

City of Newberg

City Council Meeting Minutes

February 18th, 2025

Call to Order

Mayor Rosacker called the meeting to order at 5:59 PM.

Roll Call

The City Recorder conducted a roll call. Present were Councilors McBride, Wheatley, Kilburg, Turgesen, and Carmen, as well as Mayor Rosacker. Councilor Yarnell Holloman was noted to be a few minutes late, arriving at 6:09 PM.

Staff Members Present: City Manager Will Worthey, City Attorney James Walker, City Recorder Rachel Thomas, Community Development Director Scot Siegel, Library Director Korie Buerkle, Public Works Director Russ Thomas, Chief of Police Jeff Kosmicki, IT Support Brandon Harris and Interim PIO Emily Salsbury.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Rosacker led the Pledge of Allegiance.

City Manager Report

Year End Statistical Report 2024

City Manager Will presented the Year End Statistical Report for 2024. He noted this report was unique as it contained over three years of statistics, allowing for analysis of trends and correlations.

Key points from the report included:

- Planning decisions and housing construction showed a dip in 2024 compared to previous years. Planning decisions averaged 8.58 per month in 2024, down from 11.7 in 2023 and 11.6 in 2022. Housing construction dropped to an average of 6 units per month in 2024, down from 8 in 2023 and 15 in 2022.
- The slowdown in housing construction was described as a "good bad problem" as it delayed the need for a new water plant.
- Social media engagement increased significantly to an average of 13,600 interactions per month in 2024, up from 7,500 in 2023 and 8,000 in 2022.
- Public records requests remained steady at about 5 per month over the three-year period.
- Payroll expenses increased by an average of 9% per year over the three years, driven primarily by PERS increases and health insurance costs rather than COLA adjustments.
- HR statistics showed improvements in retention and fewer recruitments needed each year from 2022 to 2024.

- The library saw significant growth in circulation numbers, reaching an average of 32,000 circulations per month in 2024, up from 26,000 in 2023 and 23,000 in 2022.
- Public safety calls for 911 increased from 428 per month in 2022 to 513 per month in 2024. The City Manager attributed this to growing confidence in the public safety team under new leadership.
- Water production remained relatively steady despite housing growth, averaging 71 million gallons per month in 2024 compared to 73 million in 2023 and 69 million in 2022.

The City Manager concluded by highlighting key takeaways, including improved public safety, steady water consumption, sluggish construction, rising payroll expenses, and increased community engagement. He noted the library's success and anticipated further engagement efforts in the future.

Councilor Kilburg asked about state revenue tied to library circulation. The City Manager clarified that increased circulation does result in some additional revenue, but from a three-county consortium rather than the state directly.

Mayor Rosacker inquired about the timeline for new housing at Colina Crossing. The Community Development Director explained they expect housing starts to begin in spring, with an anticipated 30-70 units per year depending on market absorption for the 400-lot development.

Public Comments

Written Comment - Beth Keyser

No discussion occurred on this agenda item.

Continued Business

Ordinance 2025-2933: Amending Newberg Municipal Code Title 15 Development

Community Development Director Scott Siegel presented Ordinance 2025-2933, which proposes amendments to Newberg Municipal Code Title 15 regarding development. He explained the purpose of code maintenance is to ensure procedures, application requirements, standards, and zoning are working correctly, rather than making significant policy changes.

Siegel noted no written comments had been received on the package. He recommended approval and suggested the council could choose to read the ordinance by title only and potentially waive the second reading.

Mayor Rosacker opened the legislative hearing and called for declarations of conflicts of interest or ex parte contacts. None were declared.

No public testimony was given.

Councilor Carmon moved to waive the second reading of Ordinance 2025-2933. Councilor Yarnell-Hollamon seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Councilor Carmon moved to adopt Ordinance 2025-2933 and read by title only. Councilor Yarnell-Hollamon seconded the motion.

The City Attorney James Walker read the ordinance title.

The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

New Business

Ex Parte Contact Training

City Attorney James Walker and his colleague Souvanny Miller provided training on ex parte contacts for the council. Key points included:

- Ex parte contacts are communications made to a member of a hearings body outside the hearings process related to facts or an application that is pending or will be pending.
- Disclosure of ex parte contacts is crucial for transparency and to allow all parties an opportunity to respond.
- Disclosure should include who the communication was with, when it occurred, and the content of the communication.
- Ex parte contacts can occur even after a hearing is closed but before a final written decision is made.
- Bias and conflicts of interest are related but distinct issues that should also be disclosed.

The attorneys emphasized the importance of disclosure to maintain fairness in quasi-judicial proceedings and protect the city's decisions from potential challenges.

Newberg Urban Design Verification Study - ODOT

Jenna Berman from the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and Ryan Farncomb from Parametrix presented the Newberg Urban Design Verification Study. Key points included:

- The study aims to refine previous planning work for Newberg's transportation system, focusing on Oregon 99W through downtown and East First Street/OR 219.
- Proposed changes for downtown include reducing travel lanes from three to two in each direction on the couplet (First Street and Hancock Street) to improve safety and add space for bicycles and parking.
- For East First Street/OR 219, near-term improvements include enhanced pedestrian crossings. A long-term proposal suggests a roundabout at the Everest Road intersection.
- Public feedback was generally supportive of the proposed changes, with concerns raised about speeding and traffic impacts.

Council members raised questions about diagonal parking options, maintenance responsibilities, and the timeline for implementation. The presenters noted that diagonal parking is not typically approved on state highways due to safety concerns with backing into traffic.

Councilor McBride expressed preference for a traffic signal rather than a roundabout at the Everest Road intersection, citing concerns about large truck maneuverability.

The council did not take formal action but provided feedback for ODOT to consider as they refine the proposals.

Taste Newberg Contract Renewal

Representatives from the Chehalem Valley Chamber of Commerce, Taste Newberg, and the Newberg Downtown Coalition presented their perspectives on the allocation of Transient Lodging Tax (TLT) funds.

The Chamber requested a shift from a fixed amount to a percentage-based allocation, proposing 2.5% of total TLT funds (approximately \$43,000 based on projections).

Taste Newberg requested renewal of their contract for six years and to receive 100% of the 35.067% of TLT funds designated for tourism promotion. They argued this aligns with state regulations and provides the best return on investment for the city.

The Newberg Downtown Coalition, represented by Lonnie Parrish, advocated for sustainable funding to support downtown events and improvements.

Council members expressed concerns about the lack of collaboration between the organizations and the request for a six-year contract. They decided to table the discussion and schedule a work session to further examine the proposals and funding allocations.

Councilor Carmen moved to table the discussion and schedule a work session on the topic. Councilor Holloman seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Potential Transfer of TVF&R Station 20

City Manager Will presented a proposal from Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue (TVF&R) to transfer ownership of Station 20 to facilitate a complete rebuild of the structure. He explained that due to the language in the existing intergovernmental agreement, the city has limited ability to receive compensation for the property.

Council members expressed concerns about giving up ownership of the property. Councilor McBride suggested including a right of first refusal clause if TVF&R ever decides to vacate the property in the future.

The council did not take formal action but directed staff to continue discussions with TVF&R, considering the option of allowing the rebuild while retaining city ownership of the land.

Council Business

Board, Commission, and Committee Updates

Rick Marshall, vice chair of the Traffic Safety Commission, presented an update on the commission's activities and challenges. Key points included:

- The commission has been working on prioritizing traffic safety issues but lacks resources for data collection and implementation of solutions.
- There is a need for better communication between the commission, city staff, and the council regarding traffic safety concerns and potential solutions.
- Council members suggested establishing a regular reporting schedule for the commission and exploring ways to better utilize their volunteer efforts.

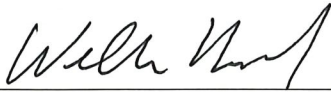
City Manager Will noted that addressing many of the traffic safety issues would require additional staffing resources, which would have budget implications.

The council did not take formal action but agreed to consider ways to improve the commission's effectiveness and communication with the council.

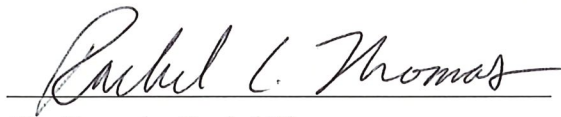
Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:24 PM.

Attested By:



Mayor Bill Rosacker



City Recorder Rachel Thomas