

**MINUTES OF THE CITY OF HEPPNER CITY COUNCIL MEETING
HEPPNER CITY HALL, 111 N. MAIN STREET, HEPPNER, OREGON
7:00 PM JANUARY 12, 2026**

ATTENDEES:

**Corey Sweeney
Ralph Klock
Sharon Inskeep
Joe Armato
Adam Doherty
Ian Murray (arrived at 7:18)
Dale Bates
John Doherty
Chad Doherty
Eric Chick
Nathen Braun**

Absent: None

Members of the Public: Cyde Estes, Joe Miller, Heather Baumgartner

On Zoom: Heppner Gazette

1. GENERAL BUSINESS

- A. Call to Order. Corey Sweeney called the January 12, 2026, 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 – Ian Murray is on his way and will be a little late. There is an addition to “Old Business” Barnett & Moro Audit.
- D. Correspondence - None
- E. Requests - None
- F. Presentations - None

2. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Joe Miller is still against the city selling Hager Park to Heppner Daycare. "It is the wrong thing to do. If someone asks to buy City Park, will it be sold too? It is wrong to sell a park that belongs to the city."

Cyde Estes is building a duplex on Cowins Street. There is a small portion of city property that runs across the creek that is adjacent to hers. It is basically landlocked as the city would have to cross her property to access it for maintenance. She would like to acquire it from the city so she can maintain it. With permission she would like to get it surveyed and will pay all the related expenses. This can be discussed at the work session on Friday.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

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

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

B. Approval of Monthly Bills

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

C. Financial Statement – For information only.

4. REPORTS

A. Fire Chief Report – Eric Chick read the report.

- 1 secure landing zone
- 2 alarm activation in the city
- 2 motor vehicle accidents, non-injury
- 3 cancelled enroute EMS calls
- 1 smoking vehicle
- 190 calls for 2025

Tac Tender use report to OSFM for November. Attended OTFTA training meeting in Hermiston. Attended Cooperative meetings with OSFM, NRCS and MCEM. Completed installation of smoke detectors project. BBQ with pay day at the station. Worked on ordering equipment on ODF VFC grant. Completed the CWRR grant report to OSFM. Worked with OSFM converting from NFIRS to NERIS program. Requested another smoke detector project from OSFM. Attended the last city council meeting as chief. Attended SSMCFF banquet and fund raiser.

B. Morrow County Sheriff's Department – 414 hours for November. There was a total of 214 incidents for the month. 25 traffic stops, 2 with citations, one misdemeanor arrest. There is one deputy that just got back from the academy that is still in field training.

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

Water Dept. – Changed the 2" meter at the High School. Updated the GIS points within the water system. The crew replaced 15 water meters. Met with a water customer on Baltimore Street and explained why their irrigation broke. Checked water usage on a meter on Willow Creek. Investigated possible meter installed backwards on Lakeview Ct. Meter was backwards and the crew fixed the meter. Hermiston IT installed a cellular line for alarm dialer call out. Put in a work order request to TAG to program the dialer and to install level indicator at Reservoir 2. Completed the water balance report. Updated the water GIS and meter list. After hours call out to shut off a meter at 185 Rock Street because of a leak. Replaced a broken main line valve box on Rock Street. Trained Cedrick on trouble shooting Reservoir 1 chlorination pump.

Sewer Dept. – Cleaned the contact basins twice. Completed 6 septic dumps. Completed monthly discharge monitoring report for DEQ. Changed out the sewer influent meter with a rental and sent ours in for repairs. Updated the sewer manhole that was not in GIS and fixed some other points in the collection system. Did a dye test on the sewer mainline on Center Street for a possible plug. The sewer was not plugged. Took the vacor truck to Owen equipment and had a new jet cleaning hose installed. Cleaned sewers on South Court, May and South Main streets. Planted two maple trees at the sewer plant.

Streets Dept. – Attended a meeting to go through Gilmore Street drawings. Attended a walkthrough on the Gilmore Street project with John and Anderson Perry. Met with hospital staff to answer questions about the upcoming Gilmore Street project. Placed mirror and reflectors on the Wilhelm/Murray driveway. Removed a dead deer and took it to the ODOT yard. Drained the Willow Street puddle on multiple days. Swept South Court, Matlock, Hager, Water, Sage Hill, Canyon, Quaid, and Elder Streets. Repaired a section of road with cold mix on South Court. Repaired pot holes on South Main, Baltimore, and Morgan streets. Pulled and sprayed weeds on Main Street. Repaired a broken school sign near the High School.

Parks. – The crew shut down the Hager Park restroom and blew out pipes for the winter. Went through burnt out light strands and saved about 40 strands of lights. Finished repairing and varnishing two Hager Park picnic tables and returned them to the park. Cleaned up leaves in City Park and in bubble outs downtown. Trimmed up arborvitae at Memorial Park. Removed railroad ties and brought in fill dirt for swing sets at Hager Park. Removed all dog poop before the park lighting event. Attended

the tree lighting event and turned on the lights. Installed a new paper towel dispenser at City Park.

Park District – Cleaned and repaired gutters on the pool building. Started park mowers and drained the fuel for winter.

Shop/Other Dept. – Met with Anderson Perry to troubleshoot why the GIS isn't connecting. Attended bi-weekly meeting with John and Dane from Anderson Perry. Changed the elbow on the vacator suction hose. The crew helped Kay Proctor take Morrow County Chronicles and cabinets downstairs at city Hall. Began reading through examples of public works standards for a meeting on January 22. Organize a cost list for water and sewer supplies. Hung new clocks and a key box at City Hall. Replaced the water pump, thermostat, and serpentine belt on the 2014 RAM 1500 #15. Greased the vacator truck and backhoe and trained Cedrick on greasing.

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

1. FY 25 Audit – Provided last details needed for Barnett & Moro for completion of audit report. Reviewed request from OR SOS.
2. Willow St – PW needed to pump water multiple dates during past month. Met with John Murray to discuss future improvements. Discussed with AP, Chad, and Mayor.
3. Oregon DAS – Completed access request for City to view/edit past-current-future payments to City via ACH.
4. Heppner Housing Authority – Attended December meeting. Continuing as resource for repairs, research, and contracts.
5. DLCDC – Received approval for Planning Grant for PW Standards project. Working with DLCDC and AP on contract a SOW.
6. TCP – Employees are using System. Continued meetings for changes & improvements to system for our ease and access.
7. POM – Attended December meeting via Zoom. Millsite work had slowed due to wet winter weather affecting work and access.
8. DEQ – Submitted grant application for Wastewater Feasibility Study. Communications with DEQ and AP regarding letter of support for additional grants. Reviewed comments for projects AP have submitted.
9. Public Works – Received MANY compliments on the work the crew has done on holiday decorations to Heritage Park and downtown.
10. BizOR – Submitted completed grant application for Wastewater Feasibility Study. Continued communication with Gail Nelson (BizOR,) and AP. Decision expected in January.
11. Anderson Perry – Continued bi-weekly meetings with Chad and Dane. Sent Dane SDWRLF LOI for 2026, Dane will complete for submittal in January. Had discussions about Water project funding – we may want to hold an additional One-Stop due to changes in funds availability, rates, and grants. Gilmore St Project – reviewed “60% Design” paperwork. Had onsite visit (along with Chad,) with Dane, Grant, and Braxton from AP.

We walked project (during rain event,) for understanding and project needs. Chad & I provided follow-up information for project. I sent AP private landowner deeds where City has utility easements that relate to project.

12. USDA- LaDonn McElligott retired from USDA Rural Development. No current grants available for water projects, but interest rate increase was not as high as earlier thought.
13. SAM.gov – City of Heppner profile and access is finally completed, updated, and approved. City now has full access to site. Updated financial information for receipt of payments. Completed City request for “.gov” web domain. (awaiting approval.)
14. City Park – Signed purchase agreement with Northwest Playground Equipment for manufacture and delivery of equipment in 2026. Completed required grant reports for multiple organizations.
15. OPRD- Working with OPRD representative on contract for reimbursement of funds expended for City Park Remodel.
16. Kuhn Law – Met with Bill to discuss drafting (1) animal ordinance and (2) habitability ordinance. (Bill on vacation late Dec/early Jan.) Discussed earnest money agreement funds with Heppner Daycare, citations for nuisance properties, and working with MCSO on particular nuisance property.
17. IT – Worked with Hermiston IT on employee access to apps on phones, received/installed dialer for Telemetry, worked with on software issues, and removal and recycling of old hardware.
18. USACE – 2025 Flood Study work – USACE has provided preliminary information regarding survey and mapping of Willow Creek – final results should follow in 2026. I took footage of Willow Creek and structures for them to expedite data collection for study (low water level allowed filming not available during Jan 2025 on-site work by contractors.)
19. FY26 budget - Review payroll, monthly bills, bank reconciliations. Work with Heather on reallocation of funds from 2025 budget resolutions. Begin work on ODR reporting related to Fire Hall bond.
20. MCSD – Attended December Bond Design Advisory Committee meeting at Riverside High School.
21. MCSO – Asked deputy to take detailed inventory of private property that is visible from street/alley relating to long-time nuisance property. Using report for code enforcement – ongoing. Asked deputies to “check-in,” earlier during the day for possible code enforcement and/or follow-up. Continued code enforcement and traffic and pedestrian safety emphasis.
22. I attended Christmas Light Parade on December 18th. Chad and I discussed City entry in 2026.
23. Investment Policy – Provide Lone Pine with information for end-of-year report they compile. Discussed possibility of increasing funds in account, will need to discuss with Council at future date (Work Session possibly.)
24. County Clerk/Assessor – Worked with employees at Morrow County Clerk and Morrow County Assessor offices to research deeds for properties where City has utility easement as relating to Gilmore St Project. Print, copy, download documents and send them to Anderson Perry.

- 25. Wee Bit O'Ireland – Attended December and January planning meetings. Working with Madison on entertainment events/venues, traffic, and permitting.
- 26. Public Works Standards – Chad & I continue review and taking notes. Discussion with AP in check-in meetings. Chad & I will have in-person meeting with Dane in January as we are closer to completing draft. Finished product will be adopted by ordinance and included with Comprehensive Plan – Title 10 of Code with hopes for future website to have all specs and forms online.
- 27. CREZ – Completed reporting for 2024 funds usage (received in 2025.) 2025 CREZ II funds distribution meeting date not yet set, possibly in January 2026. Discussed, at separate times, with BOC Chair and Interim CREZ Manager David Sykes and POM President Murray.
- 28. Resolution 1099-26 – Work with Mayor on 2026 committee appointments.
- 29. Council Packet – Draft Manager's Report, compile info for Tarina, and distribute.

5. BUSINESS

A. Old Business

- 1. Barnett & Moro Audit

The draft audit was received after the council packets were printed. It is too large of a file to email, any council member that requests it can receive a printed copy. John and Heather went through it and didn't see any glaring issues. John has a few questions he will ask the auditors.

B. New Business

- 1. Resolution 1099-26, A Resolution Ratifying Appointments to City Committees, Boards, Commissions, and Positions.

Motion to approve Resolution 1099-26, A Resolution Ratifying Appointments to City Committees, Boards, Commissions, and Positions by Ian Murray. Seconded by Ralph Klock. Councilors Sweeney, Klock, Murray, Armato, Doherty, Bates and Inskeep voted unanimously to approve. Motion Carried.

- 2. Work Session January 16th

Mayor Sweeney has an appointment out of town on Friday. He will not be able to make it to the meeting until noon. The meeting will be rescheduled from 11 am to noon. Joe Armato will not be able to attend. Morrow County has approached the city about an ordinance for side-by-sides to align with what the county's position is on them. This will be discussed during the work session.

6. MINUTES OF COMMISSION MEETINGS – For Information only

7. REPORT FROM CITY ATTORNEY – He met with the City Manager to discuss an ordinance regarding residents living in structures that do not have utilities. They also discussed animal ordinances.

8. REPORT FROM MAYOR, CITY COUNCILORS – None

9. ADJOURNMENT – Meeting adjourned at 7:44 PM.