

**MINUTES OF THE CITY OF HEPPNER CITY COUNCIL MEETING
HEPPNER CITY HALL, 111 N. MAIN STREET, HEPPNER, OREGON
7:00 PM MARCH 10, 2025**

ATTENDEES:

**Corey Sweeney
Ralph Klock
Sharon Inskeep
Ian Murray
Joe Armato
Dale Bates
Adam Doherty
John Doherty
Chad Doherty
Steve Rhea
Bill Kuhn
Nathen Braun**

Absent: None

Members of the Public: Tripp Finch, Gus Peterson

On Zoom: Kathy Street

1. GENERAL BUSINESS

A. Call to Order. Corey Sweeney called the March 10, 2025, meeting of the City of Heppner City Council to order at 7:00 PM.

B. Pledge of Allegiance. Corey Sweeney led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

C. Announcements – None

D. Correspondence - None

E. Requests – Animal Permit: Mikalie Duncan, Whitlie Duncan, Hadlie Duncan, for a total of four 4-H lambs and three goats at 565 Minor Street.

Motion to approve an animal permit for Mikalie Duncan, Whitlie Duncan, Hadlie Duncan, for a total of four 4-H lambs and three goats at 565 Minor Street by Dale Bates. Seconded

by Sharon Inskeep. Councilors Klock, Inskeep, Murray, Armato, Bates, and Doherty voted unanimously to approve. Motion Carried

F. Presentations – None

2. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC –

3. CONSENT AGENDA

A. February 10, 2025, City Council meeting minutes and February 28, 2025 Special Council minutes.

Motion to approve the minutes by Dale Bates. Seconded by Ralph Klock. Councilors Klock, Inskeep, Murray, Armato, Bates, and Doherty voted unanimously to approve. Motion Carried

B. Approval of Monthly Bills

Motion to approve the monthly bills by Ian Murray. Seconded by Adam Doherty. Councilors Klock, Inskeep, Murray, Armato, Bates, and Doherty voted unanimously to approve. Motion Carried

C. Financial Statement – For information only.

4. REPORTS

A. Fire Chief Report – Steve Rhea read the report.

2 lift assist EMS

1 secure landing zone

1 controlled burn in the city

1 motor vehicle accident, non -injury

2 flood assessment for Hinton Creek

1 flood abatement on Fairview Way

28 chief Calls

210 calls for 2024, 28 calls for 2025

Attended EMAC meeting with OSFM. Attended the Water Master Plan Meeting with Anderson Perry.

Hosted a 2-day Fire Fighter 1 academy for 4 departments.

Attended a meeting with NRCS, OSFM, ODF, County Weed and ASAP Spraying regarding the review of SWRR projects and Hazard Mapping.

Attended the District Board and Budget Committee.

Attended the Special City Council meeting regarding CREZ fund disbursements. Steve Rhea will be stepping down as Fire Chief at the end of the year. A new fire chief will

be appointed. Steve would still like to assist the fire department in the future as Fire Marshall and with grants etc.

- B. Morrow County Sheriff's Department – There were 393.25 hours for February. There were 12 dog complaints, 29 traffic stops, 28 warnings and 1 citation. There was a total of 133 incidents. A new deputy will be starting on Monday. That leaves only 2 open patrol deputy positions.
- C. Public Works. Chad Doherty read the Public Works report.

Water Dept. – The Crew installed new 6" Endress & Hauser mag meters at Well 2 and Well 3. Now scheduling with TAG to troubleshoot communication issues at Well 1 and Reservoir 3. At Well 1 the VPN device was not working, and they were able to fix Reservoir 3 while online. Caleb and Chad helped pull the TAG van that got stuck on the way to Reservoir 3. Met with TAG on the power issue at Well 3. This ended up being a transformer out on the Columbia Basin side. The crew responded to a hydrant on Sperry Street. Ordered a part and repaired the hydrant. Responded to frozen meters at 545 Pioneer Drive, 340 Barratt Blvd, 220 Center, and 215 S Main St. Replaced meters at 510 S Main, 105 Campbell Way, and 240 E Hill St. Reviewed the Water System Master Plan for the Special City Council Meeting. Picked up parts at HD Fowler for new meter installation. Completed the Oregon Water Resources 75% grant for new water meters at Well 2 and Well 3. The grant was approved and sent to Salem for processing.

Sewer Dept. – Cleaned the contact basins once. Did 7 septic dumps. Completed the Biosolids Report and sent it to DEQ. Met with TAG on the overload trickling filter lift pump at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Found the overload in the contactor by the starter. Worked on finding a new generator service for the Wastewater Treatment Plant. CAT in Pasco completed a quote for service every other year. Inspected new sewer service taps for the small homes on S Chase St. Updated the Community Right to Know forms for our Wastewater Treatment Plant and Golf Course. The crew replaced the trickling filter pump #1 and the battery on the backup generator at the treatment plant.

Streets Dept. – Painted the shamrock. Hauled off one deer to the ODOT yard. Responded to snow on multiple days. Plowed streets, removed snow from downtown and from sidewalks. Public Works spread rock for one freezing rain event. Swept Main Street, Court Street to the fairgrounds and from City Park to Fuller Canyon. The crew blew off sidewalks on Main Street and other sidewalks around town.

Parks Dept. – the crew started process to repair and repaint the Heppner sign at Heritage Plaza.

Park District – Caleb and Chad continued to take care of the therapy pool.

Shop/Other Dept. – Hauled spoils to the city dump. Chad attended the Police commission meeting. John and Chad responded to flooding at 760 Fairview Way. Hauled off a load of metal from the city yard. Replaced the battery in the 2012 Ram 1500.

D. City Manager Report – John Doherty read the City Manager Report.

1. District Courthouse – Communication with MC, DLR, & PBS regarding planning application, design. Communication with ODOT for highway signage for “Courthouse Way,” and information signs to courthouse. Met with residents regarding proposed courthouse.
2. Planning Commission – Complete staff study for MC CU/Variance, draft letter to residents, publish public notice, attend Planning Commission on 03-03-2025, complete approval notification and send approved permit and letter to MC.
3. HVFD – Meetings with Chief Rhea regarding future capital expenditures, grants, discussed succession plan for upcoming retirement of Chief Rhea and future administrative duty needs.
4. OTLD – Look into feasibility of potential future library of 5000 ft in City Park. Had Teams meeting with Hacker Architects, Laura Klinger, and Sophia Tan regarding possible library locations. Reviewed City Comprehensive Plan and properties list. Phone call with Bill Kuhn (as OTLD board member,) regarding locations and addition to Council agenda.
5. Chip Seal project – Complete ITB, publish in Gazette, plans centers, and send to paving contractors. Completed addendum and revision to ITB. Met with Eric Imes, MCPW, on development of bid and specifications. Calls and meetings with paving contractors. Requested quotes for chip rock delivery to Heppner. Follow-up with contractors after bid opening and issuance of NOI to award contract. Discuss contract with Granite Construction and prepare for review and signing.
6. Heppner Housing Authority – Attend monthly meeting. Worked with Housing Association of Oregon and Synchron on membership and insurance, transition to Rachel Payton as future contact for HHA and the entities.
7. GEODC - Attend monthly meeting and audit meeting.
8. POM – Attended monthly meeting and special session. CDA and wastewater main discussions. No Mill site flood mitigation updates.
9. MC BOC – Submitted COH list for future capital projects. Attended 02-19 BOC work session in which Capital Improvement Plan was discussed, with county outlining how the CIP process will work.
10. Safe Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund – Reviewed draft for Letter of Intent, completed by Anderson Perry. Submitted LOI/application to Business Oregon for future participation in SDWRLF
11. Legislative Water Caucus – Communication with Rep Helms and LWC group regarding Morrow County projects.

12. Oregon Legislature – Submitted letters to Senator Nash and Representative Smith regarding support for Transportation Package, Infrastructure Funding, and no vote on SB 916 (bill related to unemployment insurance for striking individuals.) Held telephone call with Calvin Bennett, Rep Smith's Legislative Director, regarding current and upcoming bills and funding.
13. "Fairview Landslide" – Responded to emergency call for landslide at Fairview Way, with Chad Doherty and Eric Chick. Worked with MCSO, HVFD, MCPW, and CBEC to mitigate. Met with landowners and viewed source after.
14. St Pat's celebration – Attended planning meeting and participated in Adopt-A-Highway litter patrol.
15. ODOT – Contact with Heppner office and Region 5 office regarding several curb damages sustained on newer ADA project curbs. Reached out to neighboring communities that have had ADA projects on issues, continuing research into options. Attended SRTS meeting and discussed 2026 grant cycle and communicated info to MCSD Ryan Gerry & Matt Combe.
16. LOC – Attending weekly legislative update meetings for any actions needed by city with legislature either supporting or opposing bills.
17. Community Initiated Project – Submitted CIP application to office of Senators Merkley & Wyden for consideration in 2026 federal funding. Application for Well #6 construction capital.
18. CREZ II – Received 2024 payment of \$539,484. Met with Chad and Steve and looked at possible funds distribution for reserves & future city needs.
19. Complaints – Received ongoing feral cat complaint from Glen Haven resident. Viridian responded they are working on enforcement with tenants. MCSO has visited property and found no evidence of feeding stations. Continued communication with MCSO on issue.
20. WCVEDG – Attended monthly meeting. Meetings with Kim regarding cottage home and visits to site and talks with contractor.
21. Kuhn Law – Meeting with Bill regarding updates to City Code and enforcement of code violations, information for Police Commission.
22. Police Commission – Held meeting to discuss contract, performance, needs of City. MCSO to provide additional reporting, COLA for salaries and vehicle purchase price given, and ideas on how to address code enforcement.
23. Zoning – Several meetings with residents on zoning questions and received tax lot partition application.
24. Economic Development Committee- Attended monthly meeting. Set action items for Mayor and myself, prior to March meeting.
25. Chamber – attended monthly meeting, budget and St Pats discussed. Researched payment history from COH to Chamber and contacted current and former COH and Chamber employees.
26. Joint Fire Meeting – Attended yearly meeting between HRFPD and HVFD and COH. 2025 payment discussed as well as future capital needs (equipment and vehicles.) Received payment for mutual operations.
27. Reviewed payroll, budget, bank reconciliation, and AP.

28. Investment Policy – Several funds either matured or were called over past month. Re-invested City funds.
29. WSMP – Reviewed draft, follow up Teams meeting with Chad and Dane. Chad and I provided revision notes for Dane.
30. Special Session – Council special session to review/approve WSMP, sealed bid opening for Chip Seal, and CREZ II funds distribution.
31. Planning Commission – Held meeting for review of Morrow County Conditional Use and Variance Permit application for new District Courthouse. Conditional Use and 3 Variances approved by Planning.
32. Budget – Preliminary work on FY 26 budget and timeline.
33. Economic development – Provide comments to Oregon iSector on HB 3104 which would provide a “leverage fund,” to a newly created Rural Community Resource Center. Opinion – Assistance to cities up to 30K population may not result in appropriation of resources to smaller communities truly in need of economic development assistance.

There are a lot of cats around the hospital. A deputy was sent to Mt. Glen apartments and found no evidence of a feeding station. Viridian gave permission to go on the property and give citations if necessary. Viridian is working to keep tenants from having feeding stations on the property.

The Fairview landslide was weather related and caused by runoff. Culverts are being installed by WCVEDG, who owns the property above Fairview Way, which is out of city limits.

5. BUSINESS

A. Old Business

1. Oregon Trail Library District

The Library District has been looking for good sites for a new library in the future. The area next to the existing library in city park was previously discussed. This would cause a loss of park space and cutting down what are possibly the oldest trees in town, which is a concern. City Park is also the oldest park in town. There has been lots of green park enhancement that wasn't there 50 years ago, to the city's credit. The Library would like the building to enhance the city park. If that is not an option, they would like to discuss purchasing the property at Chase and May. That would require engineering as it is in the flood plain and there is not an elevation certificate for the property. They are still throwing around ideas at this point. This is a good topic to discuss at the next Economic Development Commission meeting. The council will try to make a decision by June.

2. Chip Seal Contract

At the February 28, 2025 Special City Council meeting, Granite Construction was the low bid for the project. The council approved moving forward with an intent to award the bid to Granite Construction. The period to protest the awarding ends at 5 pm tomorrow.

Motion to approve awarding the contract to Granite Construction for \$181,749.00 and the additional \$12,250.00 for striping for a total of \$193, 999.00, pending no protests by Joe Armato. Seconded by Dale Bates. Councilors Klock, Inskeep, Murray, Armato, Bates, and Doherty voted unanimously to approve. Motion Carried

3. Chip Seal rock purchase

To lower the cost of the project, the city will purchase the chip rock and have it delivered to town. John needs council approval to purchase the rock. This will still come in under budget. The rock will be required to be rinsed prior to delivery. The city will purchase extra rock as a base to avoid contaminating the chip rock as it is picked up. The extra rock can be used later by Public Works.

Motion to approve the purchase of up to \$20,000 of chip seal rock by Ian Murray. Seconded by Ralph Klock. Councilors Klock, Inskeep, Murray, Armato, Bates, and Doherty voted unanimously to approve. Motion Carried

4. Public Works - Mower purchase

Chad presented three bids to the council. Moen Machinery: \$18,250.00, Inland Turf and Equipment: \$18,250.00, Walla Walla Saw: \$20,295.00. He would like to purchase the mower from Inland Turf as he already takes equipment to them for repairs, and they have been good to work with.

Motion to approve the purchase of a new mower from Inland Turf for \$18,250.00 by Dale Bates. Seconded by Ralph Klock. Councilors Klock, Inskeep, Murray, Armato, Bates, and Doherty voted unanimously to approve. Motion Carried

5. Water System Master Plan – Potential additions to include in “High priority selected improvements”.

Chad has some suggestions for some items to include in the high priority list. This include recoating the exterior of Reservoir 3 and other items. (list attached). This will increase the cost of the Master Plan by \$673,000.00. With

council approval Dane Maben will make the additions to be included for the one stop meeting.

Motion to approve the additions to the Water System Master Plan by Adam Doherty. Seconded by Joe Armato. Councilors Klock, Inskeep, Murray, Armato, Bates, and Doherty voted unanimously to approve. Motion Carried

B. New Business - None

6. MINUTES OF COMMISSION MEETINGS – For information only.

7. REPORT FROM CITY ATTORNEY – Discussed code enforcement with the city manager. Also updating outdated code and coordinating a nuisance citation process with the sheriff's office.

8. REPORT FROM MAYOR, CITY COUNCILORS – John and Corey will be attending the LOC NE Oregon Region 11 meeting on Tuesday April 16, 2025. If anyone on the council is interested in attending, please let them know. John will send out the emails for OGEC on March 15th. Councilors will then have 30 days to fill out their Statement of Economic Interest.

9. ADJOURNMENT – Meeting adjourned at 8:02 PM.