



Council Minutes

March 25th, 2025

ROLL CALL: Mayor Craven called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with Councilor Chambers, Councilor LaCoste, Councilor Eversull, Councilor Hansen, and Councilor Solberg present. Councilor Winklepleck was excused. Administrative Assistant Jannea Deaver, Administrative Assistant Elizabeth Coleman, Administrative Assistant Tammi Morrow, and City Administrator Scott McDowell were also present.

ABSENT: Councilor Winklepleck was excused.

PUBLIC: Jack Alsman, Steve and Nan VanSandt, Brittany Hansen, Dan Murphy, Sandy Saltzer, John Leaton, Bill Hand, Victor Aguilar, Don Lyon, Sarah Brown (*The New Era | Sweet Home*), Steve Brenner, Sue Geeting, Anne and Clive Clarke, Jared Swezey, Steve Frambes, (*Linn County Sheriff's Office*), and Penny Rosenberg (*Democrat-Herald*).

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS: Removed 6) B. Central Linn Recreation Association Report. Rescheduled for a future meeting.

MINUTES: Councilor Hansen made a motion to approve the February 25th, 2025 meeting minutes as presented. Councilor Solberg seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING | PRESENTATIONS:

1. **The Brownsville Times Revival | Sharon Banks.** Sharon Banks spoke on behalf of a newly formed non-profit organization hoping to restart *The Brownsville Times*. Banks highlighted their plans for getting the paper back in circulation. The paper is a living history of the City with a 136-year tradition. The relaunch will include an on-line aspect but many still like the paper in hand. She highlighted the scope of the paper and policies being considered. Banks said their Board will be holding fundraising efforts to garner enough financial support to begin operations. You can learn more, subscribe or donate to the cause at <https://www.zeffy.com/ticketing/the-brownsville-times-subscription>.
2. **Consumer Confidence Report.** Public Works Superintendent Karl Frink reviewed the annual water quality report required by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) highlights included the sources of Brownsville's water supply, the items tested monthly and annually, the importance of the GR12 project and the backflow prevention program. Frink covered the ways the City distributes and manages water throughout the City system. He encouraged anyone interested to view the report on the State website at www.oregon.gov/oha/ph/healthyenvironments/drinkingwater or the City website.
3. **Goals Setting 2025.2026.** Council passed goals as presented. Council met in February twice to consider options for the next two years. The City continues facing many challenges imposed by the State and Federal governments on a variety of issues from addressing homelessness, to housing, to floodplain management, to name a few. Council agreed to work closely with McDowell to accomplish the identified goals. McDowell said that he would create a "committee" style approach that would activate Councilors to take the lead on several of the goals they have identified for the next two years. McDowell will provide a strategy and timeline to direct the work at an upcoming session of Council.



Council Minutes

4. **City Website Reviews.** McDowell reviewed the City websites including the Emergency Preparedness website, the SMAC website, and the REAL website. McDowell shared some operational concerns with the current City website. Operational costs associated with migration to a new platform are reason for concern. Mr. McDowell related tasks that could be performed on the website, such as paying your bill, contacting Councilors, along with information about hot topics, with drop-down menus on how to contact folks and organizations. There is also a 'treasure trove' of information on Emergency Preparedness, Small Municipalities Advocacy Coalition (SMAC), and Rural Economic Alliance (REAL).

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

1. **Linn County Sheriff's Office (LCSO) Report | Sergeant Steve Frambes.** Sergeant Frames said that crime has been near zero in Brownsville which has allowed deputies to focus on traffic. A total of forty-six citations were issued last month. Frambes reported that coffee shop robberies have been happening throughout Linn County. The Sheriff's Office along with other jurisdictions are working to apprehend the perpetrators. He encouraged folks to consider installing video cameras around their businesses and properties. Cameras are inexpensive and have high quality resolution that can assist law enforcement in apprehending criminals.
2. **Public Works.** Superintendent Karl Frink reported that Staff have been busy with pressure washing, mowing right-of-way, installing new chlorination equipment, grading roads, and addressing several drainage issues. The CLRC did not pass a plumbing inspection, and that issue has been repaired. Frink reported that the Park opens on April 1st, and general maintenance of the facilities is underway.
3. **Administration.** McDowell said this information on the Calapooia Riverbank and Kirk Avenue is provided for review only. Council & Staff are constantly asked about these two projects. Every year, Staff does a presentation outlining the costs associated with each project. Council has never moved forward with the Kirk Avenue project due to the approximate \$3 million cost associated with the project and the assessments that would be placed on abutting property owners. At some point in the future, the City will have to address this issue.

Council decided years ago to retreat from the Calapooia River due to the associated approximate \$3.1 million cost and permitting required to complete a project to make the necessary repairs. Five State & Federal agencies have jurisdiction on any project that happens in any watercourse in the State of Oregon. City officials can face fines and even be jailed if the proper permits and requirements are not met.

Mr. McDowell reported that REAL has been working with Linn Benton Community College to hire an intern. The group is working on updating the IGA between the cities. This item may be coming to Council next month.

McDowell reported that Public Works Superintendent Frink and Administrative Assistant Tammi Morrow have hired Park Caretakers for the year. Their employment will begin Memorial Day weekend and run through Labor Day weekend.

McDowell reminded Council of the upcoming Sweet Home Sanitation Clean Up Day on Saturday, April 5th, 2025.

McDowell reported that the Canal Company has scheduled a meeting for Thursday, April 10th, 2025. Membership voting will commence, and the group will likely move forward in finalizing an agreement with the City.



Council Minutes

Mr. McDowell reminded Council that the April Council meeting is scheduled for April 29th, 2025. Council had indicated that they would like to meet quarterly. McDowell suggested meeting directly after the Budget meeting on April 24th, 2025 for a Council retreat to complete this goal.

McDowell reported that Small Municipalities Advocacy Coalition (SMAC) had a win in the HB 3654 Lagoon bill. The hearing on the financing piece is coming up soon. McDowell is working on the Legislative Advocacy Policy Committee (LAPC) program buildout. McDowell mentioned that the flyer on the desk from the National League of Cities (NLC) has requested cities to contact their respective member of Congress to support the continuation of tax-exempt municipal bonds. McDowell encouraged Council to reach out to the representatives. McDowell talked about a smattering of bills currently in process. Jami Cate does a very good job emailing out highlights of upcoming bills of interest. Senator Bruce Starr does this as well.

4. **Planning.** No comments.
5. **Library.** No comments.
6. **Office.** No comments.
7. **Council Comments.** Councilor Chambers reported on the Sheriff's quarterly meeting. Sheriff Duncan warned that the upcoming contract will be up over eight percent (8%), or more. The Office has been busy hiring and training deputies. Many are now ready for the road. Councilor Solberg reported that Duncan had a few bills under consideration by the State Assembly that should be opposed to keep our communities safe. McDowell was asked to obtain the bill numbers from the Sheriff. Councilor Solberg said the fraud issue cost Linn County victims \$500,000 in January alone. Mayor Craven stated that he would like Council to support LCSO in opposing some of these bills; and that we all need to be monitoring the erosion of our Constitutional rights.
8. **Citizen Comments.** No comments.

LEGISLATIVE:

1. **Resolution 2025.06 | Workers Compensation | Annual Approval.** *Councilor Solberg moved to approve R 2025.06 as presented. Councilor LaCoste seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*
2. **Ordinance 808 | City Administrator Non-Elective Appointments (First Reading).** McDowell reported that this Ordinance change will reflect what is actual practice of appointment by Council, not the Administrator, hence making sure the electors are represented by those they elected. Advertising will also be done by any means that Council deems necessary. Ad hoc committees are advisory by nature, and will be filled by the City Administrator. All ad hoc committee recommendations will come to Council for approval and implementation at the sole discretion of Council.
3. **Proclamation | Child Abuse & Prevention Month.** Mayor Craven read the proclamation into the record, declaring April 2025 as Child Abuse Awareness Month in the City of Brownsville.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. **Appoint Budget Committee Member | Julie Fisher.** The City has received one application for the Budget Committee. The City currently has one opening.

Councilor Hansen moved to appoint Julie Fisher to the Budget Committee. Councilor Chambers seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.



Council Minutes

2. **Authorize Meals on Wheels Partnership.** Councilor Solberg moved to approve the Meals on Wheels partnership with the Council of Governments Senior, Disability and Community Services, delivering fresh, hot meals to our aging and disabled folks in Brownsville. Councilor LaCoste seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. Councilor Hansen abstained due to a family member benefiting from the service.
3. **Explore City Website Request for Proposals (RFP).** Mr. McDowell reported that he is trying to negotiate with the City's current provider, but would like the option to move forward with other options as necessary.

Councilor Hansen moved to approve this authorization, sending Mr. McDowell forth. Councilor LaCoste seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

4. **Linn County Pioneer Picnic Association (LCPA) | Road Closure Request.** Mr. McDowell stated that this is an annual request.

Councilor Chambers moved to approve the road closures as presented. Councilor Solberg seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1. **Partnership Agreements & Memberships.** Mayor Craven stated that he had requested that Mr. McDowell generate a report that includes a compilation of nonprofits, civic organization, and memberships that the City partners with for Council review. There has been a lot of talk about LOC and COG and their value to the City. Mayor Craven stated that Council needs to be very responsible with spending taxpayer's dollars and challenged Council to review they memberships and partnerships as they come to Council for future consideration. Councilor Hansen expressed appreciation to Mr. McDowell and Mrs. Morrow for compiling the list.
2. **Sweet Home Sanitation | Clean Up Day | April 5th, 2025.** Mr. McDowell reminded Council that the City's annual clean up day is coming up soon, April 5th, 2025. It will be depot style as usual, up at the Rec Center parking lot.
3. **Oregon Government Ethics Committee (OGE) | Statement of Economic Interest.** Mr. McDowell reminded Council that OGE sends out their annual Statement of Economic Interest (SEI) survey that must be completed online. Please let Staff know when you have submitted your documents, or if you need help in the process. The deadline is April 15th, 2025. OGE is serious about fines and the City will not be responsible for any personal fines assessed due to late filings.
4. **Vineyard Wind Machines.** Mr. McDowell reminded Council that this is their semi-annual reminder that this minor annoyance could be happening soon.
5. **February Financials.** No comments.

CITIZEN QUESTIONS & COMMENTS. Jared Swezey relayed a garbage collection issue being requested by Sweet Home Sanitation that is causing a logistics concern with garbage cans being placed on only one side of the street. Swezey pointed out that based on the size of his lot, and the requirement of cans being placed three feet apart, it severely hampers his ability to use his driveway. Swezey asked two questions of Public Works Superintendent Frink. The City has had no results when testing for PFAs. Water testing for individual homes is done by the homeowner and not the City.



Council Minutes

COUNCIL COMMENTS. Councilor Chambers reminded everyone that the Real ID requirement was going into effect May 7th. Any travel will require this new form of ID. Councilor Hansen said that a passport will also work. She also thanked Frink for his light-hearted approach to this year's Consumer Confidence Report presentation.

ADJOURNMENT: Councilor LaCoste moved to adjourn at 8:27 p.m. Mayor Craven seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "SM", representing S. Scott McDowell.

City Administrator S. Scott McDowell

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "A. Craven", representing Mayor Adam Craven.

Mayor Adam Craven