

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, March 10, 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	
	Scott Cunningham	
	Dan Tucholsky	
	VACANT (Ward 3 position)	

Also present were Interim City Manager Adam Garvin, City Recorder Claudia Cisneros, City Attorney David Ligtenberg, Human Resources Director Vicki Hedges, Information Technology Director Scott Burke, Chief of Police Cord Wood, Public Works Director Geoff Hunsaker, Finance Director Kaite Henry, City Engineer James Lofton, Project Manager Jeff Gooden, Special Projects Manager Jody Christensen (*via Zoom*), and *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 Claudia Cisneros noted for the record had received emails from Rachael Cantrell Weaver and Adam Stone, and would be part of the amended packet posted tomorrow.

Amanda Pewonka, McMinnville Community Member, addressed the council regarding the Epstein files and accountability for powerful individuals. She emphasized that these files represent a failure of power and accountability. She discussed how the lack of accountability at high levels creates a culture of silence and abuse that trickles down to communities. She called for believing victims and building systems where survivors are heard the first time they speak.

4.

CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Consider **Resolution No. 2026-05**: A Resolution authorizing the Interim City Manager to execute an extension to the Yamhill County Health and Human Services behavioral health services contract for Community Outreach Services and training.
- b. Consider **Resolution No. 2026-06**: A Resolution adopting a policy for media attendance at executive sessions.
- c. Consider **Resolution No. 2026-13**: A Resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a purchase order with HD Fowler in the amount \$109,798.28, to supply replacement check valves at the Raw Sewage Pump Station, Project 2026-5.
- d. Consider **Resolution No. 2026-14**: A Resolution Appointing Members to the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee.
- e. Consider **Resolution No. 2026-15**: A Resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute an Intergovernmental Agreement between the City and the Oregon Department of Transportation for the Third Street Improvement Project.
- f. Consider **Resolution No. 2026-17**: A Resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into a Professional Services Contract for the NE Gateway Sanitary and Storm Sewer Replacement, Project 2025-12, with AKS Engineering & Forestry, LLC.
- g. Consider the request from Vitamin Cottage Natural Food Markets, Inc. dba Natural Grocers for Off-Premises Sales, OLCC Liquor License located at 448 NE Hwy 99W.

Councilor Chenoweth requested additional information about Resolution 2026-15, so item a was also removed from the consent agenda.

Councilor Cunningham MOVED to adopt the consent agenda with item 5.e. removed; SECONDED by Councilor Tucholsky

*AYE: Councilors Tucholsky, Chenoweth, Geary, Cunningham, Peralta
NAY: NONE*

*Motion **PASSED** unanimously by a vote of 5-0.*

4.

ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA

4.e.

Consider **Resolution No. 2026-15**: A Resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute an Intergovernmental Agreement between the City and the Oregon Department of Transportation for the Third Street Improvement Project.

Councilor Chenoweth requested this item be removed from the consent agenda as has concerns about accepting federal funds, asking about the difficulty of switching to state and local funds later if circumstances change. Public Works Director Geoff Hunsaker explained that once federal dollars are spent, the

entire project becomes federalized with additional requirements including Buy American provisions. To defederalize, the city would need to pay back any federal funds already spent. He indicated the spend-down timeline extends to September 2032, with design work beginning September 2026 and funds obligated by September 2027. Councilor Chenoweth noted this long timeline reduces the immediate financial risk and expressed interest in exploring whether city match funds could be drawn down before federal funds.

Mayor Morris sought clarification on project phasing options. Director Hunsaker confirmed the project could be shortened or phased if needed to maintain affordability, and that the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) would develop internal cost estimates once the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) is signed.

Councilor Cunningham inquired about build grant opportunities, learning that the maximum available is \$25 million with annual application cycles. The current project size positions McMinnville well for such grants. Council President Peralta acknowledged the significant funding partnership, recognizing Representative Elmer, Senator Starr, Congresswoman Salinas, the mayor, and staff for securing these funds.

Discussion revealed cost estimates of \$28-31 million for the project, with federalization potentially increasing costs by 15-25 percent based on industry experience. Staff committed to providing regular updates and exploring options to spend city funds before federal funds.

Councilor Geary MOVED to approve Resolution No. 2026-15; authorizing the City Manager to execute an Intergovernmental Agreement between the City and the Oregon Department of Transportation for the Third Street Improvement Project; SECONDED by Councilor Cunningham.

*AYE: Councilors Tucholsky, Chenoweth, Geary, Cunningham, Peralta
NAY: NONE*

*Resolution No. 2026-15 **PASSED** unanimously by a vote of 5-0.*

5.

ORDINANCES

5.a.

Consider the first reading with a possible second reading of **Ordinance No. 5173**: An Ordinance approving a comprehensive plan map amendment (Docket CPA 1-25) and zone map amendment (Docket ZC 2-25) for approximately 26.07 acres, located at 2325 NE Three Mile Lane, 160 NE Atlantic Street, 2305, 2245, 2225, 2215, and 2205 NE Cumulus Avenue, and tax lot R4422CC 01102.

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. 5173.

Community Development Director Heather Richards presented the first reading of Ordinance No. 5173, which approves comprehensive plan and zone map amendments for approximately 26.07 acres in the Three Mile Lane area. The proposal changes industrial zoning to residential and commercial designations, consistent with the adopted Three Mile Lane Area Plan. She explained the three-part test for map amendments: consistency with comprehensive plan goals, orderly timing considering surrounding development, and adequate utility/service provision. The proposal meets these criteria with five conditions of approval addressing sanitary sewer capacity analysis, storm drainage compliance, traffic improvements, and adherence to Three Mile Lane area plan policies. The traffic impact analysis identified the need for a westbound right turn lane at the Cumulus/Three Mile Lane/Nehemiah intersection. However, broader intersection improvements needed are not triggered by this specific project since existing conditions already show failure.

Councilor Cunningham questioned the traffic analysis, noting table discrepancies regarding required mitigation measures. Richards clarified that only the Cumulus Avenue improvement is directly attributable to this project, while broader Three Mile Lane intersection issues are systemic problems requiring separate solutions.

Councilor Peralta confirmed this involves the former Baker Rock facility currently leased by Cal Portland, noting the industrial use isn't immediately ceasing. Richards explained the property owner is laying groundwork for future development without imminent timeline pressures.

Councilor Tucholsky questioned why R5 (high-density residential) zoning wasn't selected instead of R4. Richards noted R4 provides more flexibility with mixed-use options, and that R5's higher density assumptions could trigger additional transportation improvements the applicant might not afford.

Councilor Tucholsky expressed broader concerns about cumulative traffic impacts from various developments never triggering system improvements. Richards distinguished between individual project impacts requiring mitigation versus overall system congestion addressed through master planning processes.

Councilor Chenoweth referenced neighborhood opposition to high-density residential during the process. Director Richards confirmed three residents testified at Planning Commission with concerns about housing density and transportation impacts, particularly regarding Northeast Atlantic Street capacity and parking issues in the adjacent Habitat for Humanity development.

The Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval with conditions. Director Richards outlined council options: adopt as recommended,

adopt with amendments requiring new findings, deny with findings, or call for public hearing.

Councilor Chenoweth advocated for a public hearing, stating his general support for public hearings when major neighborhood changes occur. Councilor Tucholsky supported this approach.

Councilor Cunningham noted the comprehensive packet information, particularly the extensive transportation analysis, and expressed willingness to consider a public hearing.

Councilor Geary questioned the cost and value of a public hearing, estimating 30 staff hours plus notification costs. Director Richards explained public hearings are most valuable when additional information is needed, cautioning against creating expectations of different findings when hosting hearings for general input.

Councilor Peralta noted this only approves the property owner's right to residential development without immediate plans, and that actual development would return to Planning Commission. He questioned whether a public hearing would provide additional decision-making information beyond what's already available.

*Council President Peralta MOVED to **pass** Ordinance No. 5173 to a second reading; SECONDED by Councilor Tuchosky. Motion **PASSED 3-2** by the following vote:*

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

The ordinance would be brought back for second reading at the March 24, 2026, meeting.

6. ADVICE/ INFORMATION ITEMS

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

Councilor Cunningham reported that February affordable housing and historic landmark committee meetings were canceled, though historic landmarks will meet Thursday. He attended ICE verifier training by UNIDOS, emphasizing their focus on safety for all parties. He also toured Stratus Village, praising the quality of common spaces and apartments, noting 170 units with 40% occupied and 895 families on the waiting list. He attended the Willamette Valley Council of Governments annual meeting in Monmouth and U' wellness fair at Chemeketa, highlighting Virginia Garcia's mobile medical services.

Councilor Chenoweth indicated his committees met but withheld details pending completion of priority analysis for both the SIP at MWAC and MEVLC.

Council President Peralta thanked Councilor Cunningham and Interim City Manager Garvin for attending the Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments meeting, noting Betsy Earl's new role as board chair and valuable networking opportunities with local officials and funding partners.

Mayor Morris reported attending the American Public Power Association convention in Washington DC with McMinnville Water and Light staff, advocating for ratepayers on BPA administrator selection, residential exchange program protection, and Columbia River Treaty preservation. Announced a new "We Care About Kids" community campaign with Superintendent Kourtney Ferrua, attending the Grizzly Diamond Dinner and Western Welding Academy's blue collar tour. She promoted the "If I Were Mayor" essay contest for students with March 20th deadline.

Mayor Morris requested council consideration to rescind the February immigration statement subcommittee motion, explaining that formal committee requirements would create inefficient serial meeting obligations preventing collaborative drafting.

Council President Peralta MOVED to rescind the February 10th motion creating an immigration statement subcommittee; SECONDED by Councilor Cunningham.

Councilor Cunningham acknowledged learning about the complexity of formal committee processes and appreciated guidance toward a better approach.

*AYE: Councilors Tucholsky, Chenoweth, Geary, Cunningham, Peralta
NAY: NONE*

Motion PASSED unanimously by a vote of 5-0.

Councilor Geary provided Visit McMinnville updates showing January 2026 room demand increased 15.9% with 46.8% occupancy, though average daily rates declined 13.1% to \$124, resulting in flat revenue. Short-term rental bookings rose 5.5% year-over-year. He reported on the new "Kickback Mac" advertising campaign and noted upcoming events including the McMinnville Wine and Food Classic and Sasquatch Duro bicycle race. He reported MURAC awarded Hoff's Homestead a \$50,000 forgivable loan for interior buildout, with forgiveness contingent on achieving occupancy within six months and operating for two years.

Councilor Tucholsky reported visiting Stratus Village and upcoming airport commission meeting on March 31st.

6.b. Department Head Reports

Public Works Director Geoff Hunsaker reported receiving Transportation System Plan proposals with staff review underway for potential contractor selection or interviews. He provided Discovery Meadows Park fountain updates, noting 90% plans are under park maintenance review for equipment procurement and construction timelines, with intention to maintain fountain operation this summer even if requiring temporary single-pass operation.

Chief of Police Cord Wood reported attending the statewide tow board meeting, two officer candidates in background process with one awaiting final medical evaluation, accepted management support specialist offer starting next month, sergeant assessment center scheduled for five candidates, RMS project training planned for late April, and upcoming officer candidate interviews.

Human Resources Director Vicki Hedges attended the CIS conference with concerning insurance rate projections for 2027. She reported 13% training completion, 30% in progress, and 56% not yet started.

Information Technology Director Scott Burke provided RMS project updates, noting complexity of integrating three agencies and upcoming vendor conference for technical resolution.

City Recorder Claudia Cisneros announced Ward 3 vacancy applications accepted through March 27th with April 8th interviews, reminded officials about statement of economic interest deadlines (March 15-April 15), and requested councilors forward applications without opening them.

Community Development Director Heather Richards reported operating without code compliance officer since early February, with director covering weekend duties. The position posting was prepared with temporary assistance managing 53 open cases, prioritizing public safety issues first while requesting community patience.

Finance Director Katie Henry reported half the team attending Oregon Government Finance Officers Association training in Redmond, with budget process entering second-round department meetings for financial projection refinement.

City Attorney David Ligtenberg had nothing to report.

Interim City Manager Adam Garvin reported ICE information posted on city website, business survey open until March 12th, ADA survey completion with over 150 responses for April work session presentation, upcoming county city manager meeting, and final design progress on restricted access building postings.

Mayor Morris announced the council would enter executive session pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(e) for real property transaction deliberations. Mayor Morris recused herself due to property ownership near the RB Rubber site.

7. ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Morris adjourned the meeting at 8:29 p.m.

s/s Claudia Cisneros
Claudia Cisneros, City Recorder