

MINUTES
City Council Meeting
April 13, 2026
Page 1

MINUTES

CITY COUNCIL MEETING
COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY HALL
APRIL 13, 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,
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 Wring invited the audience to join in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Mays noted the removal of item #12 from the agenda.

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

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

MINUTES

City Council Meeting

April 13, 2026

Page 2

PRESENTATIONS PROCLAMATIONS

Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion Program (LEAD) Presentation

Rebecca Shilling, LEAD Program Manager presented information and updates of the LEAD program. She provided additional information in response to Council questions:

- Reported the program operated out of the Wasco County Courthouse in The Dalles and the Hood River County Courthouse, with data to be updated as available.
- Explained the LEAD program functioned as a pre-arrest diversion model, allowing law enforcement to refer individuals to services in lieu of citation or arrest.
- Stated staff were exploring additional funding opportunities, with future grant funding for the 2027–2029 biennium expected to be more competitive and data-driven.
- Reported opioid settlement funds were being used to address current gaps but were limited.
- Shared that additional funding was being explored through the Criminal Justice Commission (CJC), including a potential federal grant under review.
- Confirmed the program tracked individuals diverted to services outside of LEAD, including those not enrolled but connected to resources, as part of overall program outcomes.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Chuck Gomez presented a Beautification and Tree Committee report to Council, including the following updates:

- The Committee met twice monthly and was working with the Oregon Department of Forestry to update and expand the tree list for the annual giveaway program; approximately \$20,000 in trees had been distributed over several years.
- Coordination was underway with Fort Dalles Museum to identify historically appropriate oak and chestnut species for tree replacement.
- The Dalles Middle School requested trees, with approximately six large maple trees planned for shade and outdoor use.
- The Lewis and Clark Park turnaround project was on hold pending dissipation of herbicides, with work anticipated to resume next year; existing irrigation was in place and a historic-style streetlight feature was under consideration.
- A pilot project for hanging flower baskets at three intersections, totaling twelve baskets, was under development, with an estimated \$5,000 budget and maintenance under review.
- The pilot could inform future downtown expansion, and selected baskets included self-watering reservoir systems to reduce maintenance.

Nicole Biechler introduced herself to Council as a candidate for Wasco County Commissioner Position 1. She shared she was conducting outreach to local City Councils and attending to

MINUTES

City Council Meeting

April 13, 2026

Page 3

introduce herself. She provided information on how to learn more about her candidacy, including her website and Facebook page, and offered to speak with community members following the meeting to answer questions.

Louise Langheinrich, downtown business owner, addressed Council regarding tourism outreach and downtown business support. She noted the start of the river tour boat season and expressed concern that current materials provided to visitors were limited to QR codes linking to the Chamber directory and calendar, which she indicated were not effective for the typical visitor demographic. She referenced a prior effort, approximately 11 years earlier, when a detailed downtown directory map was developed and distributed through kiosks, hotels, and tour boats, and stated that this map continued to be updated. She shared feedback from tour operators and visitors indicating a preference for printed maps, including a detailed business directory and mural map. She reported that recent visitors did not recall seeing QR codes and preferred physical materials, with some distributing printed maps among fellow passengers. She emphasized the need for clear, accessible tools to guide visitors to downtown businesses and recommended that tourism contract funds be used to support development and distribution of a detailed directory map.

Richardson expressed support for the concerns raised and indicated agreement that printed maps would be valuable. He suggested consideration of both a high-level map and a downtown-focused map and supported further discussion on the topic. He requested that staff coordinate with relevant partners to explore options and noted there may be flexibility within the existing tourism contract to support this effort.

Mayor Mays confirmed with the City Clerk that cruise ship schedules were shared with interested businesses through an email list and posted for all to view on the City's website.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

City Manager Matthew Klebes reported;

- A reminder of the wastewater treatment plant tour scheduled for April 27 from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m., and the wastewater master plan work session scheduled for August 10 from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- Councilors were asked to confirm participation in the Cherry Festival parade on April 25.
- An update on the Westside Interceptor Project Phase 2, including the early closure of Webber Street, temporary reopening with one-way flagged traffic toward the river, continued access via River Road, anticipated reopening of the Union Street underpass on April 17, and a planned closure of Webber Street again on April 20 to allow project completion.
- The First Street streetscape project was underway, with archaeological monitoring in place, the project on schedule, and additional signage installed to communicate access

MINUTES

City Council Meeting

April 13, 2026

Page 4

and parking availability downtown.

- The request for qualifications (RFQ) for an owner's representative for the water treatment plant replacement project was nearing completion and would be issued soon.
- Participation in a radio interview discussing the Federal Street Plaza (Basalt Commons) and other City topics.
- Attendance at a Town Hall hosted by Senator Ron Wyden's office and coordination with the Mayor to follow up on advocacy efforts related to the Dalles Watershed Act.
- Participation in the Governor's Data Center Advisory Committee meeting on March 27, including a presentation on municipal planning and water considerations for data centers.
- Participation on the League of Oregon Cities (LOC) Finance and Taxation Policy Committee and upcoming attendance at the LOC conference in Pendleton.

Richardson requested a future discussion on planning for the upcoming water year, noting concerns about low snowpack conditions. He expressed interest in receiving a briefing on snowpack levels, understanding the City's management approach, and identifying any potential policy considerations, and suggested scheduling the discussion within the next one to two City Council meetings.

Klebes responded that the request aligned with upcoming discussions on the Water Management and Conservation Plan update, which was scheduled for the second City Council meeting in May. He noted the timing allowed for a more comprehensive discussion of water conditions, management strategies, conservation measures, potential curtailment, and related policy considerations. He added that staff would review whether any time-sensitive items needed to be addressed sooner and could prioritize those as needed, otherwise the discussion would occur as part of the scheduled plan update.

CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilor Randall had no report.

Councilor Richardson reported;

- Attended a briefing session.
- Met with Senator Ron Wyden's staff to advocate for the City's position on the Dalles Watershed Act and encouraged a fact-based review of the issue.
- Participated with Councilor Wring and Mayor Mays in discussions to update and improve the performance evaluation process for the City Manager and City Attorney, with the goal of creating a more focused and useful approach.

Councilor Runyon reported;

- Attended a visit to the Oregon Veterans Home with Point Man Ministries and

MINUTES

City Council Meeting

April 13, 2026

Page 5

participated in a discussion with residents.

- Attended the Community Outreach Team meeting at Columbia Gorge Community College, along with the Mayor and City Manager, including updates on a recent Washington, D.C. trip and community issues.
- Attended a briefing with Councilor Randall, the City Manager, Public Works Director, and Finance staff.
- Chaired the Mid-Columbia Veterans Memorial Committee.
- Provided an update that the veterans stand down event was confirmed for May 16 at Lewis and Clark Park from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., with a focus on serving veterans age 55 and younger.

Councilor Wring reported;

- Participated with Councilor Richardson and Mayor Mays in efforts to update and improve the performance evaluation process for the City Manager and City Attorney, with the goal of creating a more effective and consistent model.
- Requested an update on efforts related to the Portland Harbor Superfund site to remain informed on current progress.
- Noted that the City's Parks and Recreation Department received an award from Moda Health and the Portland Trail Blazers organization.

Councilor McGlothin reported;

- Received periodic updates related to efforts in Portland and noted participation, along with Councilor Wring and others, in a meeting at Shilo Inn where updates were provided.
- Attended a Wasco County meeting to support the Basalt Commons development, which received unanimous approval.
- Attended a City briefing with the Mayor, City Manager, Finance, and Public Works staff, along with Councilor Wring.
- Noted an upcoming airport meeting that he planned to attend.
- Recognized a Lions group tour event held in downtown at the Granada Theatre and expressed appreciation for materials and support provided to visitors.

Mayor Mays reported;

- Completed a monthly radio interview with Mark Bailey at KACI Radio.
- Attended the Community Outreach Team meeting at Columbia Gorge Community College.
- Attended a joint Budget Committee and Urban Renewal Budget Committee pre-meeting, where the Finance Director presented the budget and responded to questions.
- Participated in the Governor's Data Center Task Force meeting, including testimony on financial and water-related considerations.
- Presided over a Town Hall hosted by Senator Ron Wyden.

MINUTES

City Council Meeting

April 13, 2026

Page 6

- Attended a Wasco County meeting in support of the Basalt Commons project, which was approved by a unanimous vote.
- Attended a regional solutions meeting regarding the Governor's Economic Development Plan for the next four years.

CONSENT AGENDA

It was moved by Wring and seconded by Richardson to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

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

Items approved on the consent agenda were:

- A) Approval of the March 23, 2026 Regular City Council Meeting Minutes
- B) Resolution No 26-014 Concurring with the Mayor's Appointments to the Urban Renewal Budget Committee
- C) Resolution No. 26-015 Assessing the Real Property Located at 909 Bridge Street the Cost of Nuisance Abatement

CONTRACT REVIEW BOARD ACTIONS

Contract No. 2026-004 Federal Street Plaza Project to Ajax Northwest LLC

City Manager Matthew Kelebes reviewed the staff report.

Mike Zillis and Reif Larson of Walk-Macy reviewed what the project included. (see attached slides)

Zillis provided an overview of the proposed Federal Street Plaza design and noted the project had reached a key milestone following over a year of coordination with the Committee. He stated the design reflected prior Committee input and community feedback. The design was inspired by the Columbia River and regional geology, with those elements incorporated into materials and layout. A primary goal was to create a welcoming, central gathering space that would serve the entire community, with a focus on families and daily use. The overall site plan, stating that Federal Street would be converted into a pedestrian plaza. Pedestrian safety improvements were included at Second Street through expanded bulb-outs and enhanced crossings.

He outlined key plaza features, including:

- A shaded seating area with porch swings near Second Street
- A central open gathering space designed to accommodate events of varying sizes

MINUTES

City Council Meeting

April 13, 2026

Page 7

- Landscaped planters with trees and integrated seating
- A splash pad as the focal feature, intended to provide cooling and attract families during warmer months

He stated the splash pad would include a recirculating and filtration system and a variety of programmed spray features. Adjacent shaded seating areas and benches were designed to support comfort and extended use of the space. Improvements would extend toward the Transportation Building, including additional paving and integration with surrounding areas. The building would receive minor upgrades, including public restroom access improvements, mechanical and electrical updates, and exterior painting. The existing roof and gutters had already been replaced. It would also support a bicycle hub, including bike lockers, racks, a repair station, water fountain, seating, and wayfinding elements to support visitors traveling by bicycle.

He stated the project had been coordinated with nearby First Street improvements and, if approved, construction would be completed by the same contractor to ensure consistency and coordination between projects. He presented conceptual images illustrating the plaza layout, splash pad, shaded seating areas, arbor features, porch swings, and bicycle hub.

He concluded by thanking the Committee for its input and stated the design team looked forward to moving into implementation.

Mayor Mays noted he had provided a list of eight questions in advance to the consultant and staff and requested to review those questions during the meeting.

1. How much of the \$3,398,000 total bid from the contractor could be attributed to the water feature?
2. Could the city remove the water feature before construction begins and have the project remain on schedule?
3. If the above scenario was to transpire, would that affect Ajax having the lowest bid compared to cross line?
4. If the water feature was taken out, would that require a rebid?
5. How long would the delay be compared to the present schedule?
6. What is the present monthly rate of inflation for construction projects?
7. If the project is delayed and rebid what is the estimated additional cost to be charged for your services?
8. Are there any other costs or benefits associated with delaying this project?

Zillis said the cost of the water feature in the bid breakdown was \$925,000

City Attorney Kara stated that, from a legal perspective, it would not be feasible to remove the water feature from the project scope after bids had been received and still proceed with contract award. He explained the water feature was a central component of the project as bid and

MINUTES

City Council Meeting

April 13, 2026

Page 8

represented approximately one-quarter of the low bid amount. He noted removing the water feature would substantially change the scope of the project, effectively resulting in a different project than what was originally advertised. He stated that proceeding under those conditions could expose the City to avoidable risk of a bid protest from contractors who may have chosen not to submit proposals due to the inclusion of the water feature or the specialized experience required to construct it.

Zillis said removing the water feature and proceeding with redesign and rebid would delay the project by approximately two and a half to three months, likely pushing construction into the following year and increasing costs. He noted the current schedule depended on starting construction immediately to complete the project by the end of the year, and that under a rebid scenario the full procurement and construction sequence would extend the timeline into early to mid-next year. He advised that rebidding could result in fewer or no bids due to market conditions, contractor availability, and timing during peak construction season, and that pricing remained volatile. He added that the City had received favorable bids below the engineer's estimate and was in a strong position to proceed.

Zillis said a specific inflation estimate could be developed with the project estimator if requested. He noted that current market conditions were highly volatile, with contractors having trouble pricing projects due to rapidly changing costs, including fuel and materials. He explained that some subcontractors were only guaranteeing pricing for short periods due to this uncertainty. He added that, while a precise inflation factor was not available at the time, it was expected that rebidding the project would result in higher costs.

Zillis said, regarding the cost of Walker Macy's services, a specific estimate was not available at the meeting and would require reconvening the full consultant team. He noted that removing the water feature would require substantial redesign, including modification of approximately 80 percent of the construction drawings and specifications, and would involve a significant level of effort.

Zillis said there was no identified benefit to delaying the project. He noted the City was in a strong position to move forward, as multiple bids were received and both were below the engineer's estimate.

McGlothlin said he supported the overall Plaza construction and the vision it represents for the community. He raised questions and concerns regarding the proposed water feature, including whether the fountain would operate on a recirculated water system or discharge directly into the sewer system. He emphasized that water use was a significant concern given diminishing snowpack and asked whether the feature could be shut off during periods when the City may need to curtail water usage.

Zillis said the fountain would operate similarly to a swimming pool system, using treated,

MINUTES

City Council Meeting

April 13, 2026

Page 9

recirculated water. He noted that consultants and equipment vendors would provide training to staff and assist with startup, and that while the system is not overly complex, it does require ongoing maintenance.

Klebes said that in a water curtailment scenario, non-essential amenities such as fountains would likely be shut off, like the existing fountain at Lewis and Clark Park. The water feature was intended to operate on a timer system activated by a push button, rather than running continuously. He noted this approach was discussed to reduce water use and address concerns about potential waste.

McGlothlin asked about vandalism, durability, maintenance, and expected life span for the Plaza.

Zillis said the water feature was designed as a flat surface with minimal exposed elements, making it difficult to vandalize. He noted that the spray heads were installed to be resistant to tampering and that all equipment was housed in secured vaults or within the Transportation Building, leaving little accessible infrastructure. The system used a combination of chemicals and a UV treatment system for water cleaning, operating similarly to a swimming pool. He noted that maintenance included ensuring filters were clean, chemicals were properly added, and water balance was routinely tested. He added that the system was not considered high maintenance and that pump systems could be monitored remotely to ensure proper operation.

Klebes said the Plaza project included installation of a new security camera system to provide full coverage of the area, with the Transportation Building serving as a central point. He noted that activation of the space, including potential use of the building by entities such as a museum, was discussed as a way to increase presence and oversight. He added that creating consistent activity and visibility in the area was intended to support both activation and security.

Klebes said that all City assets have a finite lifespan and depreciate over time, including pumps, playground equipment, patios, and public art. He noted the importance of the Capital Fund and General Fund in supporting the maintenance and eventual replacement of these amenities. He added that even relatively recent investments, such as the welcome signs at the entrances to the City, will require future maintenance and replacement, and emphasized the need to ensure sufficient revenue in upcoming budget cycles to sustain these assets.

Zillis said contractors may allocate costs differently across bid components, and that evaluation focused on the overall bid amount rather than individual line items. He noted the selected bid was approximately \$400,000 below the engineer's estimate, indicating the City was in a favorable position.

Runyon said he felt more comfortable with the project after discussion but still had concerns regarding the location of the pump house and controls, noting he had heard conflicting

MINUTES

City Council Meeting

April 13, 2026

Page 10

information about whether equipment would be inside the museum or located outside. He expressed concern about potential chemical odors affecting a future museum space and asked whether impacts could be mitigated. He also sought confirmation that the control system would be minimal in size and would not significantly limit usable space within the building. He suggested considering an external, secure structure to house equipment and chemicals to avoid impacts to the interior.

Zillis said the chemical storage and related equipment would be located in a vault, with controlled conditions for chemical handling, and that piping would run into the building for system operation.

Klebes said much of the space in that area of the Transportation Building was planned for Plaza storage, consistent with earlier discussions, including storage of amenities that may need to be moved regularly or seasonally. He noted the City currently lacks adequate facilities storage space and has been exploring additional options, while emphasizing the need for storage near the Plaza for operational efficiency. He added that a portion of the space would be dedicated to splash pad equipment and that staff had discussed ensuring adequate ventilation to prevent any odors from impacting potential uses such as a museum.

McGlothin asked if the City's insurance carrier had approved the project.

Klebes clarified that the City's insurance carrier had not formally approved the project. He said one of the considerations discussed was the application of recreational immunity, similar to other City facilities such as Lewis and Clark Park, where individuals assume a level of risk while recreating. He noted the intent was to structure the Plaza in a way that could allow for similar protections, and that the City Attorney could provide further detail.

Zillis said the Plaza design included a comprehensive lighting plan developed by a lighting engineer, with sufficient lighting throughout the space to support safety and visibility. He noted that lighting would include downlighting at the fountain and central Plaza area, as well as lighting under trellises near the Transportation Building and swing areas. He added that lighting levels could be adjusted or turned off during events as needed. Soffit lighting at the Transportation Building would be replaced to improve illumination, addressing existing dark areas around the building and enhancing overall visibility.

Wring said he asked whether an analysis had been conducted to determine if current City facilities staff had the capacity to take on additional maintenance and operational responsibilities associated with the Plaza. He noted specific concerns related to maintaining the water feature, handling daily or weekly setup of amenities such as seating, and the need for adequate storage space, particularly if the building is also used for a museum. He also asked whether additional or seasonal staffing may be needed to support these functions.

MINUTES

City Council Meeting

April 13, 2026

Page 11

Klebes said the question of staffing and operational capacity was being addressed in two parts. Ongoing discussions with the Ad Hoc Committee included consideration of how the Transportation Building would be used and whether partners such as a museum or nonprofit organizations could occupy the space and take on certain operational responsibilities, such as daily setup, cleanup, and reporting maintenance issues as part of a lease or partnership agreement. Staff were also evaluating maintenance needs more broadly across City facilities, including the Plaza, future streetscape improvements, and ongoing tree maintenance. This evaluation included consideration of whether to continue contracting services or bring them in-house, and whether additional facilities staffing may be needed. He noted long-term planning efforts were also focused on building internal capacity and ensuring continuity of institutional knowledge within the facilities team.

Wring said he raised concerns about the cost of the water feature, noting it represented a significant portion of the overall project. He asked whether alternative uses for those funds had been identified if the water features were not pursued, including whether the funding could be redirected to other priorities such as street improvements.

Klebes said some funding, including support from the Dalles Lions Club, was specifically tied to the water feature and would require further discussion if the features were modified or removed. He noted that funds could be redirected to other priorities but emphasized there are significant competing needs. He referenced Council direction to use Enterprise Zone and Strategic Investment Program (SIP) revenues to address long-term infrastructure and Capital Fund needs, including public infrastructure and street maintenance. He added that these funding sources are already heavily relied upon, and that reallocating approximately \$900,000 could support efforts such as reducing debt or maintaining the City's pavement condition, which remain capital-intensive priorities.

Runyon said most of his questions had been addressed but emphasized the importance of adequate ventilation. He confirmed that there was a rear access door to the building so maintenance staff could access equipment without going through the museum. He noted this was important due to security concerns, particularly because items on loan from the community would be housed in the space.

McGlothlin asked whether lifecycle and maintenance projections had been developed for the water feature to understand expected costs and upkeep over time.

Zillis said the overall lifespan of the feature would extend well beyond ten years, with pumps designed to last more than twenty years. He noted the system has relatively few moving parts and is designed for durability, with most equipment housed in secured areas. He said routine maintenance would include monitoring water quality, seasonal winterization and startup, and periodic system checks. He added that training would be provided to City staff, including hands-

MINUTES

City Council Meeting

April 13, 2026

Page 12

on instruction and ongoing support for control systems, which can also be adjusted or programmed for different uses. He emphasized that long-term success would depend on consistent maintenance and staff capacity.

Klebes noted that the project would require removal of commemorative bricks in front of the Veteran Service Building. He said the Ad Hoc Committee had discussed options to recognize those contributions, including plaques or reuse of the bricks in another feature, and that additional ideas would be explored at an upcoming meeting. He added that there had been interest in salvaging the bricks, if feasible, to preserve and honor the contributions of volunteers.

Mayor Mays invited audience participation on the topic.

Jim Wilcox, representing the Dalles Lions Charitable Trust, spoke in support of the Plaza project and the inclusion of the water feature. He said the Lions had a long history of supporting water-related community amenities, including contributions to the natatorium and restoration of the Rose Garden fountain. He noted the organization had committed \$20,000 toward the water feature, with additional grant funding being pursued. He emphasized the importance of the water feature in activating the space, stating it would encourage public use, provide a cooling element during hot weather, and create a family-friendly destination. He expressed concern that without the water feature, the Plaza would be less utilized. He also supported recognizing prior community contributions to the Transportation Building, including commemorative bricks, and encouraged the City to continue honoring those efforts.

Klebes said the project included approximately \$520,000 in grant funding and donations. He noted these contributions included support from the Dalles Lions Club, Google, Northern Wasco County Parks and Recreation District, T-Mobile, and the Columbia Gateway Urban Renewal Agency.

Steve Light, owner of Free Bridge Brewing, spoke in support of the Federal Street Plaza project. He noted his experience as a downtown business owner and as a former member of the Federal Street Plaza Ad Hoc Committee, where he participated in design development and public outreach. He said the project had been thoughtfully developed with significant consideration given to design, budget, and community input, and described the collaboration with the design team as thorough and intentional. He described the Plaza as a flexible, inclusive community space intended to serve residents and visitors for generations. He highlighted the design elements reflecting the natural character of the Columbia River Gorge and emphasized the importance of the water feature as a central, family-friendly component that would enhance usability, particularly during hot weather. He acknowledged the costs and maintenance associated with the feature but expressed support for its inclusion as a key element of the overall vision.

Mayor Mays shared that Bets Steltzer, a business owner and member of the Federal Street Plaza

MINUTES

City Council Meeting

April 13, 2026

Page 13

Ad Hoc Committee, was unable to attend due to a conflict but had expressed support for the water feature.

Richardson said he had been involved with the Ad Hoc Committee for several years and described the process as highly engaged, with strong public outreach, thoughtful discussion, and a shared sense of community pride. He noted that while Council raised important questions, similar detailed discussions had also occurred throughout the committee's work. He said much of the City's work focuses on maintaining existing services, but that this project represented an opportunity to make a meaningful investment in the community. He acknowledged the cost but noted the project was approximately \$1,000,000 under the \$4,900,000 budget. He expressed support for moving forward and encouraged approval of the contract.

Randall said he agreed with prior comments and noted that early concerns about the cost of the water feature were addressed through the Ad Hoc Committee's evaluation process. He said the committee reviewed options and recommended a design with the water feature as a central element. He added that water features in other communities, including those in the nation's capital, serve as attractions for visitors, and expressed the view that a similar feature would help draw people to the Plaza.

Wring said he supported the Plaza project and agreed it has strong potential to serve as a central downtown gathering space. He noted the project was well located and said he was pleased that bids came in lower than expected. He expressed continued concern about the cost of the water feature, however, and said the City should consider whether those funds could be better used for other priorities. He noted that while \$1,000,000 may not go far in some contexts, it could make a meaningful difference for needs such as street maintenance and other infrastructure work. He also raised concern about the lack of clear long-term maintenance cost projections for the feature and said Council should carefully consider both the upfront cost and total cost of ownership over time before proceeding.

Richardson said he agreed there were many other needs the City could invest in, particularly infrastructure such as streets. However, he noted those types of projects could absorb significant funding with limited visible impact over time. He said the Plaza project represented a largely one-time capital investment, with ongoing maintenance costs acknowledged but comparatively smaller. He expressed the view that the project should be considered as a long-term investment for the community, potentially lasting decades, and that its value should be evaluated over that extended timeframe. He added that while maintenance costs should be considered, the upfront investment was necessary to realize the long-term benefit.

McGlothlin said Council decisions were significant and affected many people and emphasized the importance of hearing a range of perspectives when making those decisions. He noted that when only one side of an issue was presented, it could influence the outcome and encouraged

MINUTES

City Council Meeting

April 13, 2026

Page 14

community members to participate in City Council meetings to share their views. He said public input supported more informed and balanced decision-making in the interest of the community.

It was moved by Randall and seconded by Richardson to approve award of Contract No. 2026-004 to Ajax Northwest LLC and authorize the City Manager to execute the Public Works Agreement with Ajax Northwest LLC for the Federal Street Plaza Project for the lump-sum contract price of \$3,398,000.

Runyon said he acknowledged a potential conflict due to his involvement with the museum and noted that chemical storage had been a primary concern. He said he was reassured by discussion that measures would be in place to address those concerns. He expressed support for the museum as a valuable attraction that could help increase visibility, volunteer support, and operating hours. He said that while he had concerns about the cost, he believed the project would likely be acceptable overall but emphasized the continued need for adequate storage space for museum operations, noting current storage capacity is insufficient.

McGlothlin said two of his primary concerns—chemical impacts and the treatment of the commemorative bricks—had been addressed. He noted the importance of respecting the bricks and acknowledged that staff were working toward a resolution.

Wring expressed appreciation to City staff and project partners for their work on the Plaza. He said he continued to have significant concerns, however, that prevented him from supporting the project at that time.

Mayor Mays acknowledged the work of the Ad Hoc Committee over the past 18 months in developing the project.

The motion carried 4 to 1, Randall, Richardson, McGlothlin, Runyon voting in favor; Wring opposed; none absent.

ACTION ITEMS

General Ordinance No. 26-1427 Amending Certain Provisions of TDMC Chapter 5.20 (Dog Control) for Administrative Clarity

City Attorney Janathan Kara reviewed the staff report.

Runyon asked whether, in cases where a license tag must be replaced due to approval processes or similar circumstances, the individual would be charged again for the replacement.

Kara said the ordinance included a replacement tag fee that reflected only the direct cost charged

MINUTES

City Council Meeting

April 13, 2026

Page 15

by the vendor to produce and mail the tag, estimated at approximately \$3, and the City did not receive any portion of that fee. This applied only in cases where a tag was lost or destroyed. The proposed ordinance change removed the requirement for tags to include expiration dates. The licensing program had not yet been fully implemented, no tags had been issued to date, and the update was intended to ensure the City was prepared to launch the program ahead of the July 1 deadline.

It was moved by McGlothlin and seconded by Randall to adopt General Ordinance No. 26-1427, by title only, as presented.

Mayor Mays asked if Councilor wished to have the ordinance read in full. There were none. He asked the City Clerk to read the ordinance by title

City Clerk Amie Ell read the ordinance by title.

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

Resolution No. 26-013 Amending the City Fee Schedule (Effective April 14, 2026)

City Attorney Jonathan Kara reviewed the staff report.

Council asked for examples of easily accessible or routinely requested records that would remain available at no cost to the public and for a description of the volume of requests.

Kara said routinely requested records such as police reports remained free in most cases, especially for common requests like crash reports for insurance purposes. He noted fees applied mainly to large or complex requests, while most routine requests were completed quickly, often within two days, with fees under \$25 typically waived. He added fees were intended to recover City costs for time-intensive work, with additional limitations when a request demonstrated public interest. He said approximately 30 percent of a paralegal's time was spent processing public records requests and noted the City consistently met statutory timelines. He said requests had increased and that staff were working to improve online access to commonly requested documents to reduce demand. He added that staff often worked with requestors to narrow broad requests, which helped reduce staff time and improve turnaround.

Mayor Mays asked if anyone in the audience wanted to comment or ask a question.

Rodger Nichols, resident of The Dalles and member of the press, expressed concern about increases in costs for public access but said the proposed fees appeared reasonable in the context of inflation. He also commended staff for their responsiveness and service in handling public

records requests.

Kara explained that members of the news media are often strong candidates for fee waivers or reductions due to their ability to disseminate information of public interest. He clarified, however, that media status alone does not automatically qualify a request for a waiver. He noted that requests made for personal purposes, even by a member of the press, would not meet the public interest standard.

He said the City applies a six-factor test, as required under Oregon law and outlined in the City's public records policy, to evaluate whether a fee should be waived or reduced. He explained that factors include the requester's purpose, the nature of the information, whether it is already public, the requester's ability to pay, and their ability to share the information with the public. He added that a separate six-factor test is used to determine fee reductions, allowing staff to partially reduce costs based on those considerations.

It was moved by McGlothlin and seconded by Richardson to adopt Resolution No. 26-013, as presented.

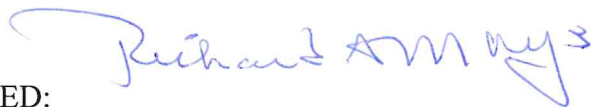
The motion carried 5 to 0, McGlothlin, Richardson, Runyon, Randall, Wring voting in favor; none opposed; none absent.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Submitted by/
Amie Ell, City Clerk

SIGNED:



Richard A. Mays, Mayor

ATTEST:



Amie Ell, City Clerk