

**MINUTES OF THE CITY OF HEPPNER CITY COUNCIL MEETING
HEPPNER CITY HALL, 111 N. MAIN STREET, HEPPNER, OREGON
7:00 PM OCTOBER 13, 2025**

ATTENDEES:

**Corey Sweeney
Ralph Klock
Sharon Inskeep
Joe Armato
Ian Murray
Dale Bates
John Doherty
Chad Doherty
Steve Rhea**

Absent: Adam Doherty (excused absence), Nathen Braun

Members of the Public: John Murray, Katie Murray, Emily Jack, Brian Thompson, George Nairns, Nikki Clark, Barb Orwick, Laurel Laney, Joe Miller, Lindsay Grogan, Petra Payne, Jim Kindle, Ruth Eadler

On Zoom: Bill Kuhn, Heppner Gazette, Becky Kindle, Brandi Sweeney, Susie Thompson, Crystal Seitz.

1. GENERAL BUSINESS

A. Call to Order. Corey Sweeney called the October 13, 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 - None

F. Presentations

Nikki Clark and Barb Orwick gave a report for the Neighborhood Center. They will be working with Heppner High School for the canned food drive again this year. HHS students will be picking up donations on October 22nd. You don't even have to be home. Just leave your donations on the porch and leave the porch light on. They are getting ready for the shopping day and the giving tree. They receive assistance from the Salvation Army to provide hotel and gas vouchers. This year they have gotten approval to have a bellringer and kettle at some local businesses. This will help supplement costs as their funding has been cut by 2/3 this year.

2. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

John Murray spoke in favor of locating Heppner Daycare at Hager Park. Murray's Drug has locations in Heppner, Condon and Boardman. They contribute towards childcare for their employees, but childcare is nearly impossible to find in Heppner. Condon and Boardman are working on expanding and improving their childcare services. We need this to allow the community to grow. John then spoke on behalf of himself as a Port of Morrow Commission President. The POM has not taken a position in or discussed moving the Fairgrounds and Rodeo Facility to the Kinzua property. Until the 1.5 million flood mitigation grant work is completed, no businesses can be located there. He personally is against moving the facility until there is a defined need to do so. He wants the Fair and rodeo to be successful but what is the strategic plan for them? What are their needs? Can they be accommodated at the current site by flood mitigation? Can additional parking be obtained by relocating the bus barn and acquiring additional property? There are too many questions yet to be answered before deciding to move the facility.

Joe Miller lives on Hager Street. He wants to talk about who owns Hager Park. He thinks that the City does not own the park. All of the taxpayers in Heppner own a little piece of that park. The city should not sell it. The decision to sell a part of it is leaving it wide open for anyone else to ask to buy park property.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

A. September 8, 2025, City Council meeting minutes.

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

B. Approval of Monthly Bills

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

C. Financial Statement – For information only.

4. REPORTS

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

- 5 Lift Assists EMS
- 1 Secure Landing Zone
- 1 Mutual aid to lone for a field/fence post fire
- 1 Smoke check in the city
- 3 Alarm activation in the city
- 2 Motor vehicle accidents non-injury
- 1 Natural vegetation fire RFPD
- 1 lone fire cancelled enroute
- 1 Agency assist with ODG Rhea Creek
- 1 Life flight at Little Baldy Mtn.
- 1 Cancelled before going enroute ODF
- 1 Vehicle fire at Willow Creek Road
- 1 EMS assist with a hunter, CPR and helicopter

129 calls for 2025

33 Chief calls for the month

Burned the hillside under Gilmore Street behind 3 homes. State Farm Representatives presented \$10,000 check for radios. Held the 911 ceremony at the fairgrounds until paged out for a fire. Completed August monthly report to OSFM for Tac Tender. Took Skeeter type 6 to Woodpecker Truck for Repair of a 4 WD. Stripped the bed and bumper off the 531 that burned. Ordered 2 Bendix King 9000 radios with accessories from 49'r.

B. Morrow County Sheriff's Department – Nathen Braun was absent. There were no questions.

C. Public Works. Chad Doherty read the Public Works report.

Water Dept. – Replaced 5 water meters. Met with Oregon Backflow to show them new devices before their annual inspections of backflows. Inspected for possible water leaks on landowner property up Willow Creek. Blew out dead end water lines on Center and Baltimore Streets. Investigated main line lead near Skinner Creek. Leak

was a 2" ARV valve. Shut off and put on temporary fix until new one arrived. New ARV came and we raised and replaced the valve. Installed new boxes around the valve. Repaired the check valve on chlorine system at Reservoir 1. Lowered the meter box at 255 Water St.

Sewer Dept. – Cleaned the contact basins twice. Completed 7 septic dumps. Caleb finished hauling biosolids. Hauled 35 loads for 139,000 gallons. Painted all safety rails at the treatment plant. Cleaned the sewer mainline on Riverside Ave from Blue Mountain Plumbing to the treatment plant. Replaced the right-side trickling filter pump at the plant. Everything is now working as normal.

Streets Dept. – Responded to streets that were washed out during a heavy rainstorm. Caleb started forming broken curbs. Replaced gravel on Morrow Street that was washed out during the rainstorm. Pulled goat heads, weeds, and cut down a tree in the Chase Street lot. Moved the Do Not Enter sign at the bottom of Morgan Street hill. Filled in potholes on Morgan St.

Parks. – Repaired broken irrigation at Memorial Park. Removed Memorial Park flower barrels for refinishing this winter. Fixed an irrigation leak at Heritage Plaza. Installed new camera signs and No Smoking signs at Plaza and Hager Parks. Cleaned encroaching brush and trees from the fence at Hager Park. Put up soccer goals. Set up Hunters Water and Hunters Garbage signs.

Park District – Created a form to track the maintenance and chemical readings for the therapy pool. Set up and completed the Community Right to Know for the pool's propane. The amount of propane held at the pool meets reporting requirements. Received mowers from RDO. Attended the end of season meeting with the Park District.

Shop/Other Dept. – Picked up 2016 RAM from Pioneer Transmission. Attended meetings with Anderson Perry, Beautification and the School District. Attended the council work session.

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

1. Anderson Perry – Continued bi-weekly meetings with Dane Maben and Chad to discuss ongoing projects. Mixing Zone Study, Gilmore St project, and Public Works Standards continue as main topics. Received draft PWS for Chad & I to review. Work with Dane on DLCD grant application. Held meetings with DEQ on Mixing Zone Study.
2. CIS/Heppner Fire Dept – Coordinated CIS taking possession of #531, following claim approval. Claim funds received by City.
3. Planning –
 - a. Held September Planning Commission, new duplex in Lakeview Heights approved with setback variance.

- b. Member of Planning Commission resigned due to schedule conflicts, informed Mayor of vacancy to fill.
 - c. Met with property owner about possible development potential on their multiple land holdings within City that include ADUs on Residential Zoned property and possible mixed retail/residential within Commercial District. Development discussions ongoing.
 - d. Met with citizens regarding development potential of possible RE purchase.
4. Heppner Housing Authority – Attended September monthly meeting. Discussed sidewalk repair adjacent to St Pats Apartments.
 5. TCP – Attended Chad's PW employee training on digital timeclock. Ongoing revision of software before “going live.”
 6. OCCMA – Reached out regarding variance ordinances related to manufactured homes, livestock/animals, livability requirement. Compiled information for Council Work Session.
 7. Council Work Session – Held quarterly Work Session to discuss (1) Gilmore St Project and (2) Code revision and additions.
 8. POM – Attended September meeting. Flood Mitigation work is ongoing at former Kinzua site. Spoke with Mark Patton about future development of utilities and infrastructure and potential future development.
 9. Beautification – Held September meeting, last of season.
 10. MC Parks – Provided letter of support for grants Morrow County Parks is applying for current and future improvements.
 11. MCSO – Mid-September began new deputy schedules and October brought new patrol deputies. Working with new deputies on code enforcement process and began enforcement of various properties. Processed payment for MCSO fleet vehicle purchase under terms of contract.
 12. MCSD – Met with Matt Combe of MCSD and Scott Rogers of the Wenaha Group, Chad joined. Discussed future development of HJHS/HHS property and current utilities infrastructure and transportation in vicinity. Group may have future presentation to Council (not immediate future.)
 13. Economic Development Committee – Held 3rd Quarter meeting. Fairgrounds improvements and the role the City can play in the future of the Fairgrounds was main topic.
 14. Reviewed payroll, monthly bills, budget, bank reconciliation, approved/signed bills/checks.
 15. MC Planning – Review new Zoning Map for COH prepared by Stephen Wrecsics, working on revisions for Stephen to complete. New map will be adopted into COH Comprehensive Plan, upon completion.
 16. LOC – Attended final Legislative Update after Special Session concluded.
 17. MC BOC – Attended October Work Session to discuss future of Morrow County Fairgrounds along with Mayor, MC representatives, MC Fair Board, OTPR, and WCVEDG.

18. District Courthouse – Met with Matt Jensen to discuss Aiken Street access to facility and paving improvements at egress. Provided Apex Engineering with ODOT Bridge Reports for Hinton Creek bridge on south end of lot, Chad provided with as-builts for future utility connections.
19. Kenny Land Surveying – Multiple meetings/conversations with Matt Kenny regarding (1) Hager Park legal description, COH utility easement needs, and received final for inclusion in Earnest Money Agreement with Heppner Daycare and (2) provided final information needed for his completion of land partition legal description.
20. Heppner Daycare/Hager Park sale: Met with Katie Murray regarding final legal description of Hager Park partition and addition to Earnest Money Agreement and inclusion in Council packet for approval. Handled additional questions from the public regarding legality, process, and timeline
21. IT –Hermiston IT installed backup cellular internet solutions for City Hall.
22. CRS/Floodplain: Begin compilation of documents for yearly reporting requirements. Contacted permittee for final Elevation Certificates on finished build(s,) and reviewed Elevation Certificates for N Main, Riverside, and Chase Street properties for current and potential future development.
23. I took vacation time and sick leave.
24. LOC – Attended LOC Conference in Portland.
25. Chamber – Attended Quarterly Chamber Luncheon. Attended monthly meeting.
26. Draft Resolution 1096-25 for application to OR DLCD grant funding.
27. Fire Department – Review and approve purchase order for Dodge 5500 for replacement of damaged #531, additional approved equipment, and grant expenditures for radio purchases under Capital expenditures.
28. Council Packet - Draft Manager's Report and distribute Council Packets.

5. BUSINESS

A. Old Business

1. Heppner Daycare – Hager Park Update

The legal description is complete and pending council approval it will be included in the earnest agreement. It can then be signed by the Mayor. Heppner Daycare is hoping to have the agreement signed by the December council meeting as the grant deadline is December 15th. They have been collecting letters of support from the community to submit with the grant application. They are requesting a letter of support from the city. The earnest agreement will be good for one year, if and when they get grant funds, a sales agreement will be the next step.

Motion to approve the legal description to be included in the earnest agreement by Joe Armato. Seconded by Sharon Inskeep. Councilors

Sweeney, Klock, Murray, Armato, Bates and Inskeep voted unanimously to approve. Motion Carried

B. New Business

1. Resolution 1096-25, A Resolution supporting the City of Heppner's Development of Public Works Standard and Applications for Funds Through the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development.

The city applied for the DLCD grant last Friday. If awarded, this would reimburse funds that were spent to develop the Public Works Standards.

Motion to approve Resolution 1096-25, A Resolution supporting the City of Heppner's Development of Public Works Standard and Applications for Funds Through the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development by Ian Murray. Seconded by Ralph Klock. Councilors Sweeney, Klock, Murray, Armato, Bates and Inskeep voted unanimously to approve. Motion Carried.

2. Morrow County Fairgrounds improvements discussion

The topic of moving the fairgrounds to the old millsite was brought up by the Economic Development Committee. The idea is for a larger area for the Fair and Rodeo. The current area is 10 acres. They are looking to expand it to 20-25 acres by relocating it. More space is needed for contestant parking and camping space. There are floodway issues at the current location which makes expansion difficult. There was a work session with Morrow County to get this integrated into future capital improvements. The Port of Morrow was not involved and they will not likely be asked for that land in the near future. The work session was very productive. They want to develop an action committee that will involve the ECD, Fair and Rodeo board, and WCVEDG to proceed with trying to get the current area improved and expanded. The Action Committee would work with the Capital Outlay Committee for Morrow County to get the Fairgrounds included in future development and acquisition of additional land. The Elementary School property will be available in the future, and the bus shed could be relocated. Part of the expansion came from the county reaching out as they still have state funds that they need to use for fairgrounds improvement. With the flood plain situation at the current location, it is difficult to use all those funds. Flood mitigation at the current location was discussed. It is currently unknown if that is possible. It would ultimately be the county's decision about how to use the grant funds.

3. City Hall Office rental

Matt Kenny would like to rent the back office. He needs an office so he doesn't have to work from home, and it would be good to have the facility used.

The council agreed to rent the space to Matt Kenny.

7. MINUTES OF COMMISSION MEETINGS – For Information only

8. REPORT FROM CITY ATTORNEY – Bill Kuhn had done no work for the city last month and said there were currently no legal issues.

9. REPORT FROM MAYOR, CITY COUNCILORS – Ralph Klock will be absent for the November meeting.

10. ADJOURNMENT – Meeting adjourned at 7:56 PM.