

City of Newberg

City Council Meeting Minutes

August 3, 2026, 6:00 PM-6:56 PM

1. Call to Order

Mayor Bill Rosacker called the City Council meeting to order at 6:00 PM on Monday, September 21, 2026, at the Newberg Public Safety Building, 401 E. Third Street, Denise Bacon Community Room, Newberg, OR.

2. Roll Call

Present: Mayor Bill Rosacker; Councilor Wheatley; Councilor Yarnell-Hollamon; Councilor Kilburg; Councilor Turgesen

Absent: Councilor McBride; Councilor Carmon

3. Pledge of Allegiance

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

4. Public Comments

The following members of the public addressed the Council during the general public comment period: Dave Brown urged the Council to remain focused on core city governance and avoid internal conflict, referencing the previous meeting's proceedings. He cited infrastructure concerns, including Morton Street and sidewalks in northwest Newberg.

Shelly Kolb expressed disappointment regarding disruptive behavior at the prior Council meeting and urged Council members to commit to civility and remain focused on municipal governance.

Mike Gunn addressed the mill property, cautioning the Council about significant environmental, transportation, and infrastructure challenges that would make development of the site exceptionally complex and costly. He requested additional information regarding prior findings and contacts related to the property.

Penny Rader cited the Council's code of conduct, focusing on trustworthiness, respect, and professional decorum, and called on individual members to evaluate their own conduct.

Andrew Schwab spoke on the River Street project, urging the Council not to move forward with the current Talt Plan without further consideration of alternative designs. He expressed concern about the bike lane configuration and limited green space.

Ed Fredenburg identified himself as a Vietnam veteran who regularly gathers at the municipal flagpole and requested that the Council not restrict First Amendment activities at that location.

Casey Banks addressed the flagpole memorial policy, proposing a compromise window of 7 to 10 days for leaving memorial items rather than adopting either a 30-day or zero-day policy, and encouraged the Council to demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively across ideological differences.

Karla Vargas read a statement on behalf of Elizabeth Todd regarding the River Street project, requesting that no plan be approved that encroaches on private property, that subsurface drainage be prioritized, and that the city consider narrower lane widths as supported by recent safety research.

Mark Markel identified himself as a veteran and spoke in support of the peaceful and respectful character of flagpole gatherings he had witnessed, suggesting a weekly cleanup arrangement as a reasonable accommodation.

Elaine Koskella addressed the flagpole memorial issue, arguing that characterizations of division were selectively applied and that a citizen committee should be convened to build consensus on the policy. She also expressed concern about the manner in which the resolution was added to the agenda.

Mike Gunn, appearing a second time, offered a legal perspective, stating that First Amendment rights permit peaceful protest but do not confer a right to leave materials on public property. He argued that a clear and consistent policy requiring participants to remove materials when they leave would be legally defensible and equitable.

Proclamation

6. Virginia Garcia Proclamation

Mayor Rosacker read a proclamation honoring Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center for 51 years of dedicated service to Yamhill County, recognizing its provision of comprehensive, culturally appropriate primary health care with a special emphasis on migrant and seasonal farmworkers and underserved populations. Representatives from Virginia Garcia Memorial Health Center were present to receive the proclamation.

5. Municipal Flagpole Maintenance Procedure

Councilor Peggy Kilburg introduced an amended version of Resolution 2026-4049 establishing a procedure for materials used at municipal flagpole gatherings. The amended resolution provided that all materials must be removed immediately when a gathering disperses; no materials may be attached to the flagpole itself; materials must be held by participants or posted in the ground similar to yard signs; and any materials left behind may be disposed of by city employees or residents, with no expectation that participants may reclaim them.

Councilor Robyn Wheatley expressed support, citing constituent feedback and public response favoring a clean area and a pack-in, pack-out approach.

Councilor Jeri Turgesen expressed concern about the late addition of the item to the agenda. Asked for consideration of the process, stating that last minute or rush items are leading to mistakes.

Mayor Rosacker stated that there is precedent for last minute additions to the council and shared that this was done because he was out of town when the agenda was set.

Mayor Rosacker acknowledged that his earlier support for allowing memorial materials to remain had been a mistake and stated that the resolution was intended to correct that policy. He affirmed that the policy was intended to preserve the right to protest while ensuring the flagpole area remains available and presentable for all residents. He spoke in support of the amended resolution presented by Kilburg.

Councilor Elise Yarnell-Hollamon stated that she desired that last minute agenda adds be for conversation items. She stated agreement with concerns raised about equal treatment and said the resolution addressed the issue of allowing one group's memorial while potentially denying another's.

Motion to approve an amended version of Resolution 2026-4049 establishing a municipal flagpole maintenance procedure as described was made by Councilor Peggy Kilburg and seconded by Councilor Wheatley. The motion carried.

Mayor Rosacker: Aye

Councilor Wheatley: Aye

Councilor Elise Yarnell-Hollamon: No

Councilor Kilburg: Aye

Councilor Turgesen: No

Councilor Carmon and Councilor McBride were absent.

7. City Manager Report

City Manager Will Worthey gave an August-September departmental update. Highlights included housing planning and UGB applications, communications support during outages and roadwork, ongoing recovery from a power surge, records modernization, busy police activity including a drone-assisted arrest

and \$19,000 in canine donations, capital projects completed on time and under budget, audit preparation and stable insurance trends, active recruitments, routine fleet and utility maintenance, hazardous tree removal and flagpole replacement, IT outage recovery and staff transition, and strong library programming including exchange students, a youth art show, and summer reading participation. Mayor Rosacker asked a clarifying question about the housing needs analysis, which staff answered.

8. Consent Calendar

8.1. Janitorial Services Contract

8.2. De-Annexation Legal Description Change

8.3. Authorization to initiate Geotechnical Work on the Springbrook Wastewater Line

8.4. Colina Trail Memorandum and Temporary Easement

Councilor Yarnell-Hollamon made the motion to approve the consent calendar, Councilor Kilburg seconded the motion. The motion carried

Mayor Rosacker: Aye

Councilor Wheatley: Aye

Councilor Yarnell-Hollamon: Aye

Councilor Kilburg: Aye

Councilor Torgesen: Aye

Councilor Carmon and Councilor McBride were absent.

9. Continued Business

9.1. Exemptions to Competitive Bidding for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrades

Public Works Director Ahmad presented an overview of the proposed Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrade project, described as the largest capital improvement project in the city's history, with an estimated construction cost of \$25 million to \$27 million and engineering costs of approximately \$3.4 million to \$3.9 million currently under negotiation with the selected consultant, Keller Associates. Director Ahmad explained the need for the project based on aging mechanical infrastructure, regulatory compliance requirements from the Department of Environmental Quality, capacity for community growth, and long-term operational reliability. He outlined the rationale for using a Construction Manager/General Contractor delivery method rather than the traditional design-bid-build approach, noting that CMGC allows for contractor involvement during the design phase, better cost estimation, constructability review, reduced change orders, and a guaranteed maximum price to protect the city from cost overruns.

City Manager Worthey provided additional context, explaining that the overlapping engineering and construction phases of the CMGC model allow for early ordering of long-lead equipment and more accurate scheduling.

Councilor Yarnell-Hollamon inquired about future public engagement opportunities and check-in points. City Manager Worthey and Director Ahmad confirmed that Council approval will be sought at multiple phases: the engineering contract, anticipated next month; the CMGC pre-construction contract; and the guaranteed maximum price construction contract. Regular project updates are planned as part of the City Manager's report, and public open houses are being considered.

Mayor Rosacker clarified for the public that sufficient reserves exist to fund the wastewater treatment plant project without rate increases or bonding. City Manager Worthey noted that future water treatment plant work, which is several years away, may require some additional revenue or bonding.

The Council was advised that the evening's action was limited to approving findings to deviate from the standard design-bid-build method, as required by statute, with the engineering contract itself to be brought before the Council at a subsequent meeting.

Motion to approve Resolution 2026-4044, authorizing the use of the CMGC process for the Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrades, was made by Councilor Wheatley and seconded by Councilor Yarnell-Hollamon. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Rosacker: Aye

Councilor Wheatley: Aye

Councilor Yarnell-Hollamon: Aye

Councilor Kilburg: Aye

Councilor Turgesen: Aye

Councilor Carmon and Councilor McBride were absent.

9.2. River Street Ad-Hoc Committee Recommendations

Councilor Jeri Turgesen, chair of the River Street Ad-Hoc Committee, provided framing for the Council's consideration, acknowledged the difficult start to the process, and expressed gratitude to committee members, city staff, Oregon Department of Forestry consultants, and citizen member Jim Talt for his engineering expertise and partnership throughout the process.

Councilor Turgesen explained that the Talt Plan, at 58 feet in width, aligns with the current River Street footprint and serves as the guiding framework. She noted that the requested action was authorization for City Manager Worthey to issue a Request for Proposals for a survey and design process. She acknowledged that granular, property-specific details would not be available until later in the design process. The Ad-Hoc Committee identified an active monitoring list of issues, including prioritizing underground subsurface drainage over open swales; ensuring the design stays as close to 58 feet as possible; addressing the power pole challenge at key intersections; and revising the language around raised intersections to reflect consideration rather than approval.

Public Comments on River Street:

Renee Rodriguez expressed skepticism that the city could guarantee the 58-foot width commitment and objected to initiating a survey before residents know how the project will affect their individual properties. She called on the Council to make firm commitments regarding property impacts, tree replacement adequacy, and construction damage liability, and stated that residents would pursue legal remedies if necessary.

Jim Talt, a committee member, submitted comments he had intended to make at the August 18 meeting, which he missed due to a family health emergency. He raised four specific concerns for incorporation into the RFP: ensuring sidewalk design does not encroach on resident yards at corners; specifying subsurface drainage rather than open swales; preferring a four-way stop at 9th Street over a raised intersection; and exploring the possibility of undergrounding small utility poles on the west side of River Street between 9th and 11th.

Following public comment, Council discussion focused on the language regarding raised intersections, with Councilor Elise Yarnell-Hollamon seeking clarification. Councilor Turgesen confirmed that the Ad-Hoc Committee's prior motion was to consider raised intersections for traffic calming, not to require them, and that the motion language should be updated to reflect consideration rather than approval.

Councilor Yarnell-Hollamon raised concern about taking a vote with two councilors absent and expressed discomfort with subjective language in design commitments, citing parallels to the Elliott Road project. She requested that the RFP scope of work be brought back to the full Council for review before being advertised and that the Ad-Hoc Committee present design-specific findings to the Council at approximately the 60 percent design stage so that property impacts can be reviewed block by block before construction.

City Manager Worthey offered to bring the scope section of the RFP back to the Council before advertising to allow for review of language precision and an additional public input opportunity. The Council reached consensus that this approach was acceptable.

Motion to approve the River Street Ad-Hoc Committee recommendations to move forward with an RFP, prioritizing the 58-foot width and evidence-based best-practice tree replanting as reviewed by the Ad-Hoc Committee; updating the raised and concrete intersection language to “consideration” with a goal of best practices for traffic calming; providing an update to Council at approximately the 60 percent design mark by the River Street Ad-Hoc Committee with design-specific information related to potential property impacts and Ad-Hoc recommendations thereafter; and bringing the RFP scope of work back to Council for review at the next meeting, was made by Councilor Turgesen and seconded by Councilor Yarnell-Hollamon. The motion carried.

Mayor Rosacker: Aye

Councilor Wheatley: Aye

Councilor Yarnell-Hollamon: Aye

Councilor Kilburg: Aye

Councilor Turgesen: Aye

Councilor Carmon and Councilor McBride were absent.

New Business

10.1. Housing Planning Assistance Grant

Planner James informed the Council that the city had been awarded a Housing Planning Assistance Grant of up to \$100,000 from the Department of Land Conservation and Development, which would cover all costs for the assigned consultant partner, Cascadia Partners, to carry out the state-mandated housing capacity analysis in conjunction with city staff.

Motion to authorize the City Manager to execute the Housing Planning Assistance Grant intergovernmental agreement, Exhibit A, was made by Councilor Kilburg and seconded by Councilor Yarnell-Hollamon. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Rosacker: Aye

Councilor Wheatley: Aye

Councilor Yarnell-Hollamon: Aye

Councilor Kilburg: Aye

Councilor Turgesen: Aye

Councilor Carmon and Councilor McBride were absent.

10.2. One-Time Urban Growth Boundary Amendment Update

Planner James presented an overview of two applications received by the July 31, 2026 deadline under the Senate Bill 1537 one-time Urban Growth Boundary expansion process:

Fernwood Village — A site of just under 8 acres located south of Fernwood Road, proposing approximately 47 units with 15 affordable units. The site falls below the 15-acre threshold, resulting in less extensive concept plan requirements. Staff determined the site is not within the urban reserve, and the applicant requested that the Council pursue a city-specific legislative pathway similar to one granted to Woodburn, which would be required for the application to be eligible to proceed.

Veritas Crossing — A site of approximately 107 acres off Highway 99 near the hospital, proposing approximately 373 housing units with 112 affordable units, a range of residential densities, and neighborhood commercial zoning. Because it exceeds the 15-acre threshold, it is subject to more robust concept planning requirements. Staff noted that eligibility is still being verified with DLCD in connection with the bypass overlay exception approved in 2004, but recommended proceeding to public engagement. City Manager Worthey noted that engineering work will be required to confirm that applicable areas are serviceable for fire safety pressure. Staff proposed a public engagement process consisting of agency referrals, a public comment period, a Council study session, and possible site selection. Staff confirmed there is no statutory timeline requiring the city to make a selection.

Motion to approve the timeline as presented was made by Councilor Kilburg and seconded by Councilor Yarnell-Hollamon. The motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Bill Rosacker: Aye

Councilor Wheatley: Aye

Councilor Elise Yarnell-Hollamon: Aye

Councilor Kilburg: Aye

Councilor Torgesen: Aye

Councilor Carmon and Councilor McBride were absent.

Motion to direct staff to pursue any needed legislative action that may be possible as it pertains to the Fernwood Village application was made by Councilor Yarnell-Hollamon and seconded by Councilor Torgesen. The motion carried.

Mayor Rosacker: Aye

Councilor Wheatley: Aye

Councilor Yarnell-Hollamon: Aye

Councilor Kilburg: Aye

Councilor Torgesen: Aye

Councilor Carmon and Councilor McBride were absent.

10.3. Vacation Rental Program Update

Planner James delivered a one-year update on the Vacation Rental Home program following adoption of Ordinances 2025-29 and 2025-35. Key findings included:

Applications: 10 land use applications were received in 2025 and 5 in 2026 to date; several older permits have lapsed or become inactive.

Registration compliance: Prior to the policy update, only 21 percent of permits were fully registered; currently, 90 percent of active rentals are either registered or actively on track to be registered.

Overall cap: The 2026 cap stands at 187 vacation rentals, representing 2 percent of city households. There are 51 active and licensed, 3 pending, and 6 unlicensed units being engaged by staff.

Transient Lodging Tax: Revenue has been consistent. Staff is working with finance to streamline Airbnb reporting reconciliation and simplify quarterly reporting for operators.

Good Neighbor Notices: Operators are required to send notices to properties within 500 feet upon business license renewal.

HOA Areas: A map was presented showing subdivisions adjacent to city limits with HOAs and/or CC&Rs. Staff noted that the city cannot enforce private HOA covenant restrictions and must approve applications that meet code criteria, regardless of HOA prohibitions.

Public Comment:

Robert, last name not provided, urged the Council to direct staff to provide more thorough research on density caps, referencing earlier constituent testimony and suggesting McMinnville as a peer city to consult. He also requested that the definition of "occupant" in the code be reconsidered to address neighborhood impacts from day-use visitors, not only overnight guests.

Council Discussion:

Councilor Torgesen expressed concern about a cluster of six to seven short-term rentals in her neighborhood, raising issues of parking violations, neighbor complaints, police reports, and an operator who, despite documented concerns, successfully applied for a second permit. She requested a clearer internal communication pipeline between code enforcement and planning, closed-loop feedback to residents who submit complaints, and an inquiry into whether current code provides tools to deny or restrict permits for operators with a pattern of violations.

City Attorney Walker clarified that under current code, if a violation is corrected, a compliant application must be approved. He confirmed that staff could return with options for amending the ordinance to address repeat offenders.

City Manager Worthey directed staff to review internal data-sharing between code enforcement and the planning approval process to ensure relevant compliance history is considered before additional permits are granted.

Mayor Rosacker suggested that density limitations by block be explored and asked staff to return with policy recommendations, including how to address repeat violators and improve the fairness of enforcement.

The Council directed staff to return with: (1) options for a density cap by block or neighborhood; (2) options for stronger enforcement tools against operators with repeated violations; (3) improved internal coordination between code enforcement and planning; and (4) improved communication mechanisms to close the loop with residents who submit complaints.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Mayor Rosacker adjourned the meeting.

Prepared by:



Rachel Thomas, City Recorder, City of Newberg

Attested By:



Bill Rosacker, Mayor, City of Newberg