

**MINUTES OF THE CITY OF HEPPNER CITY COUNCIL MEETING
HEPPNER CITY HALL, 111 N. MAIN STREET, HEPPNER, OREGON
7:00 PM APRIL 13, 2026**

ATTENDEES:

**Corey Sweeney
Ralph Klock
Sharon Inskeep
Joe Armato
Adam Doherty
Ian Murray
Dale Bates (on Zoom)
John Doherty
Chad Doherty
Eric Chick (arrived at 7:17)
Bill Kuhn**

Absent: Nathen Braun

Members of the Public: Mike Bergstrom, Joe Miller, Laurel Laney, Patti & David Allstott, Keven & Shelly Haguewood.

On Zoom: Heppner Gazette, Jessica Jones, Mark Reitman, Michael (?).

1. GENERAL BUSINESS

A. Call to Order. Corey Sweeney called the April 13, 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 – Corey Sweeney read a letter from Katie Murray (HCF). Heppner Daycare did not receive the grant from the state. They will still be working on the project and exploring ways to scale it down or do it in phases.

E. Requests

Animal Permits

1. Rick Worden: two 4-H pigs, 14 hens and 2 rabbits.

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

2. Ivy Adams: 5 hens.

Motion to approve the permit request by Sharon Inskeep. Seconded by Joe Armato. Councilors Sweeney, Klock, Murray, Armato, Doherty, Bates and Inskeep voted unanimously to approve. Motion Carried.

3. John Doherty: 4 ducks.

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

G. Presentations - None

2. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC – Joe Miller said that selling Hager Park is wrong, he is still against it. They said they didn't get the grant but will continue, if they continue to look at Hager Park he will still come to every meeting to speak against it.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

A. March 9, 2026, City Council meeting minutes.

Motion to approve the minutes by Ralph Klock. Seconded by Adam Doherty. 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 Ralph Klock. Seconded by Sharon Inskeep. 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. (at 7:34)

8 Lift assists
5 Secure landing zone
1 Commercial fire alarm
1 MVA with injury
1 MVA non-injury
1 Cancelled enroute grass fire
1 Structure fire mutual aid Lexington
1 Contents Fire Aiken Street
1 Controlled burn not called in
43 calls for the year
14 Chief Calls for the month

Submitted Tactical Tender usage report to OSFM for February.

Cooperative meetings attended with OSFM, NRCS, MCEM, Planning Commission on updating CWPP.

Hosted EVOC with Morrow County Health District and Fire Dept.

Installed new decals and lettering on all apparatus.

Picked up a new RAM 5500 chassis for the brush truck from Salem.

Submitted Wildhorse Grant for Equipment and Radios.

Submitted AG West Grant for Radios.

Worked on equipment list for VFC Grant to be submitted this month.

B. Morrow County Sheriff's Department – Nathan Braun was absent. There were 430.75 hours for the month of March.

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

Water Dept. – The crew replaced two water meters. Investigated a leaking fire hydrant on Heppner Spray Hwy. Installed a hydrant meter for Silver Creek Contracting near the fairgrounds. Contacted TAG to fix the SCADA that was shutting down on its own. They fixed it but it created a few more problems that shut the whole computer down. TAG fixed those issues the following week. Finished yearly backflow report and sent it to Oregon Health Authority. The crew responded to a water leak at 510 Riverside for a meter that had the shut off blow off. Installed a new water service for Murray's in the empty lot by the pharmacy. Worked with Silver Creek Contracting on installation of a new 8" line and water service for the new courthouse. Inquired with OHA about mandatory PFAS testing that is being done by DEQ. We are required to test PFAS two to three months later. DEQ is coming on April 16th. Continued to check Reservoir 3 because the power source is broken. TAG is scheduled to repair it the week of the 20th. After hours call out for meter leak at 260 E May St.

Sewer Dept. – Cleaned the contact basins twice. Completed 6 septic dumps. Finished Community Right to Know for State Fire Marshall after receiving the correct SDS from Oxarc. Cleaned the storage tank at the golf course and installed a filter and

air release in the pump room. The golf course is ready for irrigation. Attended LEPC meeting in Boardman.

Streets Dept. – Prepped for St Patrick's Day celebration. Included sweeping streets, cleaning Main Street where the sweeper cannot reach, cleaned the town ashtrays, set up the food court picnic tables, put out the Irish flags, placed extra garbage cans, set out the welcome leprechauns, cleaned off the info booth and washed all public works vehicles. Painted the shamrock. Set up and took down the parade cones and barriers. Removed the Irish banners. Removed the sander and plow from the RAM 3500 and installed the dump bed. Swept Court Street for multiple days to help Silver Creek while they removed dirt. Pumped out Willow Street Reservoir. Reviewed final Gilmore Street plans and met with Anderson Perry. Rehabbed the landscape by Les Schwab. Planted 5 new trees, repaired the irrigation. Researching artificial grass. Fixed a broken drip line near Church and Main St. Sprayed weeds on Main and May Street. Picked up a deer on Skyline Dr. Brought rock to Center Street Alley and leveled it out.

Parks. – Picked up both mowers at Inland Turf in La Grande. Burned the swale at the kids park. Started mowing and turned the irrigation on at the parks.

Park District – Continued to monitor the therapy pool. Drained the therapy pool due to an over chlorination. Algaecide and chlorine tab floats were added to the pool. Repaired the reduced pressure backflow on the pop machine at the pool.

Shop/Other Dept. – Alea and Caleb attended a conference in Sunriver. Kosta and Cedrick attended a conference in Ontario.

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

1. USACE –

- a. Flood Plain Study. Met with Sora Ahn & Ken Sears about study. Discussed FIRM accuracy, changes to data, streamflow equipment replacement, data accuracy, and anything else needed from City or FPM. Hopeful completion date of Summer 2026.
- b. Hager Park – Completed park lease renewal documents. Work with HYB on compliance, PW conduct last-minute cleanup of minor items. Lease renewal visitation & approval for upcoming year completed. Chad & I inquired about repairs to retaining wall.

2. Planning –

- a. (1) Answered RE questions for Sykes RE regarding Lakeview properties, HOA covenants, lot partition/combination, and deed restrictions.
- b. (2) Assist Collins on Occupied RV application and restrictions. Schedule meeting, publish public notice of hearing, complete staff study, and notices to residents for Planning Commission Meeting.

- c. (3) Planning Commission – Held meeting resulting in approval of Temporary Occupied RV Permit for Tim & Jean Collins.
 - d. (4) Assist resident with Zoning Permit, review and approve for attached deck, send application to City of Boardman, Permits Department.
3. Senator Merkley – Mayor & I met with Jessica Keys (Senator's regional director,) regarding possible visit, city infrastructure needs, data centers, and energy projects. Senator's planned Town Hall canceled due to illness.
 4. GEODC – Met with Tory Stinnett on upcoming projects in the city and funding possibilities. Discussed "Opportunity Zones," and applicability to POM Kinzua site.
 5. Ellsworth – Working with property owner on lot combination & re-plat and updated city utility easement. Anderson Perry to survey and write legal description. Documents currently out for review.
 6. Wheatland – Met with Donald/Amy regarding insurance of playground equipment until install. FY27 renewal documents received for P&L for review. Amy discussed possible grants for capital items and cybersecurity coverage. (More review to be done.)
 7. Kuhn – Bill provided recommendations on contract provisions on Gilmore St Project. Discussed code enforcement and procedures for citing and abatement process for Chase St property/owner.
 8. Sister City – Again, sent info to various agencies/organizations for the towns of both Glenties and Carndonagh, in County Donegal, Ireland. Received a response from Carndonagh week of April 6th.
 9. LOC – Attended final 2026 Legislative Update with summary to cities, via Zoom.
 10. OGEC – Filed SEI and review of filings and reminders sent to Council & Planning.
 11. Kenny Land Survey – Reviewed lot adjustment for Alleman property & approved.
 12. Review financial statements, accounts payable, timecards & payroll, sign checks.
 13. Heppner Water Control Board – Met with Janet Greenup and Will Allred (separately,) about their projects cleaning vegetation in streambed and findings that may be concerning (litter.) Work conducted between dam & May St Bridge & Gale St Bridge downstream.
 14. Willow Creek – Myself, Kosta, and Cedrick donned waders and walked streambed and removed litter between May St & Gale St bridges.
 15. Chamber – Attended March monthly meeting. Attended St Pat's Celebration review meeting. Work with Madison & Heather on final invoice processing. Attended Chamber Quarterly luncheon.
 16. RCAC – Attended multiple online trainings for (1) BABA and (2) water project funding.
 17. CRS/FEMA – Attended quarterly meeting. CRS not currently funded & government shutdowns have delayed, currently no re-certifications planned. Reviewed documents and requirements through State of Oregon on floodplain development.
 18. ODOT – Email & phone conversations regarding SCA Grant. Recommendation to apply, regardless of Gilmore St Project timing.
 19. District Courthouse – Work with DLR Group on landscaping requirements. With help of Chad & AP, provided info and procedure to sub-contractor for fire flow/hydrants. Received updated permits from DLR.

20. Business Oregon – Review contract & bid requirements for Gilmore St Project. Submitted AP bid documents and requested/received approval for advertisement. Work with Gail Bryant on WW Planning grant contract.
21. WCVEDG – Attended monthly meeting. Community Enhancement Grant is currently open and accepting applications.
22. MC Planning – Attended meeting to discuss zoning and possible UGB expansion on Robinson property adjoining city UGB. Discussed UGB swap & housing density study with DLCD.
23. OR DAS-ORCPP – Attended online webinar/training for online bid solicitation.
24. WCT – Provided letter of support for future grant applications.
25. Investment Policy – Reinvested ~\$65K in matured holdings into new holdings for city. Provided Lone Pine with info for and then reviewed quarterly investment report.
26. CREZ – Received 2025 CREZ II payment of \$400K. Attended CREZ II & III meetings via Zoom.
27. Code enforcement – Met with resident regarding their concern over neighboring Chase St property that is in violation of several areas of code. Issue has been long-term. Reviewed past communications and sent letter(s) regarding need for compliance. Included item on Council agenda for direction. Resident reported concern of possible illegal dumping, Chad & I reviewed and contacted property owners.
28. Anderson Perry – Continued bi-weekly meetings with Dane & Chad. Gilmore St – Bid package completed and advertised and Pre-Bid Conference held. AP completed survey and legal description for Ellsworth property on Gilmore – water line needing replaced through property. AP & Chad completed 1200C permit for DEQ for project. Working with Dane on ODOT SCA Grant. Dane to provide talking points for April Council relating to Gilmore St Project and Council decisions needed prior to bid close & award.
29. POM – Attended monthly meeting via Zoom. Millsite flood mitigation project is nearing completion, POM to request grant fund extension to complete water project. New POM Commissioner Jerry Rietmann expressed importance of CREZ funding to cities for infrastructure projects.
30. TCP – Worked with Heather, Chad, and TCP on revisions and updates needed.
31. Fire – Met with Chief Chick on multiple occasions to discuss grant application requirements, expenditures of funds, a Public Information Request received, and the budget process and FY27 budgeting. Eric received new Dodge 5500 from Roberson Motors.
32. PW – Discuss IT, Telemetry, GIS issues, and needs with Chad. Visited several locations in city on roads/alleys/ROW. Met with landowners on dumping on fill in alley and provided information on location of alley (that is not currently in drivable state.) Reviewed code violation properties on multiple occasions. Discuss DLCD request for access to COH GIS.
33. I was out 4 days (2 occasions of two days each,) sick and 1 day vacation.
34. Council Packet – Draft Manager's Report and add agenda items, office staff to distribute as I was on vacation.

5. BUSINESS

A. Old Business

1. Animal Ordinance Discussion

The council discussed the draft Ordinance and any changes to be made to it. They discussed 4-H versus non-4-H animals and whether they are approved by the City Manager, by the council, or if certain animals are allowed at all. The council does not want to exclude any 4-H animals. Bovine will still not be allowed, but FFA has been permitted by the council to keep bovine and other animals at the Lab. Equine can be approved by council depending on lot size and living conditions. 4-H pigs can be approved by the City Manager. Animals allowed by permit will be moved up to #3. The allowed animals are chickens (up to 10), ducks, rabbits, sheep, goats, or swine for 4-H or FFA projects. Animals allowed by council will be moved down to #4 which will include Equine. Any permit that is denied by the City Manager can be appealed to city council.

2. Gilmore Street Project

The project has been advertised, and the bid date is April 28th. The bid will be held virtually, and a link will be provided to the city to access the bid opening. The deadline for Addendums is April 24th 2026. Once the bids are opened, Anderson Perry will need one or two business days to review the bids and make sure they are appropriate and have completed all of the requirements. They will verify that the low bidder is in good standing with the State's Construction Contractors Board. Once a reward recommendation is made to the city, an Intent to Award will be sent to all contractors who bid on the project. The apparent low bidder will be required to sign the construction agreement and provide necessary bonding and insurance information for review. The award process takes 20-30 days. For this process the city has several choices provided by Anderson Perry regarding how to proceed. The Council chose option B: Once a recommendation to the City to issue the Notice of Intent to Award the project, the City Manager can authorize the Notice of Intent to Award the project to be sent out. The seven-day protest period would end on May 7th or 8th. If no protests are received, the Notice of Award can be sent out after council approval on May 11th with Notice of Award to be sent out on May 12th. On every construction project Change Orders may be executed to change the contract price or timeline. On most projects the City Council has the choice to give authority to the City Manager to approve Change Orders, or approve Change Orders below a certain price threshold, or only allow council to approve change orders.

Motion to approve Option B by Ian Murray. Seconded by Ralph Klock. Councilors Sweeney, Klock, Murray, Armato, Doherty, Bates and Inskeep voted unanimously to approve. Motion Carried.

Motion to authorize John Doherty to approve payments for the project by Ian Murray. Seconded by Adam Doherty. Councilors Sweeney, Klock, Murray, Armato, Doherty, Bates and Inskeep voted unanimously to approve. Motion Carried.

Motion to approve John Doherty to authorize \$40,000 in change orders and up to \$100,000 for the project by Ralph Klock. Seconded by Joe Armato. Councilors Sweeney, Klock, Murray, Armato, Doherty, Bates and Inskeep voted unanimously to approve. Motion Carried.

3. OGEC SEI reminder

John reminded the councilors that the deadline to file is 48 hours.

B. New Business

1. Transfer Station Vouchers

The city has issued Transfer Station Vouchers for the past several years. Last year the charge was \$11.00 per load, the charges are now determined by weight with a minimum of \$11.00. This is funded through the Property Cleanup Fund. The council approved issuing Vouchers that are good for a \$30.00 credit.

2. CREZ

We received \$400,000 from CREZ in 2025. Last year's budget was created based on last year's number. This year we are receiving \$140,000 less than our budget which makes the beginning balance lower than projected. This leaves a negative balance of almost \$46,000 in fund transfers. The quarterly transfers ate up the beginning fund balance. We need to look at where we want to spend the \$400,000. John thinks we should split it with \$150,000 to Streets, \$150,000 to Water and \$100,000 to Sewer.

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

3. Code Enforcement – 260 S Chase St

A copy of the letter that John sent to the property owner, Lucas Calder, was included in the council packet. There are multiple code violations on this property. This situation dates back to 2017 after he became owner of the property. There have been repeated attempts to resolve this to no avail. John

spoke to Lucas Calder on the phone today and advised him to get it cleaned up within 15 days (April 24th). John is asking the council to declare the property a nuisance now and start the process so we can begin abatement. It is an eyesore that is surrounded by maintained lots.

Motion to declare 360 S Chase Street a nuisance property under title 4-1-8 and various infractions under title 6 by Ian Murray. Seconded by Sharon Inskeep. Councilors Sweeney, Klock, Murray, Armato, Doherty, Bates and Inskeep voted unanimously to approve. Motion Carried.

The council discussed other nuisance properties in the city. Bill Kuhn said that if we start to issue code violation citations for these properties and they are ignored, the city can get a Justice Court judgement that can be used as a lien to foreclose on a property as well as the clean-up process.

6. MINUTES OF COMMISSION MEETINGS – John Doherty reported on the April 6, 2026 Planning Commission meeting. Tim and Jean Collins were approved for a Temporary Occupied RV on 2 properties for 365 days.

7. REPORT FROM CITY ATTORNEY – Most of his work has been covered already. He mostly worked on the Gilmore Street Project and property nuisance issues.

8. REPORT FROM MAYOR, CITY COUNCILORS – None

9. ADJOURNMENT – Meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM.