

City of Newberg

City Council Meeting Minutes

July 6, 2026

1. Call to Order

Mayor Bill Rosacker called the Newberg City Council meeting to order on Monday, July 6, 2026, at 6:00 PM at the Newberg Public Safety Building, 401 E. Third Street, Denise Bacon Community Room, Newberg, Oregon.

2. Roll Call

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

Absent: Councilor Kilburg

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Bill Rosacker led the Council and those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. City Manager Narrative Report on June

a. Presentation

City Manager Will Worthey delivered the monthly narrative report, highlighting two incidents: a contractor's truck damaged the fiber optic cable connecting treatment plants to city servers, necessitating emergency staffing, and a complaint requiring the library mouse statue's relocation due to sight line issues. He discussed Engineering updates, including the River Street ad hoc committee's second meeting, Main Street Waterline project bidding to finish early, and City Hall roof work on track. Staff were commended for organizing the Fourth of July festivities. Updates were provided on ongoing ADA ramp improvements and paving projects expected to finish by week's end. The Finance department noted interim auditor work, HR and court clerk interviews, a new purchase card policy, and the start of the next capital improvement list. The library saw a notable increase in summer reading attendance, had over 30 teen volunteers, and completed windowsill repairs. The City Recorder's Office focused on attending the clerk's institute, emergency planning, exploring new record systems, and launching staff ethics training. IT welcomed new Systems Administrator Devin, supported Hubbard Police's dispatch launch, and reduced server room hardware through cloud expansion. NDPD managed ghost 9-1-1 calls due to equipment issues and celebrated two reserve officers' graduation. Community Development

held pre-application meetings and addressed state-mandated residential land use changes. New hires included HR Manager Jenna Gray.

Community Engagement completed communications on various topics, which included drafting press releases and developing multi-platform content for the water quality report as well as collaboration with community development on a multi-format communication for Oregon HB 4037 concerning land use notification changes. Additionally, Community Engagement finalized and publicized the new budget video, praised for its engaging approach.

Public Works completed a wide array of maintenance activities, which included street repairs and management of storm water, and sewer systems. They successfully executed projects such as the phase 2 crack sealing in areas like Hillsdale Drive, Ivy Drive, and Oak Knoll, and rehabilitation and grading work on Medici Bells Road driveway and the access road to the city shed. Public Works also managed emergency tasks such as clearing a 10-yard load of mud dumped by a truck downtown. Additionally, they handled routine maintenance like street sweeping and preventative maintenance for school district vans and public works vehicles.

5. Public Comments

Jim Talt addressed the Council regarding long wait times at the Waste Management transfer station, sharing his personal experience of a two-and-a-half-hour queue on a Tuesday morning. He suggested the Council request that Waste Management return with a formal corrective action plan detailing improvements to service and throughput, including faster off-site hauling and improved bay management processes.

Public comments related to the Illinois Street Closure were deferred to Agenda Item 7.5.

6. Proclamation

6.1. Old Fashioned Festival

Mayor Bill Rosacker read and issued a proclamation declaring July 23 through July 26, 2026, as Newberg Old Fashioned Festival Week in the City of Newberg, with the theme of "Then and Now." Mayor Bill Rosacker noted this would be the final year for fireworks at the festival at its current location and announced a pie-eating contest for youth as part of the festivities.

7. New Business

7.1. Microsoft Licensing Renewal

IT Manager Dave Brooks presented a request for Council approval of the city's ongoing Microsoft licensing renewal. He explained that the annual cost had marginally exceeded \$100,000, thereby surpassing the City Manager's purchasing authority and requiring Council authorization. He noted the city operates under a state-approved cooperative purchasing contract with a single government-tier Microsoft vendor, which satisfies requirements for both insurance coverage and criminal justice information compliance. In response to Council questions, IT

Manager Dave Brooks confirmed that cloud-hosted systems provide higher redundancy than on-premises alternatives and that the city maintains both on-premises and cloud-based backups.

Motion to approve Resolution 2026-4038 for the renewal of Microsoft licensing was made by Councilor Derek Carmon and seconded by Councilor Jeri Turgesen.

Vote:

- Mayor Bill Rosacker — Aye
- Councilor Mike McBride — Aye
- Councilor Robyn Wheatley — Aye
- Councilor Elise Yarnell-Hollamon — Aye
- Councilor Jeri Turgesen — Aye
- Councilor Derek Carmon — Aye

Motion carried unanimously.

7.2. ADA Accommodation Request Policy

City Recorder Rachel Thomas presented a proposed ADA Accommodation Request Policy for members of the public accessing city services and attending city events. She clarified the policy was not prompted by a specific complaint but was developed to provide a clear, accessible process for requesting accommodations, including an appeal pathway to the City Council. The policy was developed in collaboration with the city's legal counsel. The form will be embedded on the city's website in a fully ADA-compliant format, with staff available to assist any individual unable to complete it independently.

Discussion touched on the potential use of technology such as AI-assisted live captioning and language interpretation headsets, with Councilor Elise Yarnell-Hollamon suggesting the city explore a borrowing arrangement with the school district for translation equipment as an interim step. City Manager Will Worthey agreed to raise the matter at the next Future Focus 2 joint meeting with the school district. City Recorder Rachel Thomas noted the city already contracts with Linguava for live translation services and that police body cameras carry live translation capabilities. Councilor Jeri Turgesen expressed interest in implementing live closed captioning during Council meetings, and City Recorder Rachel Thomas indicated this could be activated using existing equipment in the chamber.

Motion to approve Resolution 2026-4029 to adopt the ADA Accommodation Request Policy was made by Councilor Derek Carmon and seconded by Councilor Robyn Wheatley.

Vote:

- Mayor Bill Rosacker — Aye
- Councilor Mike McBride — Aye

- Councilor Robyn Wheatley — Aye
- Councilor Elise Yarnell-Hollamon — Aye
- Councilor Jeri Torgesen — Aye
- Councilor Derek Carmon — Aye

Motion carried unanimously.

7.3. Public Records Request Presentation

a. Presentation

City Recorder Rachel Thomas delivered an informational presentation on the city's public records request program. No formal action was taken.

She reported that public records request volume peaked in 2025 with approximately 124 total requests before trending back toward a projected level of roughly 80 for 2026, crediting the improved city website with making data more accessible, which simultaneously attracted data aggregators. Staff spent approximately 131 hours on public records work in 2025. Of 124 requests, only 10 incurred a charge, 5 of which came from data aggregators; 6 of the 10 charged requesters chose to pay, and one refund was issued when actual staff time fell below the estimated charge.

City Recorder Rachel Thomas explained the current fee schedule: no charge for the first hour of staff time, \$60 per hour thereafter, and \$400 per hour if legal review is required. She noted these rates are below the city's actual average loaded staff cost of \$71.50 per hour and below the legal rate of \$315–\$800 per hour under the city's contract. Surrounding cities generally charge loaded staff rates beginning at 15 to 30 minutes, making Newberg's fee structure comparatively favorable to requesters.

Three anonymized scenarios were presented illustrating how proactive staff communication with requesters has successfully reduced both costs and staff time, including one case where a \$400,000 potential quote was resolved for \$180 through narrowing the request, and another where an initial \$1,440 quote was eliminated entirely by refining search parameters.

City Recorder Rachel Thomas also reported significant progress in records digitization, reducing the city's physical record boxes from over 620 to fewer than 100, with over 38,000 records now uploaded to the digital system. She noted dissatisfaction with the current Oregon Records Management System's public search functionality and advised that the city is evaluating new records management platforms that incorporate AI-assisted metadata entry, a browse function, and improved user accessibility. The city anticipates transitioning to a new system by October or November, pending vendor selection following receipt of a third bid.

7.4. Surplus of Properties near Airpark

City Manager Will Worthey presented a resolution to declare two small parcels of land south of Sportsman's Airpark as surplus real property, representing the first step in a process that would ultimately support gaining easement access for a sewer line.

Motion to approve Resolution 2026-4036 declaring two small parcels of land south of Sportsman's Airpark as surplus was made by Councilor Robyn Wheatley and seconded by Councilor Mike McBride.

Vote:

- Mayor Bill Rosacker — Aye
- Councilor Mike McBride — Aye
- Councilor Robyn Wheatley — Aye
- Councilor Elise Yarnell-Hollamon — Aye
- Councilor Jeri Turgesen — Aye
- Councilor Derek Carmon — Aye

Motion carried unanimously.

7.5. Illinois Street Closure Discussion

City Manager Will Worthey provided background on the approximately six-month trial closure of the East Illinois Street intersection at North Main Street and Oregon Highway 240. He explained that a previously authorized engineering study of up to \$200,000 was not completed, as ODOT confirmed it would not fund a signalized intersection in Newberg and the only remaining engineering option—a street realignment potentially involving a mini-roundabout—would require property condemnation and ODOT authorization, neither of which was viable. The trial closure was implemented as an alternative approach to assess whether the change would improve safety and reduce congestion complaints. City Manager Will Worthey recommended that the Council defer action pending review by the Traffic Safety Commission, which was scheduled to take up the matter imminently.

Public Comments on Agenda Item 7.5:

A resident of East North Street, Liliana Argento, described how the closure had redirected heavy traffic onto their previously quiet residential street without advance notice to affected residents, raising concerns about child safety and requesting to know what traffic studies, if any, were conducted before the closure was implemented. She also noted that a September 2025 email to the city requesting safety measures had never received a response.

Brianna Oliver Palmquist, a second resident of East North Street and a single mother of two young children, echoed concerns about the increased traffic volume on East North Street,

described multiple near-miss incidents, and noted the narrower residential street was not designed for through traffic. She acknowledged the underlying safety problem on Illinois Street but expressed that the closure had moved and amplified the problem rather than resolving it.

Joni Zimmerman, a resident of West Sheridan Street, stated that East Illinois Street has served as her primary east-west route for nearly 40 years and that the closure had eliminated direct access to key community destinations and Highway 219. She contended that alternate routes involve hazardous conditions, including gravel roads, zero-visibility intersections, and streets not designed for through traffic. She called on the Council to reopen the intersection, reinstate the professional engineering study authorized in 2023, and engage ODOT as a partner. She suggested an interim all-way stop as a near-term measure.

Kathy Meyer, co-owner of the former PBM Technologies building in the Newberg Enterprise Zone, addressed the economic impact of the closure, noting that the building—approximately 103,000 square feet—has been vacant since its prior tenant, Duravant Corporation, relocated to Walla Walla, resulting in the loss of over 100 family-wage manufacturing jobs. She stated that East Illinois Street's connectivity to Highways 219 and 240, as well as the adjacent rail access, had historically been central to the property's value for industrial users, and that prospective tenants, including a winery requiring freight access, were being deterred by the closure. She urged the Council to reopen the intersection and complete the engineering study in coordination with ODOT.

Tim Trask read a written statement on behalf of neighbors Jill Jacobson and Richard Smith of 201 East Illinois Street, who were unable to attend. Their statement expressed support for the closure on safety grounds, citing the intersection's blind corners, irregular angle, and history of accidents and reckless driving, including incidents involving trucks and a vehicle striking a telephone pole. They acknowledged the displacement of traffic to other streets but argued that driver behavior, not street configuration alone, is the underlying problem, and suggested speed bumps and additional stop signs as relatively cost-effective interim measures. They cautioned that reopening the intersection without correcting its design hazards would expose the city to significant liability.

Barb Trask, a resident of 130 East Illinois Street, submitted comments on behalf of herself and her husband Tim. She expressed sympathy for neighboring street residents while noting that the safety concerns they now experience were long-standing on East Illinois Street prior to the closure. She supported addressing the speeding issue through measures such as speed bumps and a three-way stop at the East Illinois and Washington Street intersection, and proposed consideration of converting East Illinois and North Streets to one-way streets to distribute traffic volume. She acknowledged the underlying hazard of the three-way intersection remains unresolved and recommended the city invest in a comprehensive long-term traffic study.

Council Discussion:

Councilor Mike McBride disclosed that the Meyer family are clients of his, though he is not the agent of record on the affected property. City Attorney James Walker confirmed that the disclosure was appropriate and sufficient for the informational nature of the current agenda item, while noting that future decisions may warrant further consideration. Councilor Mike McBride expressed that the property owner's difficulty in leasing the building warranted prompt action in support of the business community.

Councilor Robyn Wheatley stated she was initially motivated by the business impact and the potential loss of industrial tenants, noting that the property owner had not been consulted prior to the closure. She also expressed concern for residents of the affected side streets and acknowledged the tension between competing safety interests.

Councilor Elise Yarnell-Hollamon noted the Council's stated priority of expanding light industrial land and expressed concern that the closure undermined that goal at a critical time, given that approximately 550 manufacturing jobs are projected to exit Newberg over the next 18 months. She stated she had spoken with over 20 residents and had not found a single person satisfied with the closure and expressed concern that the decision had been made on anecdotal rather than data-driven grounds without routing the matter through the Traffic Safety Commission. She acknowledged that she bore personal responsibility in voting for the trial and stated she believed in retrospect it was the wrong call. She indicated her intent to move to reopen the closure and refer a long-term solution to the Traffic Safety Commission.

Councilor Jeri Turgesen identified three areas of concern: business impact and the importance of preserving light industrial access; safety, noting that reopening the intersection risks simply shifting the hazard back to Illinois Street residents; and community communication, observing that this was the second project in her tenure where the city's outreach had not reached affected residents in a meaningful way. She called for more structured, standardized communication processes and for the Traffic Safety Commission to be properly engaged and resourced.

Councilor Derek Carmon expressed openness to either reopening the street or waiting for the Traffic Safety Commission's input but requested broader community messaging and data such as police incident records for the surrounding streets to inform the commission's deliberations.

City Manager Will Worthey noted candidly that the city operates with significantly fewer staff than comparable municipalities as a result of Council's longstanding priority of fiscal restraint and low rates, and that expanded outreach, traffic studies, and engineering capacity require resources. He acknowledged there is no simple solution for the intersection given ODOT's refusal to fund a signalized intersection and the cost and complexity of a roundabout. He confirmed that speed cameras represent a viable and deployable traffic calming option.

Mayor Bill Rosacker acknowledged that the Traffic Safety Commission had previously expressed frustration at not being utilized and stated a preference for deferring any decision until

after the commission's scheduled meeting. He noted the prior engineering study had already consumed over \$100,000 before being discontinued and was trending toward a roundabout design that would have required condemnation of two or three homes.

Following discussion, Councilor Elise Yarnell-Hollamon formally moved to reopen the closure, with a long-term solution to be developed by the Traffic Safety Commission. After clarification of the motion's language by City Recorder Rachel Thomas, the motion was restated and voted upon.

Motion to reopen, effective immediately, Illinois Street at the intersection with Main Street and that a long-term solution be addressed by the Traffic Safety Commission, was made by Councilor Elise Yarnell-Hollamon and seconded by Councilor Robyn Wheatley.

Vote:

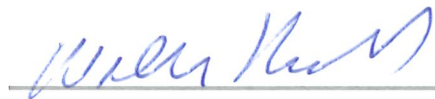
- Mayor Bill Rosacker — Nay
- Councilor Mike McBride — Aye
- Councilor Robyn Wheatley — Aye
- Councilor Elise Yarnell-Hollamon — Aye
- Councilor Jeri Turgesen — Aye
- Councilor Derek Carmon — Aye

Motion carried 5–1.

Adjournment

Mayor Bill Rosacker adjourned the meeting at 8:03 pm.

Attested by:



Mayor Bill Rosacker, Mayor, City of Newberg



Rachel Thomas, City Recorder of Newberg