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CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY HALL
JUNE 2, 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, Executive Assistant Abigail Jara, Public Works Director Dale McCabe, Police Chief Tom Worthy, Facilities Supervisor Mike Kasinger

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 Executive Assistant Jara. Wring, McGlothlin, Runyon, Randall, Richardson, Mays present

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Mays asked Councilor Richardson to lead the Pledge of Allegiance. Councilor Richardson invited the audience to join in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

PRESENTATIONS PROCLAMATIONS

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If I Were Mayor 2025 Contest Winner

Mayor Mays presented Samson Mastin the first place award for the 'If I Were Mayor 2025' contest. Mastin's winning video was shown.

The Dalles Robotics Team Recognition

Mayor Mays read and presented Certificates of Recognition to The Dalles Robotics team.

Syntax Error, Coach Webber, Zachariah Banks, Kim Morales, Evelyn Schechter, Everest Lenardson

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Dr. Judy Richardson, resident of The Dalles, and member of the District 21 School Board, thanks Council for recognizing student achievements, particularly the robotics team, and expressed appreciation for the City's cost-sharing support of the Safe Routes to School program. She referenced her past involvement in safety walks prior to the pandemic, emphasizing the ongoing need for such efforts.

Chuck Gomez gave an update from the Beautification & Tree Committee. The committee was continuing progress on its tree grant program, which was successful last fall. All 50 trees were distributed, along with a few extras. Tree placement was pre-approved by the committee—primarily by Chair John Nelson and previous Chair Janet Kavanagh—to ensure they enhanced the community. He informed of a new Downtown Beautification Grant program, made possible by a \$3,000 allocation from the City Council. The program invited downtown property owners to apply for grants supporting sidewalk beautification—covering expenses like pots, flowers, plants, greenery, soil, and water bills. While the committee initially hoped for three or four applicants, 23 applications were received. Ultimately, 10 were awarded grants. The report concluded with a note of appreciation for the successful beautification of the Trevitt Triangle at the edge of town.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

City Manager Matthew Klebes reported;

- The minutes from the Budget Committee meeting were approved.
- Wasco County declared a fireworks ban. This triggered the City's own ordinance on personal use fireworks, resulting in a citywide ban. The Public Information Officer would coordinate with the Police and Public Works departments to distribute information leading up to July.
- Attended an emergency operation planning meeting with City staff, Wasco County and a

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consultant to update the City's emergency response addendum. Focus areas included evacuation procedures and incident response.

- Participated in a meeting with the Dalles Area Chamber of Commerce and City staff to begin planning for the 2026 Cherry Festival. Coordination is necessary due to anticipated construction projects, including the First Street Urban Renewal reconstruction and the Federal Street Plaza project, both of which will affect the traditional festival location.
- The community outreach team met to begin planning a September advocacy trip to Washington, D.C., focusing on local policy and project support. The team also discussed state legislation affecting transient lodging tax revenues and 2025 street funding.
- Said Steve Sprague was the new Transportation Manager, joining from ODOT.
- Notified Council two finance department positions were currently vacant or soon will be. Recruitment was underway, and interim plans were being developed.
- Updated of a delay to the dog ordinance to allow further consultation with local veterinary offices based on their feedback.
- Reminded Council this was a special meeting and a regular City Council meeting was scheduled for the upcoming Monday.
- Announced personal vacation plans from June 13 to June 20.

CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilor Runyon reported;

- Nothing to report.

Councilor Richardson reported;

- Attended an Urban Renewal meeting. Craig Building had new owners motivated to refresh the building and help make it a livelier area.

Councilor Randall reported;

- Nothing to report.

Councilor Wring reported;

- Attended an Urban Renewal meeting and reported receiving positive feedback from downtown businesses regarding recent changes to the incentive program's guidance.
- Attended the Sister Cities Association meeting and noted the upcoming trip to Japan, with a delegation from Miyoshi City expected to visit The Dalles in October.

Councilor McGlothlin reported;

- Attended Airport Commission meeting.
- Attended Urban Renewal meeting, where a land use appeal was heard.
- Reported ongoing work on the strategic placement of video cameras.

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- Reminded the public to slow down with summer approaching, noting concerns about evening street racing and the need to prevent accidents.

Mayor Mays reported;

- KODL Coffee Break interview with Councilor McGlothlin and Al Wynn.
- Met with Leslie Naramore, Interim Executive Director of Mid-Columbia Community Action.
- KACI radio interview with Mark Bailey.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

Items approved on the consent agenda were: 1) The minutes of May 12, 2025 Regular City Council Meeting Minutes; 2) Authorizing the City Manager to Execute an Estoppel Certificate and Agreement for Planecave, LLC (an Airport ground tenant) to Secure an SBA Loan for Development of a Hangar at the Airport

CONTRACT REVIEW BOARD ACTIONS

Recommendation for Award of the Library HVAC Replacement Project, Contract No. 2025-005

Matthew Klebes, City Manager reviewed the staff report.

Richardson asked if there would be reimbursement from the Library District and if they knew life expectancy of the new system.

Klebes responded the City will enter into the contract for that amount, expend the funds, and then draw down from the grant. He said with more proactive maintenance the life should be extended. Kasinger estimated 25 years.

Klebes commented a special thanks to Ann Moorhead, who assisted with the grant as an AmeriCorps RARE program volunteer.

It was moved by McGlothlin and seconded by Richardson to authorize the City Manager to execute a contract with Air X for the Library HVAC Replacement Project, Contract No. 2025-004, in an amount not to exceed \$423,640.00. The motion carried 5 to 0, McGlothlin, Richardson, Wring, Randall, Runyon voting in favor; none opposed; none absent.

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Authorizing the City Manager to enter Contract No. 2025-004 with The Dalles Area Chamber of Commerce for Tourism Promotion Services

Wring stated that, as a downtown small business owner, he understood Oregon's ethics laws required disclosure of any potential conflicts of interest. His family owned a downtown business and was a dues paying Chamber of Commerce member. He did not believe there is a conflict of interest, but wanted to disclose.

Klebes noted for clarification the contract for tourism promotion services is 2025-004.

Matthew Klebes, City Manager reviewed the staff report.

Mays asked where Watson Creative was based. Kara responded they had offices in Bend, Portland, and somewhere in Washington.

Mays asked if the Chamber would take over cruise ship coordination and if the other six bullet points in the staff report were already being addressed under the current contract.

Klebes explained while the City handles cruise ship logistics like docking and utilities, it was not responsible for excursions or visitor services. Under the new contract, one key area was for the Chamber to engage with cruise ships, sharing local information, and assisting passengers providing needed clarity after shifting roles. He added the Chamber already handled tourism marketing, hospitality, events, media campaigns, content marketing, and data reporting.

Mays expressed confusion about the wording "Opportunities to Strengthen the Proposal" and asked if the committee had written it. Klebes confirmed the committee provided the recommendation, highlighting the need to develop destination branding through a collaborative process involving the Chamber, Council, and community, with the Travel Oregon grant aiding this effort.

Mays asked if the community-wide workshop mentioned was part of a collaborative effort Klebes was referring to. Klebes confirmed and added with the Datify subscription, visitor data was collected to help target efforts and measure improvements.

Mays asked when the Travel Oregon grant results were expected. Farquharson, CEO of Chamber of Commerce, said June 17.

Mays asked about the job market for an Executive Tourism Director. Farquharson said there was a market, especially with the RARE program ending. The job would be posted soon through WorkSource and Travel Oregon.

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Mays suggested including a city representative on the hiring committee since the role would work closely with the City.

McGlothlin recalled the transition from City-organized boat scheduling to American Empress and asked how the arrangement had been working, including whether someone was responsible for promoting local excursions. Klebes clarified American Cruise Lines currently handled dockings after American Queen Voyages went bankrupt and one of their boats was acquired by American Cruise Lines. He said docking and logistics had been going well with staff support from Jara and Ell but noted challenges with excursions, as some previously took visitors out of town. He hoped to keep more passengers in town to visit local attractions and said improved coordination under the new contract could help. Klebes added the City did not have a role in promoting excursions, which was why it was included in the contract scope of work.

Farquharson noted the Chamber had previously coordinated with cruise ships and was prepared to do so again. The new Tourism Director would be ready to take on the role with her guidance.

Wring asked if the Travel Oregon grant would fund a temporary position and whether the position at the Chamber of Commerce would be ongoing. He also sought clarification on the budget, noting \$450,000 was set aside for fiscal year 2025–26 and expected it would remain a continuing line item for the contract's duration, subject to adjustment before Monday's meeting.

Farquharson clarified the Travel Oregon grant would fund a destination development program led by a contractor, not a temporary position. The contractor, who co-wrote the grant and has experience in other states, would form a tourism committee with a three-year commitment to guide strategic planning, project prioritization, and future grant efforts. The contractor's role would last about nine months, after which the committee and tourism director would continue implementing the plan and fulfilling grant requirements.

Klebes confirmed the budget would likely remain similar to page 21 of the proposal, with a not-to-exceed 3% increase in later years to help manage cost escalations.

Mays asked the audience if they would like to address Council regarding the proposal.

Cheryl Ragard, Executive Director of Columbia Gorge Discovery Center, in her first year with the organization, appreciated serving on the committee and connecting with others. She noted her organization coordinated the local loop tour guides and worked with Anna Gaffney and Sally Forrester to promote excursions. Some tours visited regional sites, while others included local stops like the Fort Dalles Museum and Neon Sign Museum. She expressed interest in how their role with the cruise lines might evolve and in supporting continued tourism growth.

Darcy Long, a new Chamber board member, said the board had lengthy discussions about

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continuing the tourism contract due to past concerns about fund use. As a former councilor, she had reviewed the Chamber's budgets and was impressed. She supported hiring a tourism director to clarify roles and credited Farquharson with convincing the board to retain the contract, which she felt was vital to keep local.

Richardson supported the City's competitive process for the tourism contract and encouraged the Chamber to take the lead. He noted the City had not previously given clear direction on tourism efforts. He emphasized the importance of keeping cruise ship passengers in town through partnerships supported reinstating the hop-on, hop-off bus accessible to residents. He encouraged using tourism to also enhance local quality of life.

Klebes clarified the contract required the contractor to promote the community to cruise lines, supporting visitors, and coordinate excursions with local partners, while the City manages the marine terminal. He said Article 7 of the contract, included strong records and accounting provisions, requiring at least annual reporting and allowing for additional quarterly reports.

Wring supported the contract and emphasized the need to diversify tourism beyond cruise ships, calling it a strong opportunity to expand activities through collaboration.

It was moved by Wring and seconded by McGlothlin to authorize the City Manager to enter Contract No. 2025-004, a Personal Services Agreement with The Dalles Area Chamber of Commerce for tourism promotion services, in an amount not to exceed \$465,000, as presented. The motion carried 5 to 0, Wring, McGlothlin, Randall, Richardson, Runyon voting in favor; none opposed; none absent.

ACTION ITEMS

Adopting General Ordinance No. 25-1415, an ordinance amending The Dalles Municipal Code Title 5 (Offenses) by creating Chapter 5.03 (Recreational Property)

Matthew Klebes, City Manager and Jonathan Kara, City Attorney reviewed the staff report.

McLaughlin asked if the ordinance applied only to City property, such as Parks and Recreation and Kelly viewpoint. He also asked if there was an effort to coordinate with Parks and Recreation to ensure consistent rules across all parks. He raised safety concerns at Kelly Viewpoint, noting hazardous activities such as speeding and vehicles performing donuts in the parking lot.

Klebes clarified the ordinance applied to City-owned and posted properties, similar to the overnight parking rule. It could apply at Rock Fort, Lewis and Clark Park, and possibly Federal Street Plaza. He explained Northern Wasco County Parks and Recreation had its own rules and

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permits, while the proposed ordinance focused on recreational immunity and limited use of posted property to recreational purposes unless permitted.

McLaughlin expressed support for the ordinance and emphasized the importance of coordinating efforts with Parks and Recreation.

Runyon asked if walking a dog in a City park would still be allowed without a permit, then further asked if a group of 50 people gathering at 10 a.m. would require a permit. Klebes confirmed walking a dog in the park was a recreational activity that did not require a permit. A permit was needed only for exclusive or non-recreational use of the park.

Runyon asked if events like music concerts required permits as in the past, and whether permit costs were specified in the ordinance. He suggested having clear, simple signage about permits and related changes to direct people to City Hall.

Klebes stated the revised City fee schedule, including permit fees related to the ordinance, would be presented at the upcoming meeting pending Council approval. He noted administrative staff were working on developing clear signage and updating the permit application to make the process easy and user-friendly.

Runyon expressed hope that signage would be written in clear, understandable language and noted that simpler signs may be more cost-effective. He also asked if the ordinance applied to The Dalles City Park. Klebes clarified The Dalles City Park is owned by Northern Wasco County Parks and Recreation District.

Runyon asked what other City parks exist besides Lewis and Clark Park.

Klebes said the primary City-owned recreational properties were Rock Fort, Lewis and Clark Park, the potential future Federal Street Plaza, and 'Hecka Park' but noted the City had limited recreational property overall. The ordinance would most likely apply to Rock Fort, Lewis and Clark Park, and the Plaza.

Richardson stated the intent of the ordinance was to limit liability and asked how actively it would be enforced, including for non-recreational uses like napping.

Klebes stated only recreational use was allowed in the park unless a permit was obtained, preventing insurance claims based on non-recreational use.

Kara stated sleeping was not recreation but noted safeguards existed to prevent indiscriminate enforcement. He explained enforcement would begin with education and, if the issue persisted, the Police Department and City Manager would decide whether to take further action.

Mayor Mays said he wanted to clarify the ordinance's context and origin from these items:

- Until 2023, property owners, including the City, were immune from liability for recreational use. Kara confirmed the City had immunity prior to the case, emphasizing the importance of the City maintaining control over its property.
- In 2023 the court case ended recreational immunity for landowners. Kara confirmed.
- In 2024, the legislature passed a temporary fix set to expire in 2026. Kara confirmed.
- Staff was proposing a permanent fix that allowed recreational and permitted uses on public lands. Kara stated the City cannot grant itself immunity, but the ordinance aimed to clarify recreational use at one's own risk and required insurance for non-recreational, shifting liability away from the City.

Klebes explained if someone was injured using the park and claimed it was not for recreational purposes, the City would request a permit to verify, supporting the ordinance's intent.

Mayor Mays said that despite a temporary legislative fix expiring next year, this ordinance was intended as a permanent solution. Kara said the ordinance permanently addressed the City's liability gap for non-recreational uses, complementing—but not replacing—state recreational immunity.

Runyon asked if the City could enforce stricter rules than the State's and if it would need to roll back the ordinance if it exceeded state authority.

Kara said the ordinance neither expanded nor limited recreational immunity but covered uses not included under State immunity, providing the City flexibility without exceeding State requirements.

Klebes said if recreational immunity were to sunset without extension, the ordinance would still restrict property use to recreational purposes without a permit, but the City would lose recreational immunity protections.

Mays said the ordinance applied only to "improved recreational facilities," which he understood to include all City facilities like the plaza and Lewis and Clark Park.

Kara said all City recreational facilities were considered improved, while unimproved rights of way fall under different code and state laws. Recreational immunity applied to improved areas to encourage land development for recreation without risking loss of immunity.

Wring asked if insurance requirements for events like music festivals at Lewis and Clark Park would remain the same or increase under the new ordinance.

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Kara explained the ordinance set minimum insurance requirements and allowed the City Manager to adopt related rules. Coverage levels would depend on activity risk, aiming to balance risk mitigation with affordable costs to keep park rentals accessible.

Kara said amendments would be made to Section 5.0 3.020 subsection C to remove reference to the exclusive use associated with the City's permits.

It was moved by McGlothlin and seconded by Randall to adopt General Ordinance No. 25-1415, as amended, by title only.

Kara clarified the 'as amended' portion of the motion referred to his earlier proposed change to Section 5.03.020(C), removing the reference to exclusive use associated with the City permits.

The motion carried 5 to 0, McGlothlin, Randall, Richardson, Wring, Runyon voting in favor; none opposed; none absent.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Submitted by/
Abby Jara, Executive Assistant

SIGNED:



Richard A. Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:



Amie Ell, City Clerk