

CITY OF McMinnville
MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Held via Zoom Video Conference and at the
Kent L. Taylor Civic Hall on Gormley Plaza
McMinnville, Oregon

Tuesday, January 27, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.

Presiding: Kim Morris, Mayor

Recording Secretary: Claudia Cisneros

Councilors:	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
	Sal Peralta, Council President	
	Zack Geary	
	Chris Chenoweth	
	Jessica Payne	
	Scott Cunningham	
	Dan Tucholsky	

Also present were Interim City Manager Adam Garvin, City Recorder Claudia Cisneros, City Attorney David Ligtenberg, Community Development Director Heather Richards, Chief of Police Cord Wood, Human Resources Director Vicki Hedges, Public Works Director Geoff Hunsaker, Finance Director Kaite Henry, Library Director / Parks & Recreation Director Jenny Berg, Information Technology Director Scott Burke, and Airport Manager John Paskell *members of the News Media – Kyle Dauterman McMinnville Community Media*

1. CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Morris called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and welcomed all in attendance.
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor Morris led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. INVITATION TO COMMUNITY MEMBERS FOR PUBLIC COMMENT: Mayor Morris invited the public to comment.

City Recorder Cisneros noted for the record had received an email from Peter Howland and it would be part of the amended packet posted tomorrow.

Ximena Van Dyke, McMinnville community member, representing Unidos Bridging Community, addressed Councilor Chenoweth's comments about the organization at the last Council meeting. The statements showed he did not understand who they were or what they did. She thought they both shared common ground in caring about the community and invited him to meet with her. She repeated the statement in Spanish.

Councilor Chenoweth agreed to meet.

Alyson Larkin, McMinnville community member, thanked the Council members and staff who had responded to the recent federal immigration activity. The work had only just begun and there needed to be continued movement and creativity to find solutions. Listening to their immigrant community was most important and she hoped the work would continue and their voices considered and actively included.

Andrew Larkin, McMinnville community member, spoke about confrontational comments made from the dais at the last Council meeting, discrediting people's fears. It was hurtful to hear these comments, especially to the youth present. All children were at risk of the trauma, not just those directly affected by the actions of ICE. He thanked Council for prioritizing this issue. Actions needed to be taken to make the City safer.

Ames Bierly, McMinnville community member, spoke about possible actions the City could take in response to ICE activity, especially the 1st and 4th items on the list of actions put forth by Council. Identifying those detained and asking the federal government for data about those residents was the bare minimum they should do. They needed to protect the children in the community.

Karen Staben, McMinnville community member, asked the City to require any ICE or border patrol agents to identify themselves and remove their masks and to direct the police to actively protect McMinnville residents from illegal warrants, use of force, and interference in practicing their first amendment rights.

Lauren Sinclair, McMinnville community member, agreed that the 1st and 4th actions on the list would make a significant difference. She thought the City should seek the identification of persons detained, confirm that an immigration arrest had occurred, notify next of kin, and request data on individuals arrested in McMinnville and the basis for their arrest. She wanted to know that if her neighbor went missing, that the local government would do everything they could to find out why they were detained so they could have proper legal representation rather than volunteers doing that work.

Anna Keeseey, McMinnville community member, spoke about her son who was from Guatemala and how his citizenship papers were within reach in the car if he was pulled over. She understood the list of actions added to staff's workload, but it was necessary before things got worse, such as naturalized citizens like her son being targeted.

Mark Cooley, McMinnville community member, also agreed with the 1st and 4th items on the proposed actions list. The Council had expressed concerns about risk to the City and employees, however everything the City did produced risk. City leaders were called upon to choose between the risks. To make the decisions, they had to understand what the risks were, and resources were available. He did not think police officers would be facing criminal indictment for reasonable law enforcement activities.

Linda Hays, McMinnville community member, said a society that allowed some of its members to live in fear with the understanding they would not be supported and protected in equal measure as the rest of us was not a just society. She thought local law enforcement were helpers and needed to be empowered to protect and serve with clear understanding of how to best do that. They needed to take care of their community and fight for the rights and well-being of every community member.

4. PRESENTATION

4.a. McMinnville Birthday Presentation

Katherine Huit, McMinnville resident, shared the history of the City, including the story of its incorporation. She discussed founders of the City, original plat, growth and need for governance, conflicting dates for the City's incorporation, legislative powers and home rule, town versus city designation, Act 84 in 1876 that incorporated the town, contemporary newspaper reports of the incorporation, McMinnville's first election, municipal reincorporation, Special Act of 1882 that reincorporated McMinnville as a City, effects of repeal and replacement, historic continuity and legal precedent, how Act 84 served as McMinnville's "birth certificate," institutional continuity, documentary evidence, and celebrating the 150th milestone.

The Council thought the evidence was compelling and would move forward with celebrating the City's 150th milestone this year.

5. ADVISE/INFORMATION ITEMS

5.a. Reports from Councilors on Committee & Board Assignments

Councilor Chenoweth reported on the McMinnville Economic Vitality Leadership Council (MEVLC) where they discussed goal setting and how to engage with the Governor's office as well as selected a new Chair and Vice Chair.

Councilor Geary reported on Visit McMinnville and gave statistics about hotel stays in 2025 and events that might draw more people in 2026. He then spoke about successes in marketing downtown, increasing social media engagement, and planned events and projects.

Councilor Tucholsky attended the Southwest Area Plan Open House.

Mayor Morris reported on the Chamber of Commerce Board meeting where events and purchasing their own building were discussed. The Audit Committee reviewed applications for a new auditing firm. She attended the ADA Transition meeting where a survey to the community was reviewed. She also attended a lunch with Representative Elmer, met with federal field representatives for funding the Alpine Avenue project, attended the Leadership Roundtable with Senator Merkley, attended the McMinnville Economic Development Partnership investor circle luncheon, met with MEDP and

Unidos about supporting Latino businesses, and met with multiple citizens on various issues.

Councilor Peralta attended the Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration in Newberg and hosted the Senator Merkley Town Hall. The Mid-Willamette Council of Governments annual dinner would be on March 5. They could nominate people or projects for one of the three COG awards.

Councilor Payne said the DEI Committee had one vacancy and interviews were upcoming, the Landscape Review Committee had interviewed for their one vacancy and a new Chair had been elected. They also reviewed their Work Plan. She had talked with many citizens about their fears about ICE and interacting with meetings and the need for mental health assistance.

Councilor Cunningham said the Historic Landmarks Committee had been working on revising the demolition code, CLG grant, and selection of Chair and Vice Chair. They had interviews today to fill the vacancy. He also attended Unidos Community Response Training.

Councilor Cunningham MOVED to add a discussion about on emergency declaration to the agenda as Item 5f; SECONDED by Council President Peralta. Motion PASSED 6-0 by the following vote:

AYE: Councilors Tucholsky, Geary, Payne, Peralta, Cunningham, and Chenoweth

NAY: None

5.b. Department Head Reports

Interim City Manager Adam Garvin reported on the Southwest Area Plan Open House, which was well attended. Most people had heard about the meeting from a flyer. Flyers were expensive, but still the most effective form of communication. A flyer for the ADA self-evaluation and Transition Plan survey would go out in February. The If I Were Mayor contest would start next week. He gave an update on the immigration related policies from the last meeting. The first thing that would be implemented was information added to the City's website about what to do if a detention was witnessed and how to report an abandoned vehicle or hazards. They could also quickly turn around the considerations of the requirements for City buildings in the DOJ model. He had received an email that if the Council wanted to weigh in on the business survey, it would have to be done at this meeting since the Chamber and Unidos planned to put it out early February. Miriam Vargas Corona, Unidos Executive Director, said they could be more flexible on the date so the Council could have a chance to look over the questions. It would be brought back to the next Council meeting.

Finance Director Katie Henry corrected some items on the agenda. They had been working on the calendar year-end and taxes. They had also launched the budget process and were moving forward with the audit.

Library Director / Parks & Recreation Director Jenny Berg spoke about the services the Library provided to the Latino and bilingual community as well as announced classes the Community Center, Aquatic Center, and Senior Center offered.

Community Development Director Heather Richards served on the McMinnville Downtown Association Board, and she reported on the end of year successes. Their annual dinner would be on February 20. She also served on the McMinnville Economic Development Partnership Board and attended the Board Retreat to discuss annual goals. There was an upcoming training on February 5 for quasi-judicial land use decision making. They were sending out 1,500 letters at the end of the week to property owners about the natural hazards program.

Public Works Director Geoff Hunsaker said there was an upcoming Work Session on Park SDC methodology on February 10. The Transportation System Plan RFP went out yesterday.

Human Resources Director Vicki Hedges said she had been working on performance management concerns and implementing legislative changes. She also assisted in the MEVLC goal setting and preparing annual trainings for February.

Information Technology Director Scott Burke said they had completed an ongoing project to decommission the City's email server.

City Recorder Claudia Cisneros reminded Council that they needed to do the Oregon Ethics Commission Statements of Economic Interest.

- 5.c. December 2025 Cash and Investment Report (in packet)
- 5.d. Q2 Financial Report (in packet)
- 5.e. City Manager Recruitment

Human Resources Director Hedges was looking for direction on whether Council wanted to move forward with a permanent appointment of the Interim City Manager or proceed with a formal recruitment and selection process. She discussed the pros and cons of each option and gave a timeline for the more formal process.

There was discussion regarding what the Interim City Manager had accomplished and the benefits to keeping him in the position, and the difficulty of recruiting for a new City Manager.

Interim City Manager Garvin said he did not intend to apply if there was a formal process. He would entertain a conversation about a longer-term contract.

The majority of Council was in favor of a direct hire rather than taking a broader, open search. Staff would move forward with negotiating a contract.

5.f. Emergency Declaration

City Attorney Ligtenberg spoke about the reasons for an emergency declaration and in what situations they could declare an emergency legally.

Councilor Cunningham discussed the economic impact Latino businesses were currently experiencing and in essence it was a recession. However, they were limited in what could actually be done. At bare minimum, they could agree there was extreme financial hardship being inflicted on the community. He was not ready to ask for an emergency declaration until there was an ask from the community that gave Council a better direction on how it could be helpful.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

Both resolutions were removed from the consent agenda.

- a. Consider **Resolution No. 2026-02**: A Resolution removing Councilor Dan Tucholsky as the City of McMinnville's representative to the Yamhill Communications (YCOM) Executive Board.

Councilor Tucholsky supported the change of representative to the Police Chief. He recused himself from the vote.

Councilor Geary MOVED to adopt Resolution No. 2026-02, removing Councilor Dan Tucholsky as the City of McMinnville's representative to the Yamhill Communications (YCOM) Executive Board.; SECONDED by Councilor Cunningham. Motion PASSED 5-0-1 by the following vote:

AYE: Councilors Geary, Payne, Peralta, Cunningham, and Chenoweth

NAY: None

RECUSED: Councilor Tucholsky

- b. Consider **Resolution No. 2026-03**: A Resolution appointing Police Chief Cord Wood as the City of McMinnville's representative to the Yamhill Communications (YCOM) Executive Board.

Councilor Tucholsky MOVED to adopt Resolution No. 2026-03, appointing Police Chief Cord Wood as the City of McMinnville's representative to the Yamhill Communications (YCOM) Executive Board; SECONDED by Councilor Cunningham. Motion PASSED 6-0 by the following vote:

AYE: Councilors Tucholsky, Geary, Payne, Peralta, Cunningham, and Chenoweth

NAY: None

7. RESOLUTIONS

- 7.a. Consider **Resolution No. 2026-04**: A Resolution Authorizing the Interim City Manager to Release Air Easements Affecting Certain Properties Adjacent to Tice Park Along NW 25th Street.

City Attorney Ligtenberg said south of Tice Park they had nine properties whose backyards were increased when the park was developed. The City held air easements over the backyard properties, and the properties could not have dwelling units constructed on them. Some property owners wanted to do some construction in that space. He did not think it was a legal requirement to hold the easements, and it was a policy question for Council. The resolution would divest the City of the easements, however there were other options Council could pursue.

Interim City Manager Garvin explained how the assessor's office valued the lots and an air easement removal was an exception event. The value was speculative because there weren't current utilities or access to the lots. He suggested a formal appraisal if a sales price was the direction of Council. They could also terminate the easements or keep them as they were.

Director Richards said with the air easements, the properties were unbuildable. If the air easements were removed, they would be considered buildable. There was a compliance issue where one person had already built an accessory structure.

There was discussion regarding the purpose of the air easements, reasons this had come to the Council, concern about lifting the air easements and allowing encroachment further onto park property and affecting the viewshed for neighboring properties, giving property owners the option to opt out, how it would affect the future connectivity plan for parks, if there was a sales price the money would go to park maintenance or affordable housing, how there was already a solid fenceline and the view was already obstructed, and options for the one property that already had a structure on it.

Councilor Chenoweth MOVED to direct staff to come back with appraisals of the properties to consider selling the air easements after reviewing the value; SECONDED by Councilor Tucholsky. Motion PASSED 4-2 by the following vote:

*AYE: Councilors Tucholsky, Geary, Cunningham, and Chenoweth
NAY: Councilors Payne and Peralta*

8. ORDINANCES

- 8.a. Consider the first reading with a possible second reading of **Ordinance No. 5169**: An Ordinance adopting the 2025 McMinnville Municipal Airport Master Plan as a supplemental document of the McMinnville Comprehensive Plan, and amending Volume I (Data and Background), Volume II (Goals and Policies), and Volume III (Title 17 of the McMinnville Municipal Code) of the McMinnville Comprehensive Plan (Docket G 2 – 25).

Mayor Morris asked if any Councilor needed to declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest or recuse themselves regarding this ordinance. There was none.

No Councilor present requested that the Ordinance be read in full.

City Attorney Ligtenberg read by title only Ordinance No. 5169.

Airport Manager Pascal and Public Works Director Hunsaker explained the history of the Airport Master Plan, key project elements in the Master Plan, maps of the airport layout, next steps, future Council considerations, what Ordinance 5169 did, proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, public testimony received, and City Council options.

*Councilor Peralta MOVED to **pass** Ordinance No. 5169 to a second reading; SECONDED by Councilor Tucholsky. Motion **PASSED** 6-0 by the following vote:*

AYE: Councilors Tucholsky, Geary, Payne, Peralta, Cunningham, and Chenoweth

NAY: None

City Attorney Ligtenberg read by title only for a second time Ordinance No. 5169.

*Councilor Tucholsky MOVED to **adopt** Ordinance No. 5169, adopting the 2025 McMinnville Municipal Airport Master Plan as a supplemental document of the McMinnville Comprehensive Plan, and amending Volume I (Data and Background), Volume II (Goals and Policies), and Volume III (Title 17 of the McMinnville Municipal Code) of the McMinnville Comprehensive Plan (Docket G 2 – 25); SECONDED by Councilor Payne. Motion **PASSED** 6-0 by the following vote:*

AYE: Councilors Tucholsky, Geary, Payne, Peralta, Cunningham, and Chenoweth

NAY: None

8.b.

Consider the first reading with a possible second reading of **Ordinance No. 5170**: An Ordinance adopting as amendments to the November 2023 Housing Needs Analysis, the September 2024 Economic Opportunities Analysis, and the December 2025 Framework Plan.

Mayor Morris asked if any Councilor needed to declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest or recuse themselves regarding this ordinance. There was none.

No Councilor present requested that the Ordinance be read in full.

City Attorney Ligtenberg read by title only Ordinance No. 5170.

Director Richards said this was sequential UGB work task 2, to create land use efficiency measures. She discussed what the ordinance would do, what land

use efficiency measures did, summary of needs and efficiency measures to meet the needs, residential land use efficiency measures, change in the assignment of land in the urban holding Comprehensive Plan areas of the UGB, adopted changes in zoning, changes in use of land on Linfield University's campus, added land to the buildable lands inventory, industrial land use efficiency measures, commercial land use efficiency measures, public testimony received, what the ordinance would do, and Council options.

There was discussion regarding the acres of commercial land that existed but would not be developed.

Councilor Chenoweth thought it was a bad decision to include that land and would be voting no.

There was discussion regarding other potential commercial land, how a UGB amendment could be done in the future for the commercial land deficit, and state mandate to get this work done by March 1.

*Councilor Cunningham MOVED to **pass** Ordinance No. 5170 to a second reading; SECONDED by Councilor Payne. Motion **PASSED** 5-1 by the following vote:*

*AYE: Councilors Tucholsky, Geary, Payne, Peralta, Cunningham, and
NAY: Councilor Chenoweth*

The ordinance would be brought back for second reading to a future date.

8.c.

Consider the first reading with a possible second reading of **Ordinance No. 5171**: An Ordinance Amending Chapter 2.28 of the McMinnville Municipal Code to Update the Airport Commission Standing Meeting Schedule.

Mayor Morris asked if any Councilor needed to declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest or recuse themselves regarding this ordinance. There was none.

No Councilor present requested that the Ordinance be read in full.

City Attorney Ligtenberg read by title only Ordinance No. 5171.

Director Hunsaker said this ordinance would change the Committee meetings to occur quarterly. They could hold special meetings as necessary.

*Councilor Tucholsky MOVED to **pass** Ordinance No. 5171 to a second reading; SECONDED by Councilor Chenoweth. Motion **PASSED** 6-0 by the following vote:*

*AYE: Councilors Tucholsky, Geary, Payne, Peralta, Cunningham, and
Chenoweth
NAY: None*

City Attorney Ligtenberg read by title only for a second time Ordinance No. 5171.

*Councilor Cunningham MOVED to **adopt** Ordinance No. 5171, amending Chapter 2.28 of the McMinnville Municipal Code to update the Airport Commission Standing Meeting Schedule; SECONDED by Councilor Tucholsky. Motion **PASSED** 6-0 by the following vote:*

AYE: Councilors Tucholsky, Geary, Payne, Peralta, Cunningham, and Chenoweth

NAY: None

- 8.d. Consider the first reading with a possible second reading of Ordinance No. 5172: An Ordinance Amending Section 2.04.010 of the McMinnville Municipal Code to Adjust the Standing Dates of Regular City Council Meetings.

Mayor Morris asked if any Councilor needed to declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest or recuse themselves regarding this ordinance. There was none.

No Councilor present requested that the Ordinance be read in full.

City Attorney Ligtenberg read by title only Ordinance No. 5172.

Interim City Manager Garvin said this was a request from the last Council meeting. The active date was April 1.

Councilor Cunningham did not think they should move the meeting days to Wednesdays as Councilor Payne would have to be on Zoom for all meetings and not in person.

Councilor Tucholsky thought Councilor Payne was often on Zoom and it was still effective.

Councilor Payne did not think she was as effective over Zoom. She would not be able to attend any Wednesdays.

*Councilor Chenoweth MOVED to **pass** Ordinance No. 5172 to a second reading; SECONDED by Councilor Tucholsky. Motion **FAILED** 2-4 by the following vote:*

AYE: Councilors Tucholsky and Chenoweth

NAY: Councilors Geary, Payne, Peralta, and Cunningham

- 9 ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Morris adjourned the meeting at 10:19 p.m.

s/s Claudia Cisneros
Claudia Cisneros, City Recorder