

MINUTES

COLUMBIA GATEWAY URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY BOARD MEETING

October 21, 2025

5:30 p.m.

City Hall Council Chambers
313 Court Street, The Dalles, Oregon 97058
Via Zoom / Livestream via City Website

- PRESIDING:** Dan Richardson, Chair
- BOARD PRESENT:** Tim McGlothlin, Marcus Swift, Walter Denstedt, Jill Amery, Ben Wring (via Zoom), Scott Hege (Via Zoom, arrived at 5:31p.m., left at 5:56 p.m.)
- BOARD ABSENT:** Kristen Lillvik
- STAFF PRESENT:** Urban Renewal Agency Manager and Community Development Director Joshua Chandler, Economic Development Officer (EDO) Jacob Anderson, City Manager Matthew Klebes, Assistant City Manager and Human Resources Director Brenda Fahey, Finance Director Brita Meyer, City Attorney Jonathan Kara, Administrative Assistant Crystal Sayre

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Richardson at 5:30 p. m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Richardson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Hege and seconded by Amery to approve the agenda as prepared. The motion carried 7/0; Amery, Denstedt, Hege, Richardson, McGlothlin, Swift, and Wring voting in favor, none opposed, Lillvik absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Denstedt and seconded by McGlothlin to approve the minutes of August 19, 2025, as submitted. The motion carried 7/0; Amery, Denstedt, Hege, Richardson, McGlothlin, Swift, and Wring voting in favor, none opposed, Lillvik absent.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW STAFF

EDO Anderson introduced two new City employees:

- Brita Meyer, Finance Director
- Brenda Fahey, Assistant City Manager / Human Resources Director

Both briefly introduced themselves and shared their professional backgrounds. Chair Richardson and Board Members welcomed them to the City team.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ACTION ITEMS

A. Grant Agreement (Phase III) with Giamei Properties for the American Legion Hall Building (201 East 2nd Street)

EDO Anderson presented a grant agreement with Giamei Properties for Phase III of the American Legion Hall renovation, noting that this phase focused on exterior and entry improvements to the basement level. Previous phases funded rehabilitation of the upper and main floors, which were successfully renovated and leased. Anderson explained that because total Urban Renewal funding for the property now exceeded \$50,000, additional phases required Board approval. The Agency contribution for this phase was \$4,120.

Anderson commended the applicants, noting that Giamei Properties had consistently reinvested in downtown properties and approached redevelopment in incremental, cash-funded phases. He said this was the kind of investment model the Agency wanted to encourage—smaller, locally financed projects that reused historic buildings and contributed to upper-floor activation.

Chair Richardson asked who currently occupied the upper floors. Anderson responded that a local law firm was located on the second floor, with Firefly Women's Boutique, Gorge City Barbering, and Artisan Market operating on the main level. He added that future work would include asbestos floor removal in the basement, which would be an eligible project cost.

Board Member Swift expressed strong support for the project, noting that Giamei Properties had demonstrated long-term commitment and quality work downtown.

Board Member Denstedt commented that the project appeared well-managed and appropriate for funding.

Anderson said the success of the building's leasing demonstrated the value of reinvestment and served as an example to other property owners with vacant upper floors.

It was moved by Swift and seconded by Hege to authorize the Agency Manager to execute an Incentive Program Agreement with Giamei Properties for Phase III of the American Legion Hall project. The motion carried 7/0; Amery, Denstedt, Hege, Richardson, McGlothlin, Swift, and Wring voting in favor, none opposed, Lillvik absent.

B. Authorization to Use Tony's Site as a Laydown Yard for the Federal Street Plaza Construction Project

EDO Anderson presented a request to designate the Agency-owned Tony Site as a temporary

laydown yard for the upcoming Federal Street Plaza project. He explained that providing the contractor with a staging area would reduce overall project costs, as the City and Agency would otherwise pay indirectly for a private storage site.

Anderson stated that the Fermentation Hub project planned for the site was no longer proceeding, and that no new development proposal was currently under consideration. He said using the lot for temporary staging would have little to no opportunity cost, given the time required for future entitlements and design. The Federal Street Plaza was expected to enhance property values in the area, including the Tony Site itself.

Denstedt asked whether the construction contract would include liquidated damages to ensure timely completion and prevent the yard use from extending indefinitely. Anderson said that question would be addressed in the City's bid documents and project contract, and confirmed that the intent was for the Plaza to open around October 2026.

Wring asked whether indemnification and liability provisions would protect the Agency in case of damage or theft on-site. Anderson replied that this was a standard concern and deferred to the City Attorney.

City Attorney Jonathan Kara confirmed that standard license agreements include indemnification and restoration requirements, ensuring the site would be returned to its current condition. He said the site's improved, shovel-ready status would make any damages easy to identify.

Amery expressed support but suggested that the license include clear timing or cancellation language to avoid delaying future development if an opportunity arose. Anderson replied that the agreement included a 30-day termination clause and that coordination between the City and Agency would provide flexibility. Amery suggested that 30 days might be too short but appreciated the clarification.

City Manager Matthew Klebes added that the City and Agency would communicate closely and would be aware well in advance of any new development proposal. He said if a project emerged, alternate laydown areas—such as the City's parking lots near the Transportation Building—could be used to keep both projects moving forward.

It was moved by McGlothlin and seconded by Denstedt to adopt the Tony's Site as a laydown yard for the Federal Street Plaza project and to authorize staff to sign the license agreement. The motion carried 6/0; Amery, Denstedt, Richardson, McGlothlin, Swift, and Wring voting in favor, none opposed, Hege (left at 5:56 p.m.) and Lillvik absent.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS / QUESTIONS

McGlothlin noted that Hege had left the meeting early at 5:56 p.m. to board a flight.

Denstedt requested that staff coordinate with the Fire Marshal for a future presentation to the Board on fire suppression and related building safety issues. Director Chandler confirmed that staff would follow up on scheduling.

Amery thanked staff for addressing her questions on the laydown yard timing and appreciated the flexibility built into the agreement.

STAFF COMMENTS / PROJECT UPDATES

Giamei Properties Update

EDO Anderson reported that Giamei Properties had recently purchased 208–210 Washington Street and received a \$3,426 Urban Renewal grant for underfloor insulation and vapor barrier installation. The property includes a gym and a hair salon, and this initial phase was intended to improve comfort and energy efficiency for tenants.

Mint Building

Anderson stated that the grant agreement for the Mint Building project had been finalized with owner Mr. Schechtel. A walkthrough was completed to confirm eligible expenses, and Anderson was requiring documentation to ensure that no reimbursement was made for work completed before the grant agreement's effective date. He reported that Freebridge Brewery had expanded its operations into the renovated kitchen space and was now producing more food and beverages than before.

Fermentation Hub

Anderson informed the Board that the Fermentation Hub project would not move forward. Project proponents explained that high interest rates and rising construction costs made the project financially infeasible at this time. Anderson said staff appreciated the team's effort and transparency and would explore interim activation opportunities for the site, such as installing power outlets for food carts or temporary green space until redevelopment becomes viable.

McGlothlin asked what options the Agency had for the site going forward. Anderson outlined possibilities including reissuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) or re-engaging previous applicants once economic conditions improve. He emphasized that the Plaza project's completion would increase the site's market value and long-term potential.

First Street Project

Director Chandler provided an update on the First Street Project, reporting that bids were released the prior week with bid openings scheduled for mid-November. He described it as a significant milestone in a decades-long effort and thanked all involved staff. Chandler said the project had received final approvals from the State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO) and a modification to the associated archaeological permit earlier that day.

He announced that an informational meeting on October 30 at 5:30 p.m. would cover the First Street, Federal Street, and Webber Street projects, focusing on traffic and parking impacts. The meeting would be held in Council Chambers with online access available.

Chandler also noted organizational changes: he would be transitioning out of the Urban Renewal Agency, and EDO Anderson would assume full duties as Agency Manager. The Economic Development Division would now report directly to the City Manager's Office and no longer be under the Community Development Department. Chandler thanked the Board for their collaboration and expressed confidence in continued success under Anderson's leadership.

Board Member Swift thanked Chandler for his professionalism, responsiveness, and consistent communication, stating that he had set a high standard for staff work. Chair Richardson and other Board Members echoed appreciation for Chandler's leadership and dedication.

Federal Street Plaza Grant Application

Anderson informed the Board that staff would apply for a \$200,000 Recreational Trails Program grant to fund the Federal Street Plaza bike hub, linking it to the Historic Columbia River Highway Trail. He requested consensus approval for a letter of support from the Chair. The Board expressed unanimous support, and Chair Richardson agreed to sign the letter.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Meeting conducted in a room in compliance with ADA standards.

Submitted by/
Crystal Sayre, Administrative Assistant
Community Development Department

SIGNED: _____
Dan Richardson, Chair

ATTEST: _____
Crystal Sayre, Administrative Assistant
Community Development Department