

# City of Newberg

## City Council Meeting Minutes

### May 18, 2026

#### 1. Call to Order

Mayor Bill Rosacker called the City Council meeting to order at 6:00 PM on Monday, May 18, 2026, at the Newberg Public Safety Building, Denise Bacon Community Room, Newberg, Oregon.

#### 2. Roll Call

Present: Councilor McBride, Councilor Wheatley, Councilor Yarnell-Hollamon, Councilor Kilburg, Mayor Rosacker, Councilor Turgesen

Absent: Councilor Carmon

#### 3. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Bill Rosacker led the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### 4. City Manager Statistical Report on March

##### a. Presentation

City Manager Will Worthey presented statistics for March 2026. Key highlights included: 6 combined planning decisions; 3 housing unit permits issued; 55 other permits; 176 building inspections; 25 website form submissions; social media engagement of 19,491; and 5 public records requests. Finance reported \$2,870,000 in accounts payable and \$1,240,000 in payroll. Notable expenditures included a wheeled loader purchase from Forest Glen Repair LLC for \$118,576, concrete work from Concrete Solutions for \$131,002 including library ramp work, and a payment to Cedar Mill Construction Company for \$313,000 representing the final payments for the water basin covering project, which is now 100% complete. HR reported 7 active recruitments, 1 hire, 4 separations, and 7 claims, with ongoing searches for dispatchers, IT staff, and an HR Manager. IT resolved 349 service tickets with 2 after-hours emergency callouts. Library recorded 8,657 door visits and 35,546 checkout events. Public safety responded to 2,358 calls for service, with 935 traffic stops, 699 citations or warnings, and 8 DUI arrests. Dispatch received 61 emergency 9-1-1 calls and 2,006 non-emergency calls. The water utility delivered 49,800,000 gallons of potable water and processed 160,000,000 gallons of wastewater, with 1,330 work orders completed.

#### 5. Public Comments

No public comments were submitted for general public comment.

#### 6. Presentation

##### 6.1. Waste Management

Dave Huber, Senior Public Sector Manager; Jason Willie, District Manager of Newberg Operations; and Meg Gallagher, Pricing Analyst for the Pacific Northwest, delivered the annual Waste Management report. The presentation covered collection services, transfer station site improvements, the annual rate review, rate comparisons, and community partnerships.

Waste Management has served the City of Newberg since March 2010, currently serving 6,731 residential customers and 555 commercial customers. Services include weekly trash, biweekly recycling and yard

debris, subscription glass service (with a 50% participation rate), and, following the acquisition of Stericycle, medical waste services.

Regarding site improvements, District Manager Jason Willie reported that the transfer station is undertaking a permitting and bidding process to expand from 2 to 4 inbound lanes and add a dedicated outbound lane, utilizing an adjacent 7-acre property. DEQ approval has been pending for approximately 9 weeks, and a land use permit from Yamhill County is also in progress. Construction is anticipated to begin in August with completion by fall. Extended summer hours of 7 AM to 5 PM are planned beginning Memorial Day. The addition of a compactor to improve throughput is also being explored, as is a potential westward expansion of the transfer station building.

Pricing Analyst Meg Gallagher presented the annual rate review. The prior year's 8.6% rate adjustment effective July 1, 2025 resulted in approximately \$5,900,000 in revenue. For 2026, increased operating costs are projected, driven by rising disposal costs—noting a shift in hauling from Coffin Butte to the company's own Columbia Ridge facility in Arlington due to significant rate increases at Coffin Butte—as well as increased fuel costs and CPI impacts. Some labor savings are projected due to a downturn in the grape and construction industries. Based on these projections, the current rate of return is estimated at 6.64%, and Waste Management is requesting a 3.74% rate increase effective July 1, 2026, to achieve a reasonable rate of return. The most common residential service sizes (35-gallon and 65-gallon) would each see increases of approximately one dollar per month. A rate comparison was presented showing Newberg's rates would remain competitive with neighboring jurisdictions including the City of Dundee, Yamhill County, and metro-area cities.

Council discussion centered on the cumulative effect of the proposed 3.74% increase on top of the prior year's 8.6% increase, and the impact on residents given current economic conditions. Mayor Bill Rosacker raised concerns regarding traffic congestion and capacity at the transfer station, and Mr. Willie and Mr. Huber clarified that the transfer station operates under a separate 10-year agreement with Yamhill County, distinct from the city's collection services contract, which expires September 30, 2028. Councilor Wheatley asked about the shift to the Columbia Ridge facility in relation to Coffin Butte's land use proceedings, and Mr. Willie confirmed the shift predated Coffin Butte's expansion denial and was driven purely by economics. The possibility of returning to Coffin Butte if disposal rates decrease was confirmed.

City Manager Will Worthey noted that per established precedent, the Council would vote on the proposed rate increase at the following meeting.

## 7. Public Hearing

### 7.1. Right of Way and Street Closure Code Amendments

Mayor Bill Rosacker opened the public hearing. No members of the public had signed up to testify. No conflicts of interest, abstentions, or ex parte contacts were declared by Council members.

Associate Planner Jeremiah Cromie presented the proposed amendments, summarizing changes previously reviewed at a Council work session. The amendments update Newberg Municipal Code Titles 2, 10, and 12, with key changes including: designating the Chief of Police and City Engineer as decision-makers for street closure permits and adding the option of designees; expanding permissible time frames for parade and street closure applications with provisions for the Chief of Police to waive requirements for smaller events; establishing criteria restricting closures on major collectors or arterial streets absent a waiver; adding time limits for dumpsters and storage containers in the right of way; and making updates to comply with House Bill 2658 regarding frontage improvements for remodel permits, along with other cleanup language. Staff recommended adoption of Ordinance No. 2026-2944.

No public testimony was received. The public hearing was closed.

Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2026-2944, an ordinance amending Newberg Municipal Code Title 2 Administration and Personnel, Title 10 Vehicles and Traffic, and Title 12 Streets and Sidewalks to amend street closures, encroachments, and right of way regulations, by title only and waiving second reading, was made by Councilor Peggy Kilburg and seconded by Councilor Robyn Wheatley

Vote:

- Councilor McBride — Aye
- Councilor Wheatley — Aye
- Councilor Yarnell Holloman — Aye
- Councilor Kilburg — Aye
- Mayor Bill Rosacker — Aye
- Councilor Turgesen — Aye
- Councilor Carmon — Absent

Motion carried unanimously, 6-0. 1 Absent.

## 8. New Business

### 8.1. Elections Announcement

City Recorder Rachel Thomas announced that the City of Newberg General Election will be held November 3, 2026, in accordance with the state general election. The offices of Mayor and three City Councilors will be on the ballot. The terms expiring December 31, 2026 are: Mayor Bill Rosacker; Councilor Kilburg (District 2); Councilor Wheatley (District 4); and Councilor Carmon (District 6). Filing for office opens June 3, 2026. The filing deadline for incumbent candidates is August 18, 2026, and for non-incumbent candidates is August 25, 2026. Interested parties were directed to make an appointment with the City Recorder to file.

### 8.2. Master Fee Schedule

Accounting Manager Dan Keuler presented the first reading of Resolution No. 2026-4022, proposing updates to the City's Master Fee Schedule effective July 1, 2026. The Master Fee Schedule was established in 2016 and was last updated in March 2025. This update marks the first July 1 implementation cycle to better align fee update timing across departments.

Key highlights of the proposed changes include: removal of the Communication Officer Public Safety fee; CPI-U increase of 2.7% applied to applicable fees; Engineering News Record Construction Cost Index increase of 4.1% applied to the fee-in-lieu-of-parking program fee; addition of descriptive line items for swimming pools, manufactured buildings, commercial air conditioners, and mini splits for permit clarity; removal of grading permit fees no longer required under Oregon's Structural Specialty Code; addition of a mural sign review fee to ensure proportionate pricing for large-scale mural projects; clarification of the vacation rental review fee type; codification of a tree removal permit fee for trees in the public right of way; removal of the inactive bike rack cost-sharing program; a 7% decrease in the wastewater System Development Charge (SDC) reflecting completion of infrastructure priorities; a 6.06% increase in the transportation SDC; no changes to stormwater or water SDCs; and an increase in the police department's public records request fee from \$15 to \$20, consistent with a peer analysis placing the new fee in the middle of the typical \$15–\$25 range. No changes were proposed for public works fees or library fees.

City Manager Will Worthey noted that this Council has fulfilled its commitment to retire certain debt early and remove the communication officer fee, and has also elected not to take the allowable 3% property tax increase this year, a distinction he described as unique among Oregon cities.

Significant discussion arose regarding public records fees and transparency. Community member Rebecca Wallis addressed the Council, raising concerns about the \$404-per-hour city attorney review fee as a potential barrier to public access, the \$60 staff time fee, and difficulties navigating the city's web drawer document system.

City Recorder Rachel Thomas responded that the \$404 attorney rate reflects actual cost, attorney review has been invoked only once or twice in the prior year, and that the vast majority of public records requests incur no fee at all. She acknowledged the web drawer's significant usability challenges, noting it is a state-run system, and shared future work plans to developing a catalog metadata layer to improve searchability. She also noted that the option to request a fee waiver on public interest grounds is available and referenced in the public records policy linked on the city's website. City Attorney James Walker confirmed that a statutory balancing test governs public interest fee waivers, and that the city has in practice waived fees where appropriate.

Councilor Wheatley expressed interest in exploring whether a public interest fee waiver option could be made more visible to residents on the public records request webpage. City Recorder Rachel Thomas confirmed this could be considered. Councilor Wheatley also requested a comparative analysis of the volume and cost of public records requests over the prior year to better assess the fiscal impact of potential fee reductions. City Manager Will Worthey committed to providing that analysis and cautioned that the ability to recover staff costs is important given the volume of requests, including large-volume commercial data aggregator requests.

Councilor Yarnell-Hollamon inquired whether the option to request an exemption was visible on the submission form. City Recorder Rachel Thomas confirmed it is referenced in the linked policy but not on the form itself, and acknowledged this could be improved. Mayor Bill Rosacker requested that City Recorder Rachel Thomas provide an update to Council in four to six months on progress with the web drawer and the planned improvements.

As this was the first reading, no vote was taken. The item will return for a public hearing and formal vote at the next meeting.

### 8.3. Gas Tax Referral\*

Mayor Bill Rosacker introduced the item, providing context that the question of paving Newberg's remaining gravel streets has been discussed in various forms for decades—noting a citizen-shared 1948 city document referencing plans to begin paving certain streets—and that the city has never found the budgetary capacity to fund that work through normal operating revenues. He emphasized that Council members cannot discuss policy matters outside of public meetings and that the purpose of this agenda item was to have a transparent, public deliberation on the topic.

City Manager Will Worthey outlined the funding challenge: while the city's road repair program is adequately funded, there is no sufficient revenue stream to construct entirely new streets in the gravel areas. State pass-through revenue covers public works staffing and operating costs but does not keep pace with the inflationary cost of new street construction. The estimated cost to pave the remaining cluster of gravel streets—approximately two miles—is \$8 to \$10 million, which would include full street construction with stormwater facilities, sidewalks, and curbs. Federal transportation grants have been explored but are generally predicated on fatality history, which works against a city with a strong safety record. No viable alternative funding mechanism has been identified. City Manager Will Worthey stated explicitly that staff is not advocating for a gas tax, but that the discussion was brought forward to determine whether Council has any appetite to pursue new revenue sources.

The Council broadly agreed that the current economic climate—with high fuel prices, a statewide gas tax increase on the ballot, a pending school district levy, and general cost pressures on residents—makes this

an inappropriate time to refer a new local fuel tax to voters. Councilor McBride expressed a preference to revisit the idea in a couple of years should conditions improve. Councilor Wheatley and Councilor Kilburg echoed concerns about the financial burden on residents. Director of Community Development Scot Siegel noted that the Local Improvement District (LID) mechanism—Bancroft bond financing assessed to adjacent property owners at favorable rates over time—is an available tool, though it carries significant impacts for lower-income residents and still leaves a funding gap requiring a complementary revenue source. Mayor Bill Rosacker noted that the November 2026 general election would be the lowest-cost opportunity to place a measure on the ballot, as a standalone special election could cost \$60,000 to \$80,000. He confirmed that no action will be taken to place a gas tax measure on the November ballot.

Councilor Turgesen suggested the possibility of incorporating the gravel street area into the Newberg Urban Renewal Area (NURA) as a future option, given the potential for the area to meet the statutory threshold for blight. Director Scot Siegel confirmed this was potentially feasible but would require a formal amendment process. City Manager Will Worthey suggested this topic be added to a future strategic planning session, with the River Street ad hoc committee process serving as a logical precursor, as its outcome will affect NURA fund positioning.

Councilor Wheatley proposed that after the River Street ad hoc process concludes, a small outreach group of residents living on the affected gravel roads be convened to gather input and explore creative funding ideas, similar to the River Street ad hoc model. City Manager Will Worthey requested that no new ad hoc effort be initiated until the current River Street committee concludes its work.

Councilor Jeri Turgesen provided a brief update on the River Street Ad Hoc Committee, which held its first meeting the prior week with good attendance. The meeting covered historical background on transportation planning, NURA context, and initial community input on desired elements of a complete street design. A local resident proposed an additional design option that generated productive dialogue. The next meeting is scheduled for June 25, 2026 at 6:00 PM at the same location. Mayor Bill Rosacker attended as an observer and noted the committee spent considerable time on the "do nothing" option; Councilor Jeri Tergesen indicated it is appropriate for the ad hoc to present a full range of options and associated pros and cons to Council.

Three members of the public addressed the Council during public comment:

Robert Soppe opposed using city taxes or SDCs for benefiting a few property owners, advocating that traditionally, road improvements come from the LID process. He supported a gas tax only if it funded citywide maintenance, also highlighting its potential negative impact on local gas stations and expressing concern over parts of the south side being officially blighted. He called for improvements to the city's web drawer system, suggesting a link to the prior website for easier research.

Rebecca Wallis opposed the gas tax proposal due to current economic conditions, emphasizing burdens on working families and businesses. She praised the city's fiscal management but advised exploring efficiencies and grant opportunities first.

Britta Mansfield opposed the tax referral, advocating for better timing and transparency. She recommended engaging impacted residents for input and expressed a preference for keeping gravel roads over implementing new taxes.

No action was taken on this item.

## Adjournment

There being no further business, Mayor Bill Rosacker adjourned the meeting at 8pm.

Attested by:



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Mayor Bill Rosacker Mayor, City of Newberg



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Rachel Thomas City Recorder, City of Newberg