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City Council Meeting
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CITY COUNCIL MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY HALL
MARCH 9, 2026
5:30 p.m.

VIA ZOOM/ IN PERSON

PRESIDING: Mayor Richard Mays

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

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

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, Wring, Mays
present

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Mays said item #11 would be removed from the agenda.

It was moved by Wring and seconded by Randall to approve the agenda as amended.

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

PRESENTATIONS PROCLAMATIONS

Proclamation in Support of The Dalles Stand Down Event

Chelsea Perritt, local Veteran Service Officer for Wasco County, requested City support for the 2026 Veterans Stand Down event scheduled for Saturday, May 16, 2026, at Lewis and Clark Park from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The event was intended to connect veterans and their families with available resources. The previous event held in 2024 had strong participation, and organizers anticipated a larger turnout in 2026 with additional vendors and community partners. The event focus included medical care, dental services, housing, employment, education, and other support services. The outdoor format was intended to provide information and connections to resources rather than scheduled one-on-one appointments, allowing veterans to learn about available services and arrange follow-up assistance as needed.

Mayor Mays read the proclamation. (attached)

Brownfield Revitalization in The Dalles

Jacob Anderson Economic Development Officer presented updates on Brownfield Revitalization in The Dalles.

Anderson provided the following additional information after Council questions and discussion:

- The Brownfields program was not structured as grants to property owners. The City paid contractors to complete Phase I and Phase II environmental assessments and then sought reimbursement from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Property owners were not required to repay the costs.
- The program reduced financial barriers for property owners and potential buyers by covering the cost of required environmental assessments.
- Environmental assessments were typically required when a property purchase involved bank financing, while private cash sales could occur without them.
- Assessments were most effective when completed before a property was under contract, as the process—particularly if a Phase II assessment was required—could delay a sale by several months.
- Property owners considering selling within the next one to two years were encouraged to apply while funding remained available so assessments could be completed in advance.
- Word-of-mouth outreach had proven more effective than mass marketing for identifying interested property owners and businesses.

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- Property owners typically maintained records of completed assessments, and the Planning Department directed buyers or sellers with questions to the Brownfields program.
- No simple public database existed to confirm whether an assessment had been completed; records were generally maintained by property owners or located within EPA archives.
- Local realtors had been informed about the program and directed potential buyers and sellers to the City for assistance.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Chuck Gomez member of the Beautification and Tree Committee provided a Committee report and shared the following updates:

- The Committee applied for a \$300,000 State grant through the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development for tree planting, materials, labor, and maintenance on the west side of town. The City advanced through several stages of the application but ultimately did not receive the award. The grant program was recurring, and the Committee planned to apply again when it becomes available.
- Deb Ferrer of the Beautification Committee was recognized for extensive work preparing the grant application, including numerous meetings, research, and coordination efforts.
- Remaining funds from the tree giveaway program were allocated for the purchase and planting of larger trees at a local grade school and the Fort Dalles Museum.
- The Trevitt Triangle landscaping project completed the previous year continued to show visible improvement and was described as a successful example of a small commercial beautification effort.
- A similar beautification project was being developed for the roundabout near Lewis and Clark Park at the east end of the park parking lot area, where irrigation infrastructure was already present.
- Community concerns had been raised regarding an increase in rodents downtown. An environmentally based approach using owl nesting boxes was suggested as a potential method to help control the rodent population.
- The recent Hoot Fest event at the Granada Theater included approximately 400 attendees each night on Friday and Saturday for free concerts, drawing visitors from outside the community.
- A free veterans dedication concert featuring the United States Air Force Band of the Golden West was held Sunday and drew approximately 110 veterans, with nearly 1,000 total attendees participating in events at the theater over the three-day weekend.
- The events were described as contributing positively to tourism and visitation in The Dalles.

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- The Beautification Committee implemented a sidewalk beautification grant program using \$3,000 previously budgeted for the effort. Grants of up to \$300 were offered to assist downtown businesses with costs such as pots, soil, plants, mulch, watering, or related expenses. The program received 23 applications, exceeding available funding and allowing ten grants to be awarded. The Committee planned to request updated photographs from participating businesses to document improvements and share progress on the City website.
- The Committee also continued its Garden of the Month recognition program for residential gardens visible from streets and sidewalks. The program was entering its tenth year and would continue highlighting community gardens throughout the season.

In response to Council discussion regarding downtown trees:

- Previously failing trees had been replaced, and many appeared to be performing better following replanting.
- Some mature trees along Washington Street near the Granada Theater may require pruning to prevent overgrowth and potential sidewalk hazards.
- Trees removed near a small park area and the parking lot at Washington and First Streets were expected to be replaced as part of the ongoing First Street project.

Klebes added that the City had a three-year contract with a tree contractor that installed and replaced downtown street trees and provided maintenance during the contract period. As the contract neared completion, the City was preparing to procure equipment and resources to assume ongoing maintenance responsibilities. He noted the First Street Streetscaping Project would add additional street trees, increasing the downtown tree canopy and requiring continued pruning and care in areas such as the First Street parking lot and other downtown locations. He stated the objective was to create a more shaded and welcoming downtown environment and expressed confidence that, with support from the Beautification and Tree Committee, the tree canopy would continue to improve.

Rian Beach, Vice President of The Dalles Overground and Co-Director of the Hoot Festival, reported the inaugural event included seven venues, more than twenty performances, and over 400 attendees each night at the Granada Theater, with more than forty volunteers assisting. The Granada concerts were free but required registration and reached capacity weeks in advance, with returned tickets quickly claimed. Visitors attended from outside the community, and local lodging providers reported the weekend was among their busiest since peak summer tourism. Organizers recorded artist performances and captured extensive photo and video content to promote The Dalles and support future grant and sponsorship opportunities. He stated organizers planned to complete an after-action review and economic analysis and present additional information to Council at a future meeting.

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Erin Willis, resident of The Dalles, commented on the recent Hoot Festival and stated she attended events at the Granada Theater and River City, noting the strong performances and community participation. She then raised concerns about social media posts circulating regarding the City's watershed proposal and HR 655, stating the posts had received significant engagement online and portrayed the City negatively. She read portions of the post and expressed concern about potential misinformation, noting she had forwarded the content to the City's social media account and was seeking clarification or key facts that could be shared in response. She also asked whether a community group, committee, or other forum existed where residents could learn more about Google-related development and associated infrastructure topics.

Mayor Mays thanked Willis for bringing forward the concerns and stated the claim that 150 acres of land would be given to Google was inaccurate. He noted the City had previously responded to similar concerns and referenced a detailed letter prepared in response to an earlier media article. He stated the City Manager would provide additional information on the topic during the upcoming City Manager's Report and expressed appreciation for residents seeking clarification directly from the City rather than relying solely on outside information. He encouraged continued community awareness as additional information becomes available.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

City Manager Matthew Klebes reported;

- Staff continued work on a City rebranding effort identified in the previous Strategic Plan under the public relations goal. A cross-functional staff team worked with a contractor to develop a new logo and brand. A survey was distributed to City staff and City Council to gather feedback, and final revisions were underway. Once completed, updated materials such as business cards and a shorter City email address format would be introduced.
- He planned to join the Dalles Community Outreach Team during an upcoming trip to Washington, D.C., and noted he might attend the March 23 City Council meeting virtually due to travel scheduled that day during spring break.
- The City was preparing to begin procurement for an owner's advisor to assist with planning and delivery of the replacement of the Wicks Water Treatment Plant, a major project identified in the Water Master Plan. The advisor would help evaluate project delivery options and provide technical, financial, regulatory, and program support throughout the project. Staff anticipated bringing a contract recommendation to Council around July.
- Upcoming special meetings were being scheduled for June 25 and August 10 to review progress on the Wastewater Master Plan. Council interest was also requested regarding a potential tour of the wastewater treatment plant prior to those work sessions.
- Continued public outreach was occurring regarding House Bill 655, which proposes

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transferring approximately 150 acres from the U.S. Forest Service to the City for municipal watershed management. The transfer represents less than one percent of the approximately 22,000-acre watershed, does not change existing water rights, and does not authorize raising the height of the Crow Creek Dam. Staff were preparing an FAQ and maps to clarify the proposal and address misinformation circulating online.

- The City and The Dalles Art Center were partnering on a new art installation at the roundabout near Sunshine Mill to replace faded murals. The project would use a combination of private grant funding, Google support, and City funds.
- Several Hoot Festival venues were attended during the weekend, with the event described as well attended and successful. Continued community interest suggested potential for the festival to become an annual event.
- The Cherry Festival would proceed as planned, with the carnival located at Lewis and Clark Park while other traditional events—including the Cherry Run, parade, car show, live music, and vendor market—would continue downtown during construction associated with the First Street Streetscaping Project.

CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilor Runyon reported;

- Attended Mid-Columbia Veterans Memorial Committee meeting.
- Met with Code Enforcement Officer
- Talked with Police Chief about letter received regarding motorized bicycles.

Councilor Richardson had no report.

Councilor Randall had no report.

Councilor Wring reported;

- Attended a Sister Cities meeting and reported an upcoming trip to the City's sister city, Miyoshi City, Japan, scheduled for mid-June, with several local high school students selected to participate. Planned to attend the trip to represent the City.
- Attended a meeting regarding current houselessness and homelessness efforts and received an update on related activities

Councilor McGlothlin had no report.

Mayor Mays had no report.

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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, Runyon, Richardson, Wring voting in favor; none opposed; none absent.

Items approved on the consent agenda were:

- A) Approval of the February 23, 2026 Regular City Council Meeting Minutes
- B) Resolution No. 26-009 Assessing the Real Property Located at 2315 East 2nd Street the Cost of Nuisance Abatement
- C) Resolution No. 26-010 Assessing the Real Property Located at 3203 West 7th Street the Cost of Nuisance Abatement

ACTION ITEMS

General Ordinance No. 26-1426 Amending TDMC Chapter 8.04 (Transient Lodging Tax) to Enable Oregon Department of Revenue Administration Under ORS 305.620, and Authorizing the City Manager to Execute an ORS 305.620 Intergovernmental Agreement and Related Onboarding Documents

Jonathan Kara, City Attorney and Brita Meyer, Finance Director reviewed the staff report.

Additional information was provided by staff following Council questions regarding the staff report:

- Only a small number of formal disputes had occurred over the past several years; however, staff time had largely been spent addressing non-filing or underreporting issues, including repeated follow-up and collections efforts with lodging operators before matters reached a formal dispute process.
- Under the City's current process, lodging providers submitted remittances monthly, while the State required quarterly remittances.
- The City had subscribed to a service that identified unpermitted short-term rentals and potential tax compliance issues. Under the proposed change, those monitoring and enforcement responsibilities would transfer to the State, which already had access to broader platform data.
- If enforcement responsibilities shifted to the State, the City would no longer need the compliance service, resulting in an estimated annual savings of approximately \$4,000.

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- The change was expected to reduce administrative workload for City staff, allowing additional time for projects such as software implementation, records scanning, and efforts to move toward more paperless processes.
- Council emphasized the importance of considering impacts on small businesses, noting that administrative requirements that may appear minor could still create burdens for small operators.
- Council agreed the ordinance could be adopted while delaying approval of the intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with the State until additional outreach and feedback could be received from local lodging providers and small businesses.
- The ordinance had been written to provide flexibility, allowing the City to proceed with negotiations while retaining the ability for Council to review and approve the final agreement before it takes effect.
- It was confirmed that any future agreement with the State would include a process allowing the City to terminate the arrangement if it was no longer beneficial.
- Financial information submitted through the transient lodging tax program remained confidential and used only for tax enforcement purposes.
- Staff noted that less frequent reporting requirements could reduce administrative burden for lodging providers, while enforcement responsibilities would shift to the State if compliance issues occurred.

It was moved by Randall and seconded by Richardson to adopt General Ordinance No. 26-1426, as amended by title, only after revising the Dallas Municipal Code. 8.0 4.160 a to provide that all money received by the city from the tax is deposited into the tourist promotion fund, and that at least annually, the tax administrator transfers to the general fund all amounts not required by Oregon law to remain in that fund, with the amount retained in that fund not to exceed 55.4% unless state or federal law requires otherwise.

Mayor Mays asked if anyone wanted the ordinance read in full. None did. He asked the City Clerk to read the ordinance by title.

Ell read General Ordinance No. 26-1426 Amending TDMC Chapter 8.04 (Transient Lodging Tax) to Enable Oregon Department of Revenue Administration Under ORS 305.620 by title.

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

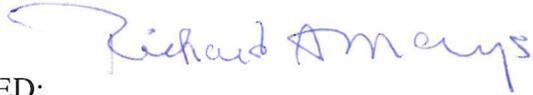
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ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

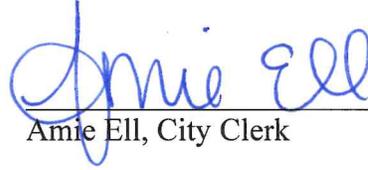
Submitted by/
Amie Ell, City Clerk

SIGNED:



Richard A. Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:



Amie Ell, City Clerk