

MINUTES

HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION WORK SESSION

January 28, 2026
4:00 p.m.

CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
313 Court Street, The Dalles, Oregon 97058
Via Zoom / Livestream via City Website

PRESIDING: Forust Ercole, Chair

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Eric Gleason (via Zoom), Victor Johnson, Bob McNary

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Tom Giamei

OTHERS PRESENT: Museum Commission Representative Julie Reynolds, City Councilor Scott Randall

STAFF PRESENT: Senior Planner Sandy Freund, Administrative Assistant Crystal Sayre

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ercole at 4:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Ercole led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by McNary and seconded by Johnson to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried 4/0; Ercole Gleason, Johnson, and McNary voting in favor, none opposed, Giamei absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: DECEMBER 17, 2025

It was moved by Johnson and seconded by Gleason to approve the minutes of December 17, 2025 as written. The motion carried 4/0; Ercole Gleason, Johnson, and McNary voting in favor, none opposed, Giamei absent.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Richard Wolfe, The Dalles: Richard Wolfe commented on potential historic resources associated with the Sam Barlow Trail, including structures near Brewery Grade that may represent historic toll or transportation facilities. He also suggested reuse of historic buildings, development of a

MINUTES

Historic Landmarks Commission Meeting

January 28, 2026

Page 2 of 4

“maker space” focused on historic crafts, and the use of recognizable landmark signage silhouettes to improve public awareness of historic sites.

DISCUSSION: 2026 GOAL SETTING

Senior Planner Freund presented the revised 2026 goal-setting materials, explaining that the Commission’s previously adopted goals were reorganized into a strategic planning format pairing each goal with defined actions to improve implementation tracking. She stated that Attachments A, B, and C consolidate prior goals, remove redundancy, and create a clearer structure for monitoring progress. Freund added that the format could also incorporate a Commission vision and mission statement if desired.

Freund further reported that staff are pursuing Certified Local Government (CLG) grant funding to update and digitize the City’s historic inventories. She explained that the work would include field verification of historic properties, updated photography, GIS integration, and development of an online historic resource database. She also noted that staff are pursuing additional grant opportunities for cemetery preservation work and potential updates to Historic Resources Code provisions and design standards.

Historic Property Awareness and Disclosure

Commissioner Johnson stated that many property owners are unaware of historic district requirements at the time of purchase and suggested coordinating with title companies and real estate professionals so that historic designation status is disclosed earlier in the transaction process.

Freund responded that the concept could be incorporated into Commission goals and that staff would review potential legal considerations related to disclosure practices.

Goal Implementation and Responsibility Tracking

Commissioner McNary stated that several long-standing Commission goals have remained incomplete due to lack of assigned responsibility and emphasized the importance of identifying individuals or groups responsible for advancing each goal.

Freund noted that while staff must prioritize statutory development review responsibilities, Commissioners may volunteer to assist with specific goal-related tasks, and staff can provide coordination support where capacity allows.

Historic Inventories and Mapping Improvements

Freund explained that the City’s historic inventory records are currently maintained largely as scanned documents and require updating and verification. She stated that the proposed inventory project would include confirming property status, collecting updated photographs, integrating information into GIS mapping layers, and improving public access to historic resource information through a web-based platform.

Commissioners discussed the importance of providing public access to historic resource data so that property owners, researchers, and prospective buyers can easily determine whether properties are designated or located within historic districts.

Student Engagement and Educational Partnerships

MINUTES

Historic Landmarks Commission Meeting

January 28, 2026

Page 3 of 4

Chair Ercole stated that local students are required to complete community service hours for graduation and suggested that Historic Landmarks Commission activities could provide opportunities for students to fulfill those requirements while learning about local preservation efforts.

Commissioner Johnson noted that partnerships with local schools, colleges, and trade programs could also support preservation-related activities, particularly in construction, fabrication, and restoration work.

Commissioner Gleason stated that student outreach may require proactive engagement by the Commission, including contacting schools or posting information about participation opportunities, rather than waiting for students to initiate involvement.

Public Education and Walking Tour Programs

Commissioner Gleason explained that the historic walking-tour plaques and QR-code program were originally supported through grant funding and coordinated with the Chamber of Commerce, and he suggested identifying available metrics to evaluate usage of the walking-tour application.

Commissioners discussed opportunities to expand public awareness of the walking-tour program and improve public access to related historical information resources.

Research and Documentation of Historic Sites

Commissioners discussed several potential research topics, including the Rock House area, railroad-related structures, Amaton Field, and other historic infrastructure features.

Commissioner McNary noted that documenting historic transportation and infrastructure features could provide valuable historical context for the community and may support future preservation initiatives.

Chair Ercole stated that research and documentation efforts could proceed even where preservation authority may be limited by property ownership considerations.

Site-Specific Preservation Issues

Senior Planner Freund reported that the Waldron Building continues to present preservation and safety challenges, including deteriorating structural conditions and prior vandalism incidents.

Commissioner Gleason stated that additional coordination with City leadership may be necessary to address long-term preservation options and ensure continued monitoring of building conditions.

Chair Ercole emphasized the importance of maintaining building security and monitoring the site to prevent further damage while preservation options are evaluated.

Due to the late hour, Chair Ercole stated that he would entertain a motion to continue the discussion at the next meeting.

It was moved by McNary and seconded by Johnson to approve a continuance of the goal setting discussion at the next regularly scheduled meeting, February 25, 2026. The motion carried 4/0; Ercole Gleason, Johnson, and McNary voting in favor, none opposed, Giamei absent.

STAFF COMMENTS

Senior Planner Freund stated that, following completion of the goal-setting discussion process, staff will prepare a short memorandum to City Council summarizing the Commission’s 2025 activities and presenting the proposed 2026 goals for formal adoption. She noted that the Commission is required to submit an annual report under applicable code provisions and that staff will finalize the report once the goals are formally adopted at a future meeting.

Freund also reiterated that staff are actively preparing multiple grant applications, including CLG funding for historic inventory updates and additional preservation-related grants, and will provide future updates as application results become available.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Gleason provided updates regarding the upcoming February History Forum programs held at the original courthouse, noting that the annual lecture series—now named in recognition of long-time organizer Karl Vercoouteren—will occur each Saturday in February, with an additional program scheduled for early March. He stated that promotional flyers have been distributed, radio announcements are planned, and the programs are open to the public with both upstairs seating and accessible downstairs viewing options.

Commissioner Gleason also reported that historic audio recordings from earlier history programs, including reel-to-reel and cassette recordings dating back several decades, have been digitized and will be made available to the public on portable media. He noted that these recordings preserve important local oral histories and educational presentations and will also complement the Commission’s broader historic preservation and education efforts.

Commissioners discussed the value of continuing public education initiatives, including lectures, historical programming, and outreach activities, as an important component of the Commission’s ongoing preservation mission.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting conducted in a room in compliance with ADA standards.

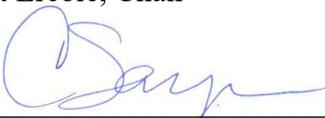
Submitted by/
Crystal Sayre, Administrative Assistant
Community Development Department

SIGNED:



Forast Ercole, Chair

ATTEST:



Crystal Sayre, Administrative Assistant
Community Development Department