mays, Mayor

ATTEST: 
Amie Ell, City Clerk