

City of Newberg

City Council Meeting Minutes

February 3, 2025

Call to Order

Mayor Rosacker called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

Roll Call

The City Recorder conducted a roll call. Present were Councilors McBride, Wheatley, Yarnell Holloman, Kilburg, Carmon, and Mayor Rosacker. Councilor Torgesen was absent.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

City Manager Report

January Narrative Report

City Manager Will Worthey presented the January 2025 narrative report. He highlighted several departments' activities:

Public Works completed 1,579 work orders over 30 days, averaging 56 per day. Emergency management activities included coordinating routine Public Information Officer tasks and meeting with the grants coordinator to outline priorities for January-June 2025.

The wastewater treatment plant processed a large volume of treatment due to winter flows, with 8.26 inches of rainfall recorded. The water treatment plant completed annual state reports and ordered additional filter media to be added prior to filter cover construction.

Public Works also addressed various waterline repairs and removals of beaver dams from Hess Creek. The police department expanded their gym for the wellness program using ARPA funds. There were 10 DUIIs in December.

Finance worked on the supplemental budget, held department meetings on budget change request forms, and began master fee discussions. Community Development welcomed a new plans examiner and noted a slowdown in building permits, though more housing is in the planning pipeline.

IT has been upgrading the Citrix environment due to Microsoft forcing a move from Windows 10 to Windows 11. The City Recorder is planning the first annual retention week for document archiving.

The library concluded its cozy reading program with 1,000 participants and is working on a teardown of a concrete wall for improved evacuation safety. HR held protected leave training for supervisors and onboarded new employees.

Councilor Yarnell Holloman asked about Microsoft updates for personal computers. The City Manager clarified that the changes primarily affect the city's distributed cloud-based version of Windows and cybersecurity systems.

Public Comments

Sonda Martin addressed the council regarding concerns about threats to constitutional freedoms and rights of vulnerable populations. She urged the council to publicly commit to upholding their oaths to the Constitution and protecting the rights of marginalized groups in Newberg. Martin also called for the council to ensure the police department would uphold its constitutional oath.

Consent Calendar

Councilor Carmon moved to approve the consent calendar as written. Councilor Wheatley seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Rosacker-Yes

Councilor Wheatley-Yes

Councilor Yarnell-Hollamon-Yes

Councilor Kilburg-Yes

Councilor Carmon-Yes

Councilor McBride-Yes

Councilor Torgesen-Absent

New Business

Newberg Downtown Coalition Update

Brandon Anderson, co-executive director of the Newberg Downtown Coalition (NDC), presented an update and funding request. He explained that NDC has been financially struggling and requested consistent annual funding from the city to support operational costs and allow for more effective fundraising and project development.

Anderson proposed that NDC receive 2.5% of the total transient lodging tax (TLT) dollars in the next budget cycle. This would amount to approximately \$13,900. He also requested that NDC be written into future city budgets for more stable funding.

The council discussed the proposal, with several members expressing support for NDC's work. Concerns were raised about the specifics of how funds would be used and the impact on other budget items. City Manager Worthey noted that discussions about this funding have been ongoing and more comprehensive information will be presented at the next meeting.

Mayor Rosacker indicated that the item would be part of the next meeting agenda with additional time allocated for discussion.

Annual Development Code Maintenance Package

Community Development Director Scott Siegel presented an overview of proposed code maintenance amendments. He explained that the amendments are intended to clarify and improve predictability and

efficiency in the permit process, maintain compliance with state and federal law, and include minor policy changes to improve customer service and operational efficiency.

Siegel highlighted several key amendments, including:

- Changes to definitions and exemptions for accessory structures
- Clarifications to appeals processes
- Updates to align with state law requirements
- Revisions to expiration dates and extension procedures for various permits
- Updates to annexation procedures
- Reorganization and clarification of parking standards, including a new procedure for parking studies

The council asked questions about specific amendments, particularly regarding accessory structures and their potential impact on neighbors. Siegel clarified that the changes are intended to align planning review with building code requirements.

Mayor Rosacker suggested that the council may need more time to discuss the amendments at the upcoming public hearing on February 18.

Property Tax Analysis

Finance Director Kady Strobe presented a property tax analysis and discussion on whether to include the allowed 3% annual increase in the upcoming biennial budget. She explained that Newberg's current property tax rate is \$2.98 per \$1,000, with a maximum assessed rate of \$4.38 per \$1,000.

Strobe outlined the potential revenue impact of the 3% increase, which would amount to about \$724,000 over two years and cost the average homeowner about \$19 per year. She also discussed unavoidable cost increases, including significant rises in PERS rates and health insurance costs.

The council engaged in a discussion about the proposed increase, with most members reluctantly expressing support for the increase due to budget pressures and the need to maintain services. City Manager Worthey emphasized that the city has been fiscally conservative and is not in a budget crisis like many other municipalities.

Robert Soppe, a member of the public, spoke against the proposed tax increase, arguing that it would be a significant burden on property owners over time and suggesting that the council explore other options for balancing the budget.

After discussion, the general consensus of the council was to support including the 3% increase in the budget planning process, with the understanding that it could be reevaluated if other revenue sources improve.

Capital Improvement Plan Informational Presentation

City Manager Worthey presented an overview of the proposed Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for the next four years. He emphasized that the plan focuses on critical and achievable projects, which should lead to lower rate increase requests in the future.

Key projects highlighted in the presentation included:

- Ongoing infiltration and inflow reduction efforts for the wastewater system
- Oxidation ditch expansion at the wastewater treatment plant
- Annual pipe replacement for water, wastewater, and stormwater systems
- Specific stormwater improvement projects to address flooding issues
- Transportation System Plan update

- River Street improvement project

Worthy noted that the number of projects in this CIP is significantly reduced compared to previous years, focusing on achievable and necessary improvements. He also emphasized the city's partnership with Keller Engineering in developing accurate cost estimates and innovative solutions.

Council Business

Board, Commission, and Committee Updates

Councilor Carmen reported that the Traffic Safety Commission will be presenting at the next council meeting to discuss their future direction.

Councilor Kilburg mentioned that Taste Newberg is planning a social media campaign for spring to fall 2025 and producing promotional videos. She also noted that the wine industry ad hoc committee is working on goals, including positioning Newberg as a premier gateway to wine country.

Adjournment

Mayor Rosacker adjourned the meeting at 9:15pm.

Attested By:



Mayor Bill Rosacker



City Recorder Rachel Thomas