

City of Newberg

City Council Meeting Minutes

October 6th, 2025

Call to Order

Mayor Rosacker called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

Roll Call

City Recorder Thomas confirmed attendance: Councilor McBride - present, Councilor Wheatley - present, Councilor Yarnell Holloman - present, Mayor Rosacker - present, Councilor Turgesen - absent at roll call (joined later via Zoom at 6:18, and then in person at 6:45), Councilor Carmon - present, Councilor Kilburg - absent.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Rosacker led the Pledge of Allegiance.

City Manager Report

September Narrative

City Manager Worthey presented his September report highlighting numerous city activities:

Community Engagement:

- September focused on emergency preparation outreach for National Preparedness Month
- Promoted Everbridge alert system signup
- Shared information about the library's temporary closure
- Promoted recycling resources from Recycle Oregon
- Worked with City Recorder's office on volunteer committee recruitment

Downtown Improvements:

- Continued Operation Curb Appeal efforts to make downtown more attractive and safer
- Replaced deteriorated and delaminated signs
- Fixed uneven grates throughout downtown
- Painted new decorative barrels with assistance from George Fox University volleyball team during Serve Day

Community Development:

- West Branch apartments at Hayes Springbrook may begin construction soon

- Encore 77 Tap House opened at Crestview Crossing
- Construction started on new pickleball courts
- Updated noise ordinance was adopted
- Planning and building division is developing key performance indicator reports to demonstrate improved turnaround times

Library Events:

- The library was closed September 2-6 for renovation work on front steps and ramp
- During closure, staff completed interior work including painting, moving shelves, database maintenance, weeding, cleaning, and new carpet installation
- The front entrance will reopen soon when ADA-compliant handrail is properly installed
- Fall programming included "Read to the Dogs" program to help children practice reading
- Hosted an author talk and presentation about Oregon land use reforms
- Conducted a miniature book making party

Police Department:

- K-9 officers continued training with their partners, Tango and Ayeke
- One officer became an official Oregon Police K-9 Association patrol dog trainer

Finance Department:

- Developing new purchasing card policy
- Court beginning process to interface electronically with DMV for convictions
- Preparing for upcoming audit this month
- Finance and Community Development Department met to discuss OpenGov invoicing capabilities for items like TLT payments

Human Resources:

- Attended Barn Lieberman 2025 annual labor seminar
- Participated in Robert Half HR networking roundtable
- Distributed pre-open enrollment benefits information to staff
- Developed better healthcare and insurance plans with lower costs

City Recorder Administration:

- Staff attended annual conference
- Processed 58 boxes and 38 rolled sets of plans for scanning
- Exceeded annual records requests with 3 months remaining in the year
- Trained staff on updated AV equipment for the Denise Bacon room
- Finalized details for employee appreciation event

Emergency Management:

- Coordinated ICS 300-400 registrations for staff who may work in Emergency Operations Center
- Began work on Genesis evacuation platform with multiple agencies to develop escape routes

- Conducted new trainings on emergency management, safety orientations, citywide CPR, AED, NARCAN, and other safety protocols

Operations - Wastewater:

- Treated 60 million gallons of wastewater (1.93 million gallons daily average)
- Recorded 0.4 inches of rainfall for stormwater master plan data
- Completed rebuild of raw water pump for reuse system
- Conducted oil changes for dehydration unit
- Replaced two failed valves in pump room

Operations - Water:

- Completed annual nitrate sampling
- Conducted quarterly safety inspections
- Completed final original hydrochloric cell replacement
- Repaired water leak at reservoir chlorine analyzer
- Replaced pumps and repaired failed reservoir level transmitter
- Completed well #4 equipment removal and abandonment process
- Installed thermoplastic paving along Howard Street
- Conducted routine maintenance including sweeping, valve exercising, and storm pipe cleaning
- Replaced water meters at Wheeler Sports Center and Collina
- Trimmed and painted fire hydrants
- Repaired a 6-inch water main break on North Sitka
- Fixed sewer service lateral on South College

Public Comments

Sonda Martin, resident of Newberg, addressed the Council regarding ethical concerns about Mayor Rosacker's promotion of the Spark Newberg program. She expressed dismay about the Mayor's questioning of YCAHC representatives during the last meeting about compliance with CET fund's 60-year affordability rule and 30% of 80% AMI housing costs. She stated the Mayor appeared to be seeking information to further Spark Newberg's interests rather than the city's interests.

Ms. Martin questioned why the Mayor was allowed to continue despite what she viewed as a clear conflict of interest, having recused himself only after inserting opinions and promoting Spark Newberg's interests. She expressed concern that Councilors McBride and Kilburg did not want guardrails on Spark Newberg, a new nonprofit, while other organizations like Habitat for Humanity have succession plans and other requirements.

She questioned why the Council would award \$740,000 to Spark Newberg with minimal requirements while imposing strict guardrails on the Peace Trail project. She called for greater objectivity and fairness in decision-making, stating she didn't want affordable housing money used to build wealth for people already financially stable at the expense of struggling residents.

Ms. Martin concluded by praising the Newberg Public Library, noting that in her 24 years as a resident, the library continues to improve every year, and she appreciates the city's support for library programs.

Consent

The consent agenda included the purchase of a new bucket truck.

Motion: Councilor Carmon moved to approve the consent calendar. Councilor McBride seconded the motion.

Vote: Mayor Rosacker called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously

Councilor McBride -Aye

Mayor Rosacker -Aye

Councilor Wheatley -Aye

Councilor Yarnell-Holloman -Aye

Councilor Torgesen -Aye

Councilor Carmon -Aye

Councilor Kilburg- Absent

Continued Business

Review Draft SB 1537 Urban Growth Boundary Expansion Solicitation

Planner James Dingwall presented information on the Senate Bill 1537 one-time Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) expansion process. He reviewed the Council goals related to careful and prudent fiscal policy and furthering strategic planning and growth with local taxing districts.

Planner Dingwall recommended the Council direct staff to conduct a formal solicitation for SB 1537 one-time UGB expansion sites and provide direction on fees required with application submittals. He noted that in August, the Council had directed staff to prepare the solicitation after discussing interest from potentially eligible property owners.

Planner Dingwall explained that SB 1537 provides minimum requirements for the solicitation and application process while allowing cities flexibility to set their own processes. Before selecting a site, the city must provide public notice including intent to select a site and the bases of qualification. Newberg qualifies under two criteria: no UGB expansions for residential uses in the past 20 years (last expansion was in 2006-2007) and a high percentage of rent-burdened households (which has increased from about 25.7% to 28.8% since discussions began).

The notice deadline must be 45 days after public notice is issued, and notices must be sent to the county, special districts, and the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD). Following the application deadline, the city will review submissions for completeness and compliance, notify property owners not included in applications, and conduct a public participation process.

Planner Dingwall noted two special considerations:

- The land exchange option could be used in lieu of the one-time expansion
- The city is not required to select a site even after issuing the solicitation

He proposed a two-step process similar to the City of Bend's approach:

- Step 1: General solicitation for sites, site selection process with public comment, work session, and public hearing where Council makes a decision by resolution

- Step 2: Concept plan refinement with the selected site, including transportation alignment, open space, and commercial uses

Mayor Rosacker asked about the November timeline, and Planner Dingwall explained they planned to correspond with DLCD before issuing the solicitation to confirm eligibility, with November as a buffer depending on DLCD's response time.

City Manager Worthey asked for clarification that engineering issues like site elevation and infrastructure needs would be considered in Step 2 rather than having to review detailed engineering for all potential sites. Planner Dingwall confirmed this approach, explaining they would request high-level plans initially, then spend more time on detailed engineering for only the selected site.

Motion: Councilor Carmon moved to direct staff to conduct a formal solicitation for Senate Bill 1537 one-time UGB expansion sites. Councilor Wheatley seconded the motion.

Vote: Mayor Rosacker called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously

Councilor McBride -Aye

Mayor Rosacker -Aye

Councilor Wheatley -Aye

Councilor Yarnell-Holloman -Aye

Councilor Turgesen -Aye

Councilor Carmon -Aye

Councilor Kilburg- Absent

Planner Dingwall then addressed the fee structure for the process. The current fee sheet establishes costs for comprehensive plan text amendments (\$3,251) and UGB amendments, plus a 5% technology fee. He proposed that the resolution selecting a site would establish an SB 1537 fee with part applied to Step 1 (non-refundable) and part to Step 2 (potentially refundable if a site doesn't move forward).

Councilor McBride asked about the 5% technology fee, and Planner Dingwall clarified it was an existing fee on all land use applications to cover software platform costs. City Manager Worthey suggested staff should develop the fee structure further after reviewing potential land tracts, as the amount of work could vary significantly.

Community Development Director Siegel added via Zoom that they weren't looking for a definitive fee structure yet, just concurrence on the approach, noting they wanted to make prospective applicants aware that the city would need to recover its costs in this different process.

New Business

Committee Appointments

Mayor Rosacker presented the list of recommended committee appointments:

- Joseph Churella to the Budget Commission
- Kayla Maverick to the Planning Commission
- Ron Sinickito to the Rate Review Committee

- Mary Meyer to the Rate Review Committee
- Steven Hargrove to the Traffic Safety Commission
- Natasha Luepky to the Traffic Safety Commission
- Hunter Anderson to the Traffic Safety Commission

Councilor Carmon stated he had reviewed all applications and had no concerns with the recommendations. Councilor Wheatley expressed support for all recommended appointments.

Motion: Councilor Carmen moved to consent to the Mayor's appointments. Councilor McBride seconded the motion.

Vote: Mayor Rosacker called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously

Councilor McBride -Aye

Mayor Rosacker -Aye

Councilor Wheatley -Aye

Councilor Yarnell-Holloman -Aye

Councilor Torgesen -Aye

Councilor Carmon -Aye

Councilor Kilburg- Absent

Councilor Wheatley thanked City Recorder Rachel Thomas and staff for their recruitment efforts given the constant turnover on committees. Mayor Rosacker also expressed appreciation for the recruitment work and noted they would continue seeking more applicants for open positions.

City Manager Employment Agreement

Mayor Rosacker introduced the City Manager's employment contract agenda item.

City Manager Worthey provided background on his contract request, explaining he wanted to make the request early rather than waiting until the final months of his current contract. He explained the proposed contract was designed to take him through to retirement, with flexibility in the final year.

City Manager Worthey noted his hope to remain with the city and assist with recruitment for the next city manager when the time comes. He emphasized that his contract represents a balanced position between the city's needs and his own, with a modest raise given the over \$1 million in savings he has generated for the city. The contract keeps his salary at the bottom of the pay scale for medium-sized cities in Oregon, where he prefers to be, and includes a 10-month severance which he considers reasonable.

Mayor Rosacker noted that the City Council had previously met in executive session to discuss the contract terms, but pay and benefits could not legally be discussed in that session, so council members first saw those numbers in the meeting packet.

Council members individually expressed their support and appreciation:

Councilor Yarnell-Holloman thanked City Manager Worthey for his service, praising his thoughtful and thorough approach, and supported the contract as a way to maintain stability for the city. She appreciated the timing of the contract renewal and noted the salary was appropriate for similar-sized cities.

Councilor Wheatley expressed honor in serving with City Manager Worthey, stating he works tirelessly for Newberg citizens and has made Newberg a better place. She contrasted Newberg's stability with nearby cities experiencing turmoil and budget deficits.

Councilor Carmon asked if City Manager Worthey had taken a pay cut when serving as interim City Manager, which City Manager Worthey confirmed, explaining he refused the city manager's salary for the first 6-7 months to help the city recover from financial losses. Councilor Carmon also confirmed that City Manager Worthey would take at least four weeks of leave next year, including three weeks to visit the United Kingdom.

Councilor McBride noted the stark difference between City Manager Worthey and his predecessor, appreciating his hard work, the quality of staff he's assembled, and the camaraderie that did not exist before. He expressed that it was "like night and day" and wished City Manager Worthey would stay even longer.

Councilor Yarnell-Holloman stated she doesn't support keeping people at the bottom of their pay range, suggesting that over time City Manager Worthey should be at the appropriate place in the regional pay range, not only for his own benefit but for the impact on future city managers and his team.

Mayor Rosacker reflected on advice from longer-term mayors that newly elected mayors often think they need to fire the city manager, but as they mature in the role, they discover the existing city manager might be right for the city. He credited City Manager Worthey for the city's current positive state, noting many other cities are currently looking for city managers. He emphasized that City Manager Worthey had earned a long-term contract after four years of service, during which previous councils had been hesitant to offer such terms given past experiences with city managers leaving with large severance packages.

City staff also provided comments:

HR Manager expressed appreciation for City Manager Worthey's HR knowledge and support, noting his basic compensation package lacks many perks common to other city managers such as tax-deferred annuities, cell phone plans, or driving allowances.

Public Works Director Russ Thomas stated that after working under 17 city administrators or managers throughout his career, he could say only two significantly benefited the community, with City Manager Worthey being one of them. He praised the work environment, camaraderie, and City Manager Worthey's willingness to roll up his sleeves and get dirty while standing up for what's right for both the city and employees.

Library Director Korie Buerkle appreciated working with City Manager Worthey during her 25 years with the city, stating she had never felt it was as much of a team as it is now, attributing that to leadership from the top. She expressed delight at his contract renewal and looked forward to the next eight years.

Finance Director Kady Strobe expressed agreement with other staff comments, highlighting the camaraderie built by City Manager Worthey and his support for department heads in pursuing initiatives. She noted staff had encouraged him to take more money and vacation time, but he had declined both.

Police Chief Jeff Kosmicki stated the city is in good hands with City Manager Worthey's leadership, appreciating his support for employees and the team he's built.

City Recorder Rachel Thomas added that the team had just completed their reviews with City Manager Worthey and still maintained their enthusiasm for working with him, appreciating his ethical leadership, innovation, and willingness to try new approaches.

Community Development Director Scot Siegel, speaking via Zoom, supported previous comments, noting that as the newcomer on the executive team, he was pleased with how well the organization functions, giving City Manager Worthey "100 percent of the credit."

City Attorney James Walker remarked that through working with cities across the region, what City Manager Worthey has accomplished over the past four years is extraordinary. He expressed delight in presenting the contract to Council, praising City Manager Worthey's passion, love for Newberg, and selflessness.

Motion: Councilor Carmon moved to approve Resolution 2025-3996 approving the proposed contract between Mr. Will Worthey and the City of Newberg for continued employment as the City Manager. Councilor McBride seconded the motion.

Vote: Mayor Rosacker called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously

Councilor McBride -Aye

Mayor Rosacker -Aye

Councilor Wheatley -Aye

Councilor Yarnell-Holloman -Aye

Councilor Turgesen -Aye

Councilor Carmon -Aye

Councilor Kilburg- Absent

Mayor Rosacker left the meeting, with Council President Yarnell Holloman taking over as chair.

City Manager Review Process

City Manager Worthey requested that his review process be shifted to match the system used by department heads, based on Professor Lasenby's "preview" system rather than a point-scored system.

City Manager Worthey explained that the current review system does not further city goals, while the proposed system creates an open space for dialogue on how well council goals are being achieved. The preview process focuses on looking forward rather than backward, discussing how to improve in the coming year, identify process improvements, and address oversight.

By aligning his annual review process with department heads, City Manager Worthey explained his efforts would more closely align with council goals and more effectively identify any areas needing improvement.

Motion: Councilor Carmen moved to approve Resolution 2025-3994 establishing a process for the City Manager's annual review. Councilor Wheatley seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

Councilor McBride -Aye

Councilor Wheatley -Aye

Councilor Yarnell-Holloman -Aye

Councilor Torgesen -Aye

Councilor Carmon -Aye

Councilor Kilburg- Absent

Mayor Rosacker -Absent

City Manager Succession Plan

Council President Yarnell Holloman noted her appreciation that succession planning was initially included in the City Manager's contract but agreed it made more sense as a separate item.

City Manager Worthey explained his philosophy that in every life there is a season for different activities, and too often public organization executives may overstay their time rather than considering retirement and family needs. He proposed a succession plan to assist with a smooth transition after his tenure, keeping him involved in the process of recruiting his successor while ensuring he leaves gracefully when the time comes.

Motion: Councilor Carmon moved to approve Resolution 2025-3995 establishing a succession plan for the City Manager position. Councilor Wheatley seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

Councilor McBride -Aye

Councilor Wheatley -Aye

Councilor Yarnell-Holloman -Aye

Councilor Torgesen -Aye

Councilor Carmon -Aye

Councilor Kilburg- Absent

Mayor Rosacker -Absent

Library Surveillance Policy

Library Director Korie Buerkle presented the Library Surveillance Policy. She provided statistics showing the library's activity level: open 42 hours per week with approximately 8,200 visits, 33,000 circulation events, and 2,650 reference questions monthly.

Director Buerkle explained that while most public interactions are positive, the surveillance cameras installed several years ago help discourage unsafe behaviors. The policy creates transparency so everyone understands the process. The policy was developed with input from Miller Nash and was approved by the Library Advisory Board before coming to Council.

Director Buerkle noted that the cameras, both inside and outside the library, have been successful in addressing inappropriate behavior quickly. When problems arise, the Newberg-Dundee Police Department has been responsive and excellent to work with.

Councilor Carmon expressed concern about potential barriers to working with law enforcement, noting language regarding search warrants and video release to police. Director Buerkle clarified that their practice has been calling police and using their video to assist officers. The policy provides a framework for handling requests from the general public rather than law enforcement.

When asked about potential barriers to police access in emergency situations, City Manager Worthey explained that other city buildings have less foot traffic than the library, with the exception of court days when officers with body cameras are present. Director Buerkle added that she personally responds to after-hours incidents at the library and works directly with police.

Councilor Carmon asked specifically if the library would ever require Newberg-Dundee Police to obtain a search warrant for video footage. Director Buerkle stated she couldn't imagine such a situation arising, as their experience has been collaborative with police.

Police Chief Jeff Kosmicki confirmed they have never experienced resistance to accessing video under the current administration, though there had been issues prior to City Manager Worthey and Director Buerkle.

Council members suggested revising the policy to clarify the working relationship with law enforcement. City Attorney agreed that additional language would be helpful to reaffirm the collaborative relationship while still maintaining appropriate controls for third-party requests, such as from attorneys seeking footage for civil cases not involving the city.

Director Buerkle and Police Chief agreed to work with City Attorney to revise the policy language before final approval.

Records Policy

City Recorder Rachel presented the Records Policy, explaining it brings together current practices surrounding records management at the city. During her two years with the city, she has focused on cleaning up records, ensuring compliance with retention schedules, and making documents more accessible.

City Recorder Rachel reported disposing of over 450 boxes of past-date records or materials that have been digitized. She emphasized this does not mean hiding information, but rather creating digital collections that are publicly accessible. She acknowledged past complaints about navigation difficulties and promised easier-to-navigate catalogs are coming.

The policy provides structure for digital records and sets expectations for staff on records management. Key elements include education on repositories, cleaning out Windows drives, creating department-specific drive maps with organizational plans, implementing annual maintenance checks through "records week," and formally adopting the state retention schedule for cities.

City Manager Worthey noted the decentralized approach, with departments designing their own drive maps to match their specific needs, rather than administration imposing a uniform system.

Motion: Councilor Carmon moved to approve Resolution 2025-3993 allowing the City Recorder to update and implement the new records policy and data control plan. Councilor Wheatley seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

Councilor McBride -Aye

Councilor Wheatley -Aye

Councilor Yarnell-Holloman -Aye

Councilor Torgesen -Aye

Councilor Carmon -Aye

Councilor Kilburg- Absent

Mayor Rosacker -Absent

Council President Yarnell Holloman, took a moment to thank fellow councilors for their service in a polarized world. She expressed respect and admiration for each councilor despite potential partisan differences and called for no violence in the community. She stated she would not participate in divisive social media comments and hoped councilors would speak up for safety and protections for all community members, especially those with whom they disagree.

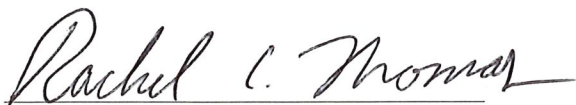
Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:36.

Attested By:



Bill Rosacker, Mayor



Rachel Thomas, City Recorder