



Council Minutes

June 30th, 2025

ROLL CALL: Mayor Craven called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with Councilor Chambers, Councilor Eversull (7:06 p.m.), Councilor Hansen, Councilor LaCoste, Councilor Winklepleck, and Councilor Solberg present. Administrative Assistant Jannea Deaver, Administrative Assistant Tammi Morrow, Superintendent Karl Frink, and City Administrator Scott McDowell were also present.

ABSENT: None.

PUBLIC: Sravya Tadepalli, Jack Alsman, Chelly Bouferrache (*The New Era | Sweet Home*), Michael Humphreys, Steve VanSandt, Steve Hood, Troy Jones (*Friends of Gap Road*), and Steve Frambes, (*Linn County Sheriff's Office*).

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS: Additions included: 10) B. Pebble Street Closure. McDowell reported that also on the dais tonight was a certified letter from Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) requiring the City to perform a shade study, and the Linn County Commissioners adoption of their annual budget.

NEW CITIZEN'S COMMENT PROCEDURE: Mayor Craven reviewed the newly implemented procedure for Citizen's Comments, and the signup sheet was passed around.

MINUTES: Councilor Solberg made a motion to approve the May 28th, 2025 meeting minutes as presented. Councilor Hansen seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING | PRESENTATIONS:

1. **Muddy Creek Solar Park | Troy Jones.** Mr. Jones provided an update outlining the progress that has been made with the siting of the Muddy Creek Solar Park. Jones shared several instances where Q Cell had not followed proper procedure or made conclusions on studies that proved inconsistent with State Law. Jones was complimentary of the State agencies working on the siting project because they were attempting to get the requirements met. Jones said that Q Cell was granted a one-time extension until May 16th, 2026 to submit all the required plans. Jones explained the measures that Marion County has taken to protect EFU lands and said that the Linn County Commissioners are considering their legal options. To learn more and track progress, visit <https://www.friendsofgaproad.com/>.
2. **Proposed Use of State Revenue Sharing Hearing | FY 2025.2026.** Mayor Craven opened the public hearing and asked for comments or discussion. No comments were forthcoming; the public hearing was closed.
3. **Budget Public Hearing | FY 2025.2026.** Mayor Craven opened the public hearing and asked for comments or discussion. No comments were forthcoming; the public hearing was closed.

Councilor Hansen made a motion to adopt the FY 2025.26 annual budget as presented. Councilor Winklepleck seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.



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DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

1. **Linn County Sheriff's Office (LCSO) Report | Sergeant Steve Frambes.** Sergeant Frambes reported there have been strange incidents around town including two domestic situations, one involving a firearm and the other involving a vehicle used as a weapon. Charges are pending on both cases. The LCSO has been busy with hiking accidents that have claimed the lives of several area teenagers. Deputies are preparing for the Fourth of July celebrations throughout the County with Harrisburg and Mill City being the largest celebrations. Deputies will be in town for Brownsville's celebration.
2. **Public Works (PW).** Superintendent Frink reported that the team has been busy preparing for summer events. PW addressed a water leak discovered in the middle of the night on Spaulding Avenue. The Park Caretakers are doing a good job taking care of Pioneer Park.
3. **Administration.** Administrator Scott McDowell reported the City's Standard & Poor's (S&P) rating review is this week. McDowell is hopeful that the City will retain or improve its stellar rating of AA-.

A three-year contract has been signed with the Linn County Sheriff's Office to continue providing police services. Ms. Morrow hand delivered the contract to Sergeant Frambes.

Preparations are being made for all summer events. Staff will be locating light towers for exit safety during the 4th of July fireworks event. Sweet Home Sanitation and the Assembly of God provide support to Public Works for this event. Connect Linn County, a newly formed nonprofit entity, will be doing some kid events in the park this year.

Weeds and nuisance season is in full swing. Staff has heard several complaints regarding neighbor disputes, which the City will not engage in. Overall, the City has had good cooperation from folks attaining compliance with the weeds and nuisance ordinance. Staff only had two locations that had to be mowed by the City's contractor.

McDowell reported on the several complaints we receive each week surrounding the downtown restrooms. The nature of this beast is the fact that the restrooms will always be vandalized, from graffiti, to feces on the walls and ceiling, etc. It seems to just be part of the public condition, a total disregard for the common good. Staff will continue to monitor the situation.

The City is working on building a new City website with CivicsPlus.

Staff will put out a proposal for the painting of City Hall soon.

Council is working on committees to complete recommendations for Council goals. Please check in with Mr. McDowell if you are unclear about your committee assignments.

4. **Planning.** No comments.
5. **Library.** No comments.
6. **Office.** No comments.
7. **Council Comments.** Councilor Winklepleck reported that he will be meeting with the American Legion this upcoming Tuesday, July 1st. This project is designed to recognize local veterans on Veteran's Day by hanging memorial banners. Mayor Craven and Councilor Solberg are also on this committee.



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8. **Citizen Comments.** Michael Humphreys expressed concern about the public comment period change recently made by Council. Humphreys thought it would be better to have the comment period after the legislative items. Craven and McDowell explained that as it stands, citizens have the opportunity to share concerns prior to any item being adopted. The process does require citizens to read through items they may be concerned about. The last comment period was rarely used. Regardless of how the City changes the comment period, certain people will complain. The City experienced many meetings being hijacked by comment periods that repeated previous testimony and grandstanded on things that were not necessarily City issues. McDowell said that over the last two decades, there have been two legislative items removed due to public comment. The first comment period provides an effective opportunity for citizens to voice their concerns in a constructive manner.

Jack Alsmann expressed concern about the public restrooms on Spaulding Avenue. Staff reiterated the reality of having public restrooms and facilities. Unfortunately, many people do not respect public facilities, which often leads to vandalism.

LEGISLATIVE:

1. **Resolution 2025.09 | Water Rates Annual Adjustment.** Councilor LaCoste moved to approve R 2025.09 as presented. Councilor Hansen seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.
2. **Resolution 2025.10 | Sewer Rates Annual Adjustment.** Councilor Winklepleck moved to approve R 2025.10 as presented. Councilor Chambers seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. Councilor Winklepleck said that no one likes to raise rates, but it is necessary.
3. **Resolution 2025.11 | Adopting FY 2025.2026 Annual Budget.** Councilor Hansen moved to approve R 2025.11 as presented. Councilor Winklepleck seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.
4. **Resolution 2025.12 | Year End Transfers.** Councilor Winklepleck moved to approve R 2025.12 as presented. Councilor LaCoste seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. **Approve Delinquent Assessments.** Councilor Hansen moved to approve the delinquent accounts assessment to turn over to the Linn County Assessor's Office to be placed as a lien against the property. Councilor LaCoste seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.
2. **Pebble Street Closure | Ashley Lobaugh.** Mr. McDowell reported that Ashley Lobaugh is requesting a street closure for a block party on the 4th of July from 12:00 p.m. – 10 p.m. on behalf of the River's Edge Homeowners Association. Six or seven homes will be affected. She has obtained signatures from those folks. Staff are still waiting on the insurance certificate.

Councilor Winklepleck moved to approve the street closure with the contingency that the insurance certificate is received by the City. Councilor LaCoste seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1. **Oregon Liquor and Cannabis Commission (OLCC) | Local Licenses.** McDowell shared the new process implemented by the State two years ago. Liquor licenses are now done online. Council approved all licenses for 2025. Any inquiries or complaints need to be directed to Staff, and will be



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handled administratively. Violations include fines, fees, and revocation in bad cases. Historically, Brownsville businesses have been very responsible in following OLCC rules and requirements.

2. **Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) | TMDL | Shade Study.** The City received a certified letter from the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) requiring the City to conduct a shade study on the Calapooia River. Council referred the matter to the Communications Committee to develop a response. Councilor Winklepleck asked about the letter. McDowell shared the general parameters of the letter sharing his concern that 44 miles of river are do not fall under the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) authority, but the 1/8 of a mile the City owns is causing the temperature in the river to rise – it's preposterous.
3. **May Financials.** No comments.

COUNCIL COMMENTS. Councilor Chambers commented that July 4th symbolizes the historic day when the Declaration of Independence was established. Please remember to honor our legacy of freedom fighters, and to live with courage and integrity. Happy Fourth of July to everyone!

Mayor Craven stated that his son's bicycle helmet was recently found in Pioneer Park and returned to City Hall. This act of kindness reminds us all that our community is full of folks looking out for each other, our kids, and our community. He also asked to observe a moment of silence for the firefighters recently killed in Idaho.

ADJOURNMENT: *Councilor Hansen moved to adjourn at 8:21 p.m. Councilor LaCoste seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.*

Handwritten signature of S. Scott McDowell in blue ink.

City Administrator S. Scott McDowell

Handwritten signature of Adam Craven in blue ink.

Mayor Adam Craven