

MINUTES

CITY COUNCIL MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY HALL
OCTOBER 13, 2025
5:30 p.m.

VIA ZOOM/ IN PERSON

PRESIDING: Mayor Richard Mays

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

COUNCIL ABSENT: Ben Wring

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Matthew Klebes, City Attorney Jonathan Kara, City Clerk Amie Ell, Public Works Director Dale McCabe, Deputy Public Works Director David Mills, Brita Meyer Finance Director Police Chief Tom Worthy, Community Development Director Joshua Chandler, Assistant City Manager/HR Brenda Fahey

CALL TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL OF COUNCIL

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilor Randall invited the audience to join in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Randall and seconded by Richardson to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried 4 to 0: Randall, Richardson, Runyon, McGlothlin voting in favor; none opposed; Wring absent.

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AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Leslie Narramore, Executive Director of Mid-Columbia Community Action Council (MCCAC), addressed comments made by Council members at the end of the previous City Council meeting. She stated her intent was not to be disrespectful but to publicly correct erroneous remarks made in public. She expressed disappointment that the discussion occurred after she had left the meeting and clarified that MCCAC's 30 staff members work diligently across Hood River, Wasco, and Sherman counties to support vulnerable community members. She described their work providing shelter, case management, and assistance to Rowena fire survivors and noted that while the organization has expanded services, it still lacks resources to meet all needs. She emphasized that homelessness and housing instability are community-wide issues requiring collaboration, not solely MCCAC's responsibility. She invited Council members to visit MCCAC facilities to observe operations firsthand and encouraged attendance at the upcoming Housing Stabilization Summit on November 6 at The Dalles Civic Auditorium.

Sarah Kellums, staff member at Mid-Columbia Community Action Council (MCCAC), shared highlights from the organization's recent work and outcomes from the Fiscal Year 2023–24 Annual Report. She reported MCCAC served over 3,000 people across its three-county service area, with most receiving utility assistance to help them remain stably housed. Within housing programs, 243 individuals achieved successful housing outcomes, including 175 who avoided eviction and 68 who transitioned from houselessness to long-term housing. Of those 68, 40 were living with disabilities, and 79% of those who avoided eviction were children or youth. She noted these outcomes were achieved through partnerships with 90 local landlords and community volunteers who contributed 579 service hours, primarily supporting shelter programs. She also highlighted MCCAC's new 2025–2030 Strategic Plan, focused on stability after a period of growth, and shared housing staff supported 23 people transitioning from The Annex into long-term housing. MCCAC has also assisted 26 households displaced by the Rowena fire, with 23 now stabilized in new homes. She invited the Council and community to view the short film Local Landlords Change Lives and encouraged continued partnership in efforts to prevent and end homelessness.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

City Manager Matthew Klebes reported;

- Attended a Special Districts Association financing presentation at the Port of The Dalles; thanked the Port for organizing.
- Announced receipt of a Transportation Growth Management grant for West Side area planning; more details forthcoming.
- Reported the Chenoweth housing development land use approved; building permit packet expected in early 2026.
- Announced an informational session on October 30 in City Council Chambers regarding

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2025 downtown construction projects, including: First and Weber Project, First Street Streetscape, Federal Street Plaza. The session will address anticipated traffic, parking, and railroad crossing impacts and engage business owners, property owners, and the public.

- Working with the City Attorney on correspondence with the U.S. EPA Portland Harbor Team about proposed transport of remedial waste to the Wasco County Landfill to ensure clear communication and understand potential impacts.
- Announced ribbon cutting for new water improvements on October 22; improvements were built and funded by Google and transferred to City ownership.
- Introduced new Finance Director Brita Meyer.

CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilor McGlothlin reported;

- Observed food delivery for unhoused individuals at First and Union; spoke with a man camped under the underpass who agreed to relocate.
- Met with Bread and Blessings representatives to review possible new sites for food distribution; options still under consideration. Emphasized goal to keep the City safe and livable for all residents, including the unhoused.
- Attended the League of Oregon Cities Conference.
- Reported progress on the Airport business park project; runway removed and T-hangar construction beginning soon.

Councilor Randall reported;

- Attended the League of Oregon Cities Conference.
- Local Public Safety Coordinating Committee (LPSCC) meeting.

Councilor Richardson reported;

- Met with Economic Development Officer and Community Development Director to review Urban Renewal projects. Noted Jake Anderson will take on the role of Agency Manager; expressed confidence in his abilities.
- Meeting with the City Manager.
- Appreciated Naramore and staff efforts in supporting residents facing housing challenges and helping them access permanent housing.

Councilor Runyon reported;

- Attended the League of Oregon Cities Conference, focusing on a session by Washington County and City of Beaverton on homelessness solutions, including safe parking zones and partnerships with churches and public properties.
- Participated in a meeting of the Mid-Columbia Veterans Memorial Committee.

Mayor Mays reported;

- Attended the League of Oregon Cities Conference and noted the City received an award for excellence in best practices from City/County Insurance Services (CIS) for management of workers' compensation and other claims.
- Presented the award to the City Manager with commendation for a job well done.

CONSENT AGENDA

It was moved by Randall and seconded by McGlothlin to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

The motion carried 4 to 0, Randall, McGlothlin, Richardson, Runyon voting in favor; none opposed; Wring absent.

Items approved on the consent agenda were:

- A) Approval of the September 22, 2025 Regular City Council Meeting Minutes
- B) Approval of the August 21, 2025 Planning Commission and City Council Joint Work Session Meeting Minutes
- C) Resolution No. Concurring with The Mayor's Appointments to The Traffic Safety Commission and Planning Commission
- D) Authorization to Declare Surplus of Tasers
- E) Award of Contract No. 25-013 for the Wicks Sludge Removal Program
- F) Authorizing the City Manager to Execute a Joint Funding Agreement with Klickitat County for the Airport's Aviation Hangar Expansion Project
- G) Resolution No. 25-041 Authorizing an Interfund Loan to the Airport Fund for the Aviation Hangar Expansion Project
- H) Resolution No. 25-040 Establishing a Mandatory Prequalification Program for Public Improvement Contracts
- I) Resolution No. 25-042 Directing the City Attorney to Issue Subpoenas for the Production of Records to Ensure Compliance with and Enforcement of TDMC Chapter 8.04

ACTION ITEMS

General Ordinance No. 25-1420 Amending TDMC Chapter 5.12 (Public Nuisances)

City Attorney Jonathan Kara and Police Chief Tom Worthy reviewed the staff report.

Kara suggested amendments to Section 5.1 2.030 B, Safe Harbor, reflecting recommendations from the Wasco County District Attorney. He explained that under the revision, an occurrence reported by the person in charge—or a third party on their behalf—would not have counted

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toward establishing a pattern unless the City demonstrated the person was not in substantial compliance with an approved abatement plan. He noted the amendment was intended to maximize victim protection, particularly for domestic violence and related offenses.

Mayor Mays asked for Council questions. Additional information shared included:

- The revision allowed more precise enforcement in multi-use buildings, so business violations did not automatically impact residential tenants above.
- Under the previous ordinance, enforcement could have required closure of the entire property, affecting all tenants.
- The Council appreciated staff's amendments as thoughtful, balanced, and not overly punitive toward property owners.
- The Council asked for clarification on what specific problem the ordinance revision was intended to address

Kara said the ordinance revision addressed administrative and law enforcement efficiencies and incorporated lessons learned from prior use. The ordinance had been used previously to navigate a situation with the St. Vincent de Paul Society on Pentland Street, and while it was effective, it was seen as rigid. The revision aimed to provide balanced flexibility, weighing public safety and property rights, rather than being overly punitive. Nuisance ordinances historically served as tools for cities to ensure businesses responsibly managed public interactions and risks. The updates were intended to close the loop on past litigation, reflect practical experience, and improve the ordinance for potential future use.

Police Chief Worthy clarified the ordinance revisions were intended solely for the improvement of the City code. He emphasized there were no immediate plans to apply the updated ordinance to any specific property or situation.

Mayor Mays asked if there was anyone from the public who would like to comment.

Karen Murray, a resident of The Dalles, provided comments and raised questions regarding the ordinance and its impact on the community. She highlighted concerns about enforcement, support for people experiencing homelessness, and the effects on local organizations.

Staff and Council responded to Murray. Key points made included:

- The 300-foot provision was common in nuisance ordinances and used to link crimes or nuisance activity to a property while maintaining reasonable scope.
- A nuisance occurred when a property attracted criminal activity, not merely because of individuals on the street.

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- The revised ordinance allowed more targeted enforcement, addressing specific activities rather than entire properties.
- The ordinance was one tool among many to balance public safety, property rights, and supportive services.
- The ordinance applied broadly to many situations.
- The review process for multiple incidents within 300 feet included documentation connecting nuisance activity to a specific property.
- The revision improved fairness and enforcement and provided leverage to address problem properties.
- The ordinance reflected lessons learned from prior applications, including issues with short-term rentals and party houses.

Teresa Yrgui-Zeman of Bread and Blessings explained that many proposed locations for food distribution were not feasible due to logistical constraints, including transportation limits and space for supplies. She emphasized that nonprofits should not be blamed for the actions of adults experiencing homelessness, noting that individuals understand their rights and that the organizations have no authority to enforce behavior on public property. She cited the St. Vincent de Paul situation as an example, highlighting that the organization provided only basic services and could not control actions outside its operations. She stressed that nonprofits like Bread and Blessings and St. Vincent de Paul work to help the community and that legal actions or criticism against them were unfair and unhelpful.

Staff and Council responded to Yrgui-Zeman. Key points made included:

- The nuisance crimes on Pentland Street had largely subsided because services were no longer being provided there, but the prior impacts had affected a wider area, including the post office and neighboring streets.
- Past events, including the Boise case and House Bill 3115, changed the context since the 1997 ordinance.
- Current ordinance defenses remained available, allowing property operators to avoid liability if they did not know or could not prevent qualifying incidents.
- Individuals without housing resting in public places were not considered violations; only repeated incidents such as assault, burglary, disorderly conduct, and other criminal activities within a 300-foot radius were counted.
- The tool was intended to address ongoing criminal activity impacting neighborhoods and provide a mechanism for property or business owners to mitigate repeated issues.
- Staff emphasized the ordinance did not target nonprofits or residents and encouraged contacting law enforcement for public safety issues rather than relying on nonprofits to enforce behavior.

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- Council acknowledged the hard work of nonprofits but reiterated the City’s obligation to act when activities, even well-intentioned, interfere with public safety and neighborhood quality.
- The ordinance updated the City’s municipal code and provided needed improvements without aiming at any specific organization or individual.

Council discussed three items to be amended in the ordinance:

- Section 5.1 2.030 B, Safe Harbor: An occurrence reported by the person in charge—or a third party on their behalf—would not count toward establishing a pattern unless the City showed the person was not in substantial compliance with an approved abatement plan, aiming to maximize victim protection, especially for domestic violence and related offenses.
- Section 5.1 2.050: Heading changed from “City Attorney’s Office” to “Police Chief Report,” requiring the Police Chief to send copies of nuisance notices to both the City Manager’s Office and the City Attorney.
- Section 5.1 2.060: Added the phrase “after specific City Council authorization” before the City Attorney may commence legal proceedings.

It was moved by McGlothlin and seconded by Richardson to adopt General Ordinance No. 25-1420, as amended, by title only.

Mayor Mays asked for the ordinance to be ready by title.

Ell read the ordinance by title.

The motion carried 4 to 0, McGlothlin, Richardson, Runyon, Randall voting in favor; none opposed; Wring absent.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Progress Update – City Council Goal and Action Plan

City Manager Matthew Klebes presented the progress update.

City Council discussed the Goal Progress Update and focused on managing the scope and prioritization of goals. Councilors noted that the current plan included 33 goals, which could risk overloading staff and potentially lead to burnout. They suggested reviewing the list to remove items that were routine processes or already standard practices, and to consider combining related goals where possible. The discussion emphasized the importance of balancing short-term, high-reward actions with longer-term objectives and setting clear priorities. It was highlighted

that the upcoming goal-setting session in November would provide an opportunity to refine timelines, assign priorities, and ensure that staff efforts were sustainable and focused on the most impactful initiatives.

Judy Merrill, a resident of The Dalles, thanked Councilor McGlothlin for visiting five meal service locations and asked for a list of those sites. She invited Council to attend to a free screening of the documentary No Place to Grow Old at the Granada on November 6, which included a dinner and discussion on older adults aging into homelessness.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Submitted by/
Amie Ell, City Clerk

SIGNED:



Richard A. Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:



Amie Ell, City Clerk