

**MINUTES OF THE CITY OF HEPPNER CITY COUNCIL MEETING
HEPPNER CITY HALL, 111 N. MAIN STREET, HEPPNER, OREGON
7:00 PM FEBRUARY 9, 2026**

ATTENDEES:

**Corey Sweeney
Ralph Klock
Sharon Inskeep
Joe Armato
Adam Doherty
Ian Murray
Dale Bates (on Zoom)
John Doherty
Chad Doherty
Eric Chick
Bill Kuhn
Nathen Braun**

Absent: None

Members of the Public: Cyde Estes, John Murray, Justin Hoefft, Cam Sweeney, Bill Rosenbalm,

On Zoom: Dane Maben, Kathy Street, Heppner Gazette, Michael (?).

1. GENERAL BUSINESS

- A. Call to Order. Corey Sweeney called the February 9, 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 – None
- D. Correspondence - None
- E. Requests - None
- F. Presentations - None

2. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

John Murray spoke in favor of allowing ATV's in city limits. It would be useful for people. On another note, the CREZ board met today, they had 13.5 million dollars to allocate. John said he always fights for funding for infrastructure for all the cities. Last year it was \$539,484 for the cities. Boardman successfully argued to drop it to \$400,000 this year. There was more money to disburse this year, and it was still cut. He does not respect that decision. He is still fighting for it, but it is getting a bit tougher.

Cam Sweeney, Justin Hoeft and Bill Rosenbalm spoke in favor of allowing ATV/UTV's in city limits.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. January 12, 2026, City Council meeting minutes and January 16, 2026, Goal Setting Minutes.

Motion to approve the minutes by Ralph Klock. Seconded by Ian Murray. 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 Ralph Klock. 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.

- 6 lift assists
- 2 secure landing zone
- 1 MVA non-injury
- 1 alarm activation at the Courthouse
- 2 alarm activation at Lakeview Heights
- 1 smoking vehicle RFPD
- 1 structure fire RFPD
- 14 calls for 2026
- 8 Chief calls for January

Steve worked with OSFM on National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS) conversion from NFIRS program. Tac Tender Use report for the Month of December to OSFM. Steve attended community Risk Reduction Webinar to OSFM. Steve attended

Community Risk Reduction Webinar with OSFM. Attended Area 9 Defense Board Chiefs Meeting in Hermiston. The second Skeeter arrived, working on getting it into service. Attended the first City Council Meeting as chief. Kaitlyn, Steve and Eric attended a 4-hour webinar with OSFM, OEM and Planning in Irrigon. Attended the City Council Goal Setting Work Session.

B. Morrow County Sheriff's Department – Nathan Braun read the report. 351 hours for the month of January. There were two dog complaints. One misdemeanor arrest. 46 traffic stops with 11 citations. 262 Incidents for the month.

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

Water Dept. – Had an after hours call about a broken water meter at 300 N Chase Street and repaired the meter box the next day. Updated the GIS points in the water system. The crew replaced 3 water meters. The solar panel at Reservoir 3 blew off. Working with TAG to get a new one installed. Working with TAG to get the Reservoir 2 level indicator installed and the alarm system up and going. Investigated communication errors at all three wells. Reset all modems, and they came back online. Disassembled water meters to save the brass for recycling. Trained the crew on how to set up radios.

Sewer Dept. – Cleaned the contact basins twice. Completed 9 septic dumps. Completed monthly discharge monitoring report (DMR) for DEQ. Received our repaired FLODAR (Sewer influent meter) and sent the rental back. Updated sewer cleaning GIS. Cleaned sewer lines on South Court., Matlock., Green., S Chase., N Chase., and all of Gilmore Street. Cleaned 3991 feet of sewer mainline in January. While cleaning, it was discovered that the Shobe Creek crossing on Green St. had a hole. Replaced the sewer crossing with a new pipe. Replaced a water ball valve in the SO2 room at the golf course. Unplugged the digester overflow at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Replaced the rubber squeegee part on the skimmer arm on the primary clarifier at the treatment plant. Completed the recycled water use report and sent it to DEQ. Completed a new manhole inspection report and trained the crew on how to fill it out and what to look for.

Streets Dept. – Replaced a dead tree on May Street. Deiced streets one time and trained Cedrick while deicing. Removed Christmas decorations from light poles and removed the lights from downtown trees. Pumped out Willow Street Lake a couple of times.

Parks. – Began removing dead grass from Hager Park and started planting grass seed. Planted Oak, Maple, and Eastern Red Bud trees at Heritage Plaza. Put deer fence around newly planted trees. Removed all Christmas lights from trees and equipment at Heritage Plaza.

Park District – Continued to monitor the therapy pool.

Shop/Other Dept. – Went through public works standards. Met with Dane and John and provided comments on public works standards. Attended the every-other-week meeting with John and Dane Maben. Worked with Anderson Perry to fix the GIS machine. Still having trouble with it. The crew completed inspection reports on fleet vehicles. The crew installed a new light in the walkway of the shop.

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

1. FY 25 Audit – Needed to clarify Investment Policy items for Barnett & Moro for submittal.
2. Work Session – Attended Work Session for Council Goals.
3. Anderson Perry – Continued bi-weekly meetings. Working between AP and state agencies on grant contracts and funding availabilities. Work with Dane on updating LOI for SDWRLF. Discuss Federal Community Initiated Project application for Senators Wyden and Merkley for FY27. Work with Dane on recycled water use contracts to OWRD and clarification on renewal timelines. Held in-person meeting with Dane and Chad to review Public Works Standards and give revisions for next (final,) draft. Gilmore St – reviewed cost changes with various valley gutter options. Dane completed technical side for OR Capital Funding Request.
4. Heppner Housing Authority – Attended January meeting.
5. City Hall – Hermiston Glass has installed new doorway for 123 May St (back office,) as we ready for Kenny Land Surveying as tenant.
6. Investment Policy – Reinvested matured securities. Looked at revision of Investment Policy for submittal to OSTF. Will need to revise and have policy approved before City increases investment amounts (we would be limited in our ability to invest in higher yield bonds with our current policy.)
7. Review bills, sign checks, review bank reconciliations, review budget.
8. Chamber – Attended bi-monthly meeting, attended St. Pat's planning meeting, attended yearly luncheon. Appointed new board members and I was elected Treasurer.
9. IT – Preliminary work on domain registration and website developer research. Renewed current website hosting for 6 month period. TCP – Heather, Chad, and I are hopefully providing the last information for the program to meet all of our wants and needs.
10. OR legislature. Drafted request to Senator Nash to co-sponsor LC 133 (which became SB 1585.) Completed Capital Funding Request for funding for our well and reservoir and requested Representative Smith's support. Researched 2026 short session bills. Completed list of bills requesting support or opposition for Senator Nash and Representative Smith. Submitted written testimony in support of SB 1585 and will give verbal testimony on SB 1585 on 02-09-2026. Attended "Water Day at the Capitol," with Mayor Sweeney, sponsored by the Water Caucus. Mayor & I held meetings with each Senator Nash and Representative Smith to discuss current bills and City infrastructure needs. Mayor and I attended several presentations held by the Water Caucus.
11. Transient Room Tax – Send communication to delinquent owners on filing and payment.

12. Oregon State Treasury – Completed yearly debt verification for Fire Hall bond and 2002 Safe Drinking Water loan.
13. MCSO – Received request from Deputy Neubert to use upstairs of City Hall for training on K9 unit from. Discussed daily check-ins with Lt. Braun. New deputy rotation began in February.
14. Solid Waste Advisory Committee – Attended meeting via Zoom.
15. POM – Attended monthly meeting via Zoom (had to leave early for MCSD meeting.)
16. MCSD – Attended Bond Design Advisory Committee meeting at HHS. Meeting 3 of 4. Locations of rooms and facilities discussed
17. Kuhn Law – Held meeting with Bill to discuss city finances, Estes property request, ordinances, and City Park funding.
18. Ordinance 592-26 – Bill completed draft for Animals Ordinance. Review/revision in-process.
19. Gilmore St Project – Held joint meeting with City, AP, MCHD, Morrow County Admin, MC Facilities, MCSO, and MCEM to discuss traffic detours, temporary flow revision, and EMS and local delivery traffic. Received plans review exemption from OHA (permit cost savings.)
20. Planning – Met in-person and on phone with three properties regarding setback requirements and shed placement, explained Zoning Permit and Variance Request for one. Provided sign ordinance for multiple properties in preparation for elections advertisements. Met with prospective RE buyer to answer questions on various properties and zoning.
21. RCAC – Sabrina Strauss set meeting with USDA-RD, myself, and Dane @ AP to discuss financing options for water project.
22. LPSCC – Attended bi-monthly meeting.
23. Public Records Request – fulfilled one request regarding Hager Park property sale.
24. Congressman Bentz – Held meeting with Congressman Bentz' Field Representative, Bern Anderes. Discussed FEMA – PICM regulations and future Community Project Funding.
25. LOC – Attended webinar regarding Community Initiated Project held with LOC, and reps from Senators Merkley and Wyden.
26. Senator Merkley – Held call with Jessica Keys regarding a CIP for the City for Federal FY27. Asked guidance and recommendations and will work with Dane @ AP on application.
27. US Census – Completed yearly Boundary Annexation Survey (BAS.)
28. District Courthouse – Kelli @ DLR Group informed me that structural, plumbing, and electrical permits have been issued with mechanical expected soon. She said groundbreaking should be in near future.
29. HRFPD – Scheduled Joint Meeting for City and Rural for February 17th.
30. OTLD – Discussed earnest money agreement with Kathy Street for (possible,) future sale of NE Chase St lot for library site.
31. OPRD- Completed requirements for SOW and contract for grant. Awaiting OPRD to complete for future funds reimbursement.
32. Drafted Resolutions 1100-26 & 1101-26.
33. Council Packet – Draft Manager's Report, compile info for Tarina, and distribute packets.

5. BUSINESS

A. Old Business

1. Gilmore Street Project

a. E-bidding

The design for the project is 90% completed and should be done by March. Dane Maben recommended e-bidding to the council. Anderson Perry has been doing it for two years. E-bidding can produce a better turnout than in person bidding. The software will pick up math errors and can help with anyone that contests the bidding process. The council agreed to e-bidding for the project.

b. Valley Gutter discussion

While walking through the project site, some problem areas were discovered on the ground compared with what was on the plans. They discovered a valley gutter with a low spot that may not drain properly. Dane provided two estimates to resolve it. One for replacing just the problem area and the other for total replacement. Even though it is an additional cost it may be smart to address the whole thing while the street is torn up. The figures are just an estimate and not bids. The council discussed it and decided on whole replacement to ensure there are no problems later.

c. Letter of Interest

Last year Anderson Perry submitted a Safe Drinking Water Letter of Interest. This was before the Water System Master Plan was finalized and before Oregon Health Authority reviewed it and concurred. As a result, last year there was a potential compliance issue that was identified after the letter was submitted, which resulted in a lower score than the city deserved to receive. There's another Letter of Interest deadline on February 15th. Dane has revised the letter and spoke with Oregon Health Authority. They agreed with the approach and agreed with the revisions. The city should score better with the revisions.

2. Oregon Trail Library District – Chase Street lot discussion

The council discussed an earnest agreement with Kathy Street. An earnest agreement with a three-year option to purchase was discussed earlier but they didn't have a sale price. The council decided on a price

of \$30,000, with a \$500 in earnest agreement to expire in three years starting from today's date.

Motion to approve setting a price of \$30,000 for the Chase Street lot with a three-year earnest agreement of \$500.00 by Ralph Klock. Seconded by Joe Armato. Councilors Sweeney, Klock, Murray, Armato, Doherty, Bates and Inskeep voted unanimously to approve. Motion Carried.

B. New Business

1. Resolution 1100-26, A Resolution Adopting the City Council's Goals for 2026

Motion to approve 1100-26, A Resolution Adopting the City Council's Goals for 2026 by Ian Murray. Seconded by Adam Doherty. Councilors Sweeney, Klock, Murray, Armato, Doherty, Bates and Inskeep voted unanimously to approve. Motion Carried.

2. Resolution 1101-26, A Resolution Appointing the City Manager as Budget Officer for the City of Heppner.

Motion to approve Resolution 1101-26, A Resolution Appointing the City Manager as Budget Officer for the City of Heppner by Sharon Inskeep. Seconded by Ralph Klock. Councilors Sweeney, Klock, Murray, Armato, Doherty, Bates and Inskeep voted unanimously to approve. Motion Carried.

3. Public Works Capital Equipment

Chad has supplied bids to purchase a valve working machine. This will extend the life of gate valves. This was included in last year's budget, but approval is needed due to the amount of the purchase.

Motion to approve spending up to \$26,685.00 to purchase a valve exercising machine by Ralph Klock. Seconded by Ian Murray. Councilors Sweeney, Klock, Murray, Armato, Doherty, Bates and Inskeep voted unanimously to approve. Motion Carried.

4. Estes request

This was discussed at the work session but needs to be formally discussed at a regular meeting. The land Cyde is requesting is approximately 10' wide at the back of her property. Cyde will pay for the survey and all expenses for writing legal descriptions and recording. This will cost more than the property is worth. She said that this is a substantial amount of

money and hopes the council will accept the land transfer. Bill Kuhn suggested that a title report should also be obtained. If the property does not have to go through a vacation process the transfer should be quick.

Motion to approve moving the property to Cyde Estes after all the requirements are met by Sharon Inskeep. Seconded by Adam Doherty. Joe Armato abstained as his property will be included in the survey. Councilors Sweeney, Klock, Murray, Doherty, Bates and Inskeep voted to approve. Motion Carried.

6. MINUTES OF COMMISSION MEETINGS – For Information only

7. REPORT FROM CITY ATTORNEY – He worked on the draft animal permit ordinance. This will be at the March meeting. He did research on the habitability ordinance, and it is almost complete. Other items he worked on were discussed in the City Managers report.

8. REPORT FROM MAYOR, CITY COUNCILORS – None

9. ADJOURNMENT – Meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM.