

City of Capitola

City Council Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 23, 2026 – 6:00 PM



City Council Chambers

420 Capitola Avenue, Capitola, CA 95010

Mayor: Margaux Morgan

Vice Mayor: Gerry Jensen

Council Members: Joe Clarke, Melinda Orbach, Susan Westman

Closed Session – 5:15 PM

- i. CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATOR (Govt. Code § 54956.8)
Property: Capitola Wharf Buildings, 1400 Wharf Road (APN: 034-072-01)
City Negotiator: Jamie Goldstein, City Manager
Negotiating Parties: JFS Incorporated (dba Capitola Boat and Bait)
Under Negotiation: Terms of lease
- ii. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL—LIABILITY CLAIMS (Gov. Code § 54956.95)
Claim Against the City of Capitola
Claimant: Julissa Guzman
- iii. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL – ANTICIPATED LITIGATION
Significant exposure to litigation pursuant to Gov't. Code §54956.9(d)(2), (e)(3)
One Case

Regular Meeting of the Capitola City Council – 6 PM

1. **Roll Call and Pledge of Allegiance** - *The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM. In attendance: Council Members Clarke, Orbach, Westman, Vice Mayor Jensen, and Mayor Morgan.*
2. **Additions and Deletions to the Agenda** – *None*
3. **Report on Closed Session** – *The City Council met and discussed three items on the Closed Session agenda. No reportable action was taken.*
4. **Additional Materials**
 - A. *Item 5 – One email received after publication of the agenda packet.*
 - B. *Item 7B - One email received after publication of the agenda packet.*
 - C. *Item 7C - Two emails received after publication of the agenda packet and two staff memorandums distributed after publication of the agenda packet.*
 - D. *Item 7D - One email received after publication of the agenda packet.*
 - E. *Item 8A - Two emails received after publication of the agenda packet.*
 - F. *Item 8B - One email received after publication of the agenda packet.*
 - G. *Item 8C - Two emails received after publication of the agenda packet.*
5. **Oral Communications by Members of the Public**
 - *Goran Klepic*

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- *Bob Hickman*
- *Melinda Vinto*
- *Speaker*

6. Staff / City Council Comments

- *Public Works Department staff provided an update and photos from the rehabilitation of the Wharf kiosk signage.*
- *City Manager Goldstein provided a status update on the arbitration hearing between tenants and the Cabrillo Mobile Home Estates.*
- *Council Member Westman provided an update on her attendance at a recent Seniors Advisory Council meeting and requested that the City Council send a letter of opposition to the Department of Fish and Game on their newly proposed rules on off-shore fishing. Mayor Morgan seconded her request.*
- *Vice Mayor Jensen provided an update on his attendance at the opening of the Park at the Rispin Mansion event, held at the Capitola Library; asked staff to clarify how the proposed City budget will be made available to the public, when the Treasure Cove playground will open, and when the roundabout on Bay Ave will be on a Council agenda.*
- *Council Member Clarke thanked staff for their efforts to install the stairs at Hooper's Beach.*
- *Council Member Orbach provided comments on her previous comments from the April 9, 2026, City Council meeting.*
- *Mayor Morgan provided comments on her attendance at the opening of the Park at the Rispin Mansion event, held at the Capitola Library; and reminded the Council to maintain decorum at the dais.*

7. Consent Items

- A. City Council Meeting Minutes
Recommended Action: Approve minutes from the special meeting on April 7, 2026, and the regular meeting on April 9, 2026.
- B. Esplanade Park Coastal Access Enhancement and Adaptation Plan
Recommended Action: 1) Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a grant agreement with the State Coastal Conservancy for the Esplanade Park Coastal Access Enhancement and Adaptation Plan; and 2) Authorize the City Manager to execute a professional services agreement with Integral Consulting Inc. in the amount of \$275,000, in a form substantially similar to the attached agreement, subject to approval by the City Attorney. **(Pulled for discussion by Vice Mayor Jensen) (Resolution No. 4480)**
- C. Homeland Security Grant Program
Recommended Action: 1) Accept a Homeland Security Grant as a subrecipient through the County of Santa Cruz in an amount up to \$50,000; and 2) adopt a resolution amending the FY 2025–26 General Fund operating budget to increase revenues and expenditures by up to \$50,000. **(Resolution No. 4481)**
- D. Park at Rispin Mansion Fundraising Partnership
Recommended Action: 1) Authorize the City Manager to execute a Memorandum of Understanding with Capitola Cares for a fundraising campaign for additional elements at the Park at Rispin Mansion; and 2) approve an administrative policy regarding Donor Recognition at the Park at Rispin Mansion. **(Administrative Policy No. V-22)**

Council Member Jensen requested to pull Item 7B for discussion.

Motion to approve Consent Items 7A and 7C: Council Member Westman

Second: Council Member Orbach

Voting Yea: Council Members Clarke, Orbach, Westman, Vice Mayor Jensen, and Mayor Morgan

Council Member Westman recused from Item 7D due to a conflict of interest arising from her husband's position on the Capitola Cares Board.

Motion to approve Consent Item 7D: Council Member Clarke

Second: Vice Mayor Jensen

Voting Yea: Council Members Clarke, Orbach, Vice Mayor Jensen, and Mayor Morgan

Abstaining: Council Member Westman

Vice Mayor Jensen thanked staff for their efforts to secure grant funding for Item 7B. He inquired about the intent of the grant funding and project, and how this project interacts with overall efforts to combat coastal erosion.

Motion to approve Consent Item 7B: Vice Mayor Jensen

Second: Council Member Orbach

Voting Yea: Council Members Clarke, Orbach, Westman, Vice Mayor Jensen, and Mayor Morgan

8. General Government / Public Hearings

A. Wharf Master Plan

Recommended Action: Receive a presentation on the conceptual design for a Wharf Master Plan; adopt a resolution adopting the Wharf Master Plan; and direct staff to release a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a qualified private entity to construct and operate the marketplace through a lease agreement with the City.

Community and Economic Development Director Herlihy presented the staff report with the project consultant, Fuse Architects.

Public Comment:

- ***Cami Corvin***
- ***Scott Harway***
- ***Speaker***

The City Council requested that staff rewrite the request for proposals (RFP) to allow for further flexibility from respondents and incorporate the public outreach conducted for public review. Council discussed the importance of incorporating public safety elements into the Wharf Master Plan. Council clarified that the RFP does not need to return at a future Council meeting but requested that staff return with a policy for the leasing of City-owned property. The City Council opted not to adopt a resolution approving the Master Plan, as they felt it wasn't necessary.

The Council discussed the possibility of inviting Central Fire to a Council meeting to present on the partnership between the City and CFD.

Motion to direct staff to revise the RFP before releasing to allow for greater flexibility:
Council Member Westman

Second: Council Member Orbach

Voting Yea: Council Members Clarke, Orbach, Westman, Vice Mayor Jensen, and Mayor Morgan

The City Council took a recess at 7:35 PM and reconvened at 7:38 PM.

B. 41st Avenue Pavement Rehabilitation and Multimodal Improvements Project - Entryway Enhancement

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Recommended Action: Authorize staff to modify the project scope of the 41st Avenue Pavement Rehabilitation and Multimodal Improvements Project to include curb, sidewalk, and hardscape improvements at the corner of 41st Avenue and Gross Road Extension to accommodate a future gateway monument.

Community and Economic Development Director Herlihy presented the staff report.

Public Comment: None

Council Discussion

Motion to authorize staff to amend the scope of the 41st Avenue Pavement Rehabilitation and Multimodal Improvements Project: Council Member Orbach

Second: Council Member Clarke

Voting Yea: Council Members Clarke, Orbach, Westman, Vice Mayor Jensen, and Mayor Morgan

- C. California Voting Rights Act Challenge and Demand for City to Transition to District-Based Elections

Recommended Action: Consider a letter received on March 19, 2026, challenging the City's at-large election system and demanding the City transition to district-based elections; and provide direction to staff regarding next steps.

City Attorney Tran presented the staff report.

Public Comment:

- Cami Corvin
- Speaker
- Speaker
- Meghan Morrissey

Council formed an ad-hoc subcommittee, composed of Mayor Morgan and Vice Mayor Jensen, to work with staff to review proposals for a demographer/mapping consultant and interview prospective consultants. The Council discussed the importance of taking time to allow for maximum public input during the process and the potential of reviewing the feasibility of the composition of the districts (four districts and an elected Mayor vs. five districts).

Motion to form an ad-hoc subcommittee (composed of Mayor Morgan and Vice Mayor Jensen) to work with staff to select a demographer and hold a special meeting on April 30th at 6:00 PM to present a resolution of intent to transition to districts and an agreement with the selected consultant: Council Member Westman

Second: Vice Mayor Jensen

Voting Yea: Council Members Clarke, Orbach, Westman, Vice Mayor Jensen, and Mayor Morgan

- D. Citywide Website Update Project

Recommended Action: Receive a presentation of the City's new website.

Assistant to the City Manager Woodmansee presented the staff report.

Public Comment: None

9. Adjournment

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The meeting adjourned at 8:31 PM. The next regularly scheduled City Council meeting is on May 14, 2026, at 6:00 PM.

Signed by:

Margaux Morgan

Margaux Morgan, Mayor

ATTEST:

Signed by:

Julia Gautho

Julia Gautho, City Clerk