



Council Minutes

May 28th, 2025

ROLL CALL: Council President Lynda Chambers called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with Councilor Eversull, Councilor Hansen, Councilor LaCoste, Councilor Winklepleck, and Councilor Solberg present. Administrative Assistant Jannea Deaver, Administrative Assistant Elizabeth Coleman, Administrative Assistant Tammi Morrow, Superintendent Karl Frink, and City Administrator Scott McDowell were also present.

ABSENT: Mayor Craven was excused.

PUBLIC: Sravya Tadepalli, Chenoweth Robertson, Sherri Lemhouse, Linda McCormick, Alice Tetamore, Penny Rosenberg (*Democrat Herald*), Chelly Bouferrache (*The New Era | Sweet Home*), Bill Hand, and Deputy Steve Frambes (*Linn County Sheriff's Office*).

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS: Deletions included: 11) B. CIS Insurance Renewals.

NEW CITIZEN'S COMMENT PROCEDURE: Mr. McDowell read into the record the new procedure for Citizen's Comments. The City of Brownsville has hosted public comment periods on Council agenda for years. Initially, there were four inputs on the agenda where the public could speak during a regular session Council meeting, without a time allotment for speakers. These practices were modified due to inefficiency and under the advisement of the League of Oregon Cities.

In 2010, Council changed to two Citizen Comments agenda inputs. The State's Public Meetings Law ensures that anyone can watch all proceedings of Council, with exceptions for executive sessions. The City values citizen input and continues the practice of multiple public comment periods, although the second comment period is rarely used.

Council passed an update to the Council Handbook on April 29th, 2025, eliminating the citizen comment input at the end of the agenda. Now, there will be one public comment period listed on every regular session Council agenda, following Item 7). Staff Report.

Participants must sign up prior to the start of the meeting and are allotted three minutes unless otherwise noted. The full Citizen Comments portion will not exceed thirty minutes unless extended by vote of Council.

People wishing to speak are encouraged to meet with Staff, send a letter, email, or make a phone call prior to addressing an issue with Council. Contact information for Councilors and Staff can be found on the City website.

The Council meeting is for the Council to discharge the business of the City, and questions should be directed to Staff or Councilors at the conclusion of the meeting.

For tonight, anyone wanting to speak should see Administrative Assistant Tammi Morrow to sign up. In the future, there will be a sign-up sheet available before the Council meeting commences for those that wish to speak during citizen comments portion of the meeting.

MINUTES: Councilor Solberg made a motion to approve the April 29th, 2025 meeting minutes as presented. Councilor Winklepleck seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING | PRESENTATIONS:



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1. **Stand By Me Day | Linda McCormick.** Mrs. McCormick talked about the planned activities including walking tours, antique cars, and the fan forum that will be held in the Rec Center. This year the event will be held on Saturday, July 26th, 2025. To learn more about the event, visit <https://linnparks.com/museums/linn-county-historical-museum>.

Councilor Winklepleck made a motion to approve the street closure request for the 2025 Stand By Me event. Councilor LaCoste seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

2. **Proposed Use of State Revenue Sharing Hearing | FY 2025.2026.** Councilor Chambers opened the public hearing and asked for comments or discussion. No public comments were made. The public hearing was closed.
3. **Budget Public Hearing | FY 2025.2026.** Councilor Chambers opened the public hearing and asked for comments or discussion. No public comments were made. The public hearing was closed. Mr. McDowell stated that the budget and budget details are on the City website. He highlighted a few of the key components included in the 2025.2026 budget. The full budget will be approved at the June Council meeting as well as the tax rate, Wastewater Bond Debt levy amount, Water Bond Debt levy, utility rate increase, and approve the use of State Revenue Sharing.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

1. **Linn County Sheriff's Office (LCSO) Report | Sergeant Steve Frambes.** Sergeant Frambes reported there were 32 traffic stops last month yielding 1 DUI, and 3 warrants. Property crimes included a break-in at the local 76 station where cases of Coors Light were stolen. Stella Jones also experienced chainsaws being stolen. Event season is here, which is the busy season for the LCSO.
2. **Public Works (PW).** Superintendent Frink reported that the Park Caretakers have arrived and started their duties in the park. They are doing a great job so far. Frink is awaiting a new hydrant to fix the damaged hydrant on Park Avenue. Public Works will be relocating the hydrant. The Public Works team have been busy tending to mowing City properties. The team completed maintenance at Pioneer Cemetery, so everything looked great for Memorial Day.
3. **Administration.** Administrator Scott McDowell reported that Councilors received their Council goals committee assignments. Council goals will be handled by several sub committees which will report back to Council. Breakout sessions will commence soon.

McDowell stated that the annual audit date will be set soon. McDowell reported that Rob Hess has been named the new Superintendent for the Central Linn School District.

Mr. McDowell reported work will begin soon on the transition of the City website. McDowell is hoping to launch the new site this summer. The new website comes with a host of services that may be useful in the future.

Frink and McDowell submitted the required information for all City property & equipment insurance coverages.

McDowell shared a letter from Pacific Power urging customers with medical concerns to investigate a generator due to possible power interruptions.

4. **Planning.** Mrs. Coleman reviewed the FEMA PICM status and options. The City chose a permit-by-permit basis; however, this is an active case and will be changing during this year or next. Coleman touched on Senate Bill 6 & 974, both bills aim to restrict local control by adopting unmanageable timeframes for building permit reviews. She shared the City's process in working



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with a developer or a person building a home. The City always tries to get to “yes” for folks building in town, but Staff must ensure the Brownsville Municipal Code, the Public Works Standards and applicable laws and requirements are met. Staff is concerned about protecting the City systems and protecting rate and taxpayer’s investment in critical infrastructure. The City does not design projects, nor does the City dictate who can build or what they can build other than those general parameters found in the Code. A common misunderstanding is that the City dictates details that are private matters.

5. **Library.** Mrs. Lemhouse presented information on passes to the Oregon Gardens, the Gilbert House, the Museum of Natural & Cultural History at the University of Oregon, and the Oregon State Parks. Stop by the Library to check out these passes. To learn more about happenings at the Library, please visit <https://www.brownsvillecommunitylibrary.org/>.
6. **Office.** Mrs. Morrow discussed the City’s abatement process. She was happy to report that the program is going well. The City has been assisted by Sweet Home Sanitation, Linn County Sheriff’s Office & Public Works through the years to clean up properties that were in violation of the Brownsville Municipal Code. Council has modified ordinances to give Staff the proper tools to advance this program. The City works with property owners to keep property in compliance and nearly everyone does a great job keeping Brownsville looking its best and ensuring safety for fire protection. Councilor Winklepleck asked about legislation around RV’s. McDowell stated that was one of the goals that Council elected not to pursue this year.
7. **Council Comments.** Councilor Winklepleck requested that Mayor Craven & Mr. McDowell draft a letter to Pacific Power about the power blips. Council agreed by consensus for the letter to be sent. Councilor Eversull complimented Mr. McDowell for negotiating a great deal for the City with the website folks.
8. **Citizen Comments.** No comments.

LEGISLATIVE:

1. **Resolution 2025.08 | Election to Receive State Revenue Sharing.** Councilor Eversull asked Mr. McDowell to review the history of this legislation. If Council passes a resolution stating that we offer these things, we are eligible for the funding. Historically, the City has used these funds to pay for our streetlights, which is approximately \$90,000 per year. The City does get charged the same amount per fixture, regardless of whether they are LED or not. The saving is on power generation for the utility, but not cost savings for the City. Pacific Power is also on a time deadline for changing all streetlight to LED.

Councilor Hansen moved to approve R 2025.08 as presented. Councilor Winklepleck seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

2. **Ordinance 808 | Nuisance Abatement Modification | Brownsville Municipal Code. (Second Reading).** Councilor Chambers asked for questions or discussion.

Councilor Hansen made a motion to read by title only. Councilor LaCoste seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Councilor Eversull made a motion to approve O 808. Councilor LaCoste seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. **Linn County Museum | Hands on History Request.** Connie Bull requested the closure of Park Avenue & Averill Street to accommodate the event. After discussion, Council approved the use



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of Library Park and the closure of Park Avenue, as historically done, but did not authorize the closure of Averill Street as presented.

Councilor Hansen moved to approve the Hands On History agreement like last year, striking paragraph 2. Councilor Winklepleck seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

2. **Central Linn School District (CLSD) | IGA.** Mr. McDowell reported that Council has been working on developing an agreement of green space and facilities around youth sports for over a year. CLSD's interim superintendent is Cathy Hurowitz. Staff met with Hurowitz, a few Board members, the Athletic Director, and two Central Linn Recreation Association (CLRA) representatives to discuss the issue and hopefully move forward. The superintendent expressed concerns about the maintenance of the fields and the conditions of the facilities after use. This issue was addressed by implementing use requirements. A JBO field, with certain parameters, will be created for the rec sports to play games on. McDowell praised the District for making improvements to a field for use this season, namely Kellen Hobie & David Karo. McDowell explained the District has had difficulty with the public using the fields in improper ways. McDowell added language that requires photographic documentation to assist with those concerns.

Councilor Solberg moved to approve a reciprocating agreement for the use of certain facilities and green space for youth athletics with the Central Linn School District. Councilor LaCoste seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

The CLRA is the primary beneficiary of this agreement.

3. **James Land Lease Agreement.** Mr. McDowell reported that the City has had a land lease with the James' since 1979. There was an issue with the north wastewater treatment plant last summer. Staff have met with the parties and then put together an agreement going forth. McDowell is basically asking for Council's approval to go forth. If there are any substantive changes to the agreement, the agreement will be placed on the agenda for Council approval.

Councilor Winklepleck made a motion to authorize Mr. McDowell, Mr. Frink, and Councilor Chambers to go forth with this agreement. Councilor Hansen seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

4. **June Council Meeting Schedule.** Mr. McDowell requested a date change for the June Council meeting due to scheduling conflicts. June is one of the biggest business meetings for Council, adoption of the budget and other financial documents.

Councilor Hansen made a motion to move the June Council meeting date to Monday, June 30th, 2025 due to scheduling conflicts. Councilor Eversull seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1. **785 Butte Street | Private Construction.** Mr. McDowell explained to Council the ongoing complaints received from the residents of 785 Butte Street charging that Staff has not been doing their job. Staff believe the basis of this allegation is a personality dispute between the neighbors. Predominantly, they have complained of trespass issues and drainage issues with a vacant lot being built out next door.

Mr. McDowell, Mr. Frink, and Mrs. Coleman have all responded several times to their complaints and disputes, but have found no noncompliance issues or discrepancies with requirements. Mr. Frink recapped several conversations and complaints he has addressed with the folks, to no avail. Frink explained how he went above and beyond checking the drainage to ensure it met the City's regulations. Frink has also explained to the Doren's how to remedy their situation.



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McDowell admits to being a bit frustrated with the situation, stating that the City has done everything, and more, that needed to be done. Staff have gone above and beyond in dealing with this situation. This is not a Council issue, it is a Staff level issue. Mrs. Coleman remarked that it is time for resolution of the issue.

Staff have tried very hard to come alongside the property owner when we can, but their concerns are simply not a City issue. McDowell said that no one can absolve themselves from the responsibility of maintaining their sidewalks. The Brownsville Municipal Code states clearly what the property owner is responsible for. McDowell added that the retaining walls are the sole responsibility of the property owner as well.

Councilor Chambers remarked that she felt it has now become a personal attack on Staff. Councilor Hansen commented that Council has been hearing these complaints for over 2 years now. Councilor Eversull queried what it was that the residents want from Council? McDowell responded that the property owner wants her issues resolved, but these issues are not resolvable. McDowell stated that Staff work very hard to do what we can for the City and community residents, but sometimes, there is nothing that can be good enough to appease folks. These issues need to be kept at a Staff level, and Council could encourage folks to deal directly with Staff in these sorts of instances.

2. **April Financials.** No comments.

CITIZEN QUESTIONS & COMMENTS. No comments.

COUNCIL COMMENTS. No comments.

ADJOURNMENT: Councilor Eversull moved to adjourn at 8:31 p.m. Councilor LaCoste 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/C", representing Mayor Adam Craven.

Mayor Adam Craven