



# CITY COUNCIL

## Regular Meeting Minutes January 12, 2026

Mayor Primmer called the regular meeting to order at 7:00pm. Present were Councilors Hayward, Roberts, Myers, McCarthy, Duron, Linton, Kelso, and Barron. City Staff in attendance included: City Manager Byron Smith, Assistant City Manager Mark Morgan, City Attorney Rich Tovey, Police Chief Jason Edmiston, Finance Director Ignacio Palacios, Parks and Recreation Director Brandon Artz, Street and Capital Improvement Projects Manager Cameron Meade, and City Recorder Lilly Alarcon-Strong. The pledge of allegiance was given.

Mayor Primmer apologized to Councilor Linton for his misinterpretation of the City Charters time allotted for Council members to ask questions that he spoke of at the last City Council meeting, stating it is important to be accountable.

### **Citizen Input on Non-Agenda Items**

None given.

### **Consent Agenda Items**

Councilor McCarthy moved, and Councilor Hayward seconded to approve Consent Agenda items A-D, to include:

- A. Committee Vacancy Announcements
- B. Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee Appointment Confirmation to Helen Nevin to Position #6 for a 3-year term expiring 10/31/2028
- C. Recreation Projects Fund Advisory Committee Reappointment Confirmation to Helen Nevin to Position #1, Representing Citizens At-Large for a 3-year term expiring 12/31/2028
- D. Minutes of the December 8th Regular Meeting of the City Council

Motion carried unanimously with Councilors Hayward, Roberts, Myers, McCarthy, Duron, Linton, Kelso, and Barron voting in favor.

### **Resolution No. 2401- Master Fee Schedule & Utility Rate Adjustments**

Assistant City Manager Morgan reviewed information from the agenda packet and presented additional information (PowerPoint Presentation attached) regarding Resolution No. 2401 and addressed the typo on page 5 of the PowerPoint Presentation stating the page should read \$2.72 not \$2.27.

After addressing Council questions and additional discussion, Councilor McCarthy moved and Councilor Hayward seconded to adopt Resolution No. 2401 and lay upon the record. Motion carried unanimously with Councilors Hayward, Roberts, Myers, McCarthy, Duron, Linton, Kelso, and Barron in favor.

### **Resolution No. 2402- Authorize Installation of Four Stop Signs**

Assistant City Manager Morgan reviewed information from the agenda packet regarding Resolution No. 2402.

After addressing Council questions and additional discussion, Councilor McCarthy moved and Councilor Hayward seconded to table this item until the next City Council Meeting and directing staff to include a 4-way stop in the SE Columbia Drive and SE 10<sup>th</sup> Street intersection. Motion carried unanimously with Councilors Hayward, Roberts, Myers, McCarthy, Duron, Linton, Kelso, and Barron in favor.



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Regular Meeting Minutes  
January 12, 2026

**Where Life is Sweet**

## **January 2026 Council Goal Update**

City Manager Smith gave updates (PowerPoint Presentation attached) on each 2025 established goal item.

### **Public Comment**

Krista Van Veen, 764 W Alder Ave- Suggested the City publicize these goals with updates in a broader form, to include the City's Newsletter as this information is important for the community and asked if Goal Setting Sessions are open to the public.

The Council responded that Council Goals for the last 10-years can be found on the City's website, Goal Setting Sessions are open to the public but do not allow for public comment, however, the public is encouraged to reach out to Council members, prior to this meeting, to give ideas and suggestions for Council discussion, and mentioned that Council Goals are always presented to the Council for refinement and adoption at Council Meetings each year.

After addressing Council questions and additional discussion, Mayor Primmer stated this item is for information only and no action is being asked of the City Council.

### **Committee Reports**

Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee- Councilor Myers gave updates regarding the great holiday events that happened over the last month, park updates throughout the City, Aquatic Center updates, Parks and Recreation staffing, and Park and Recreation Goals.

Airport Advisory Committee- Councilor Roberts gave updates regarding budget, LifeFlight relocating to Good Shepherd Hospital, fuel sales, new hangar, hangar rentals, and encouraged the public to apply for the open Committee position.

- Councilor Linton thanked the LifeFlight Team as the recently helped save the life of her great grandson.

Charter Review Committee- Mayor Primmer stated the Committee met and completed review of all chapters. All recommended changes will be combined for final review, published for public comment, and then Council review and approval to place in the General Election of 2026.

### **Mayor's Report**

Mayor Primmer spoke regarding:

- Christmas Express and thanked all those who were able to volunteer
- Thanked all members of the Council for the many meetings they attend
- The 116<sup>th</sup> Calvary Change of Command Ceremony at the Hermiston Armory that he and Councilor Kelso attended
- Umatilla County Fair Appreciation Dinner
- Tomorrow's City Chat at Hermiston Drug
- LOC Listening Session held on Wednesday at the Harkenrider Senior Center
- The impressive Boy Scout who constructed Belt Parks water bridge
- The National Guard has offered to help the City with any preparations for the United States 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration



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Regular Meeting Minutes  
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## **Council Presidents Report**

Councilor McCarthy spoke regarding:

- Reminded the Council to give their iPads to City Recorder Alarcon-Strong after the meeting
- Council Candidate deadline of March 10<sup>th</sup>
- MLK Walk on January 19<sup>th</sup> at 11:00am at the Community Center

## **Council Reports**

Councilor Barron stated he remembers the Council agreeing to rotate Goal Setting Meetings days from Thursday and Friday to Friday and Saturday every other year and asked that the Council consider switching the days next year to Friday and Saturday to accommodate his schedule.

Councilor Duron stated she has been appointed to a one-year term on the LOC Board to represent the region. She is grateful to be able to represent the community and has a newfound appreciation for the level of commitment that City Manager Smith and previous Mayor Drotzmann as the amount of time needed to dedicate to this effort is great.

Councilor Linton asked if the City would be installing sidewalks on N HWY 395 near Stepping Stones Alliance.

City Manager Smith stated this area is outside of City Limits and is the decision of ODOT and Umatilla County.

Councilor Roberts stated the community has faced a tremendous amount of loss in the last few weeks and his thoughts and prayers are with the families and community who rally around them.

Councilor Kelso spoke regarding attending the 116th Calvary Change of Command Ceremony at the Hermiston Armory and how proud he is to have these men and women in our community.

## **Youth Advisory Report**

None present.

## **Manager's Report**

Assistant City Manager Morgan introduced Cameron Meade the new Street and Capital Improvement Project Manager. He and Robert Herrera, Street Foreman, have replaced Street Superintendent Ron Sivey, after retirement, with additional responsibilities.

Mayor Primmer welcomed Mr. Meade.

## **Adjourn**

There was no other business and Mayor Primmer adjourned the regular City Council meeting at 8:41pm.



ATTEST:

Lilly Alarcon-Strong, CMC, City Recorder

SIGNED:

Doug Primmer, Mayor

## Resolution 2401- Utility Fees

City Council: January 12, 2026



## Annual Inflation Policy

- *Engineering News-Record: Construction Cost Index (CCI)*

- **200hr common labor**
- **25cwt Structural Steel**
- **1.128 tons Cement**
- **1,088 bf lumber**
- **Etc.**



## Resolution 2401

- General Water & Sewer Rates: 2.34% Increase
  - **-\$2.72/mo for Median Customer**
- Industrial Sewer: Change to Sampling Method



## 3-Year Averaging

	Total Cost	YOY % Change	3Yr Avg
2025	14118	3.57%	2.34%
2024	13632	0.87%	3.00%
2023	13514	2.57%	5.16%
2022	13175	5.56%	
2021	12481	7.35%	
2020	11626		





## Median Residential Customer

- $\frac{1}{2}$  More
- $\frac{1}{2}$  Less
- \$4.02 August
- \$2.17 January
- \$2.27 Avg



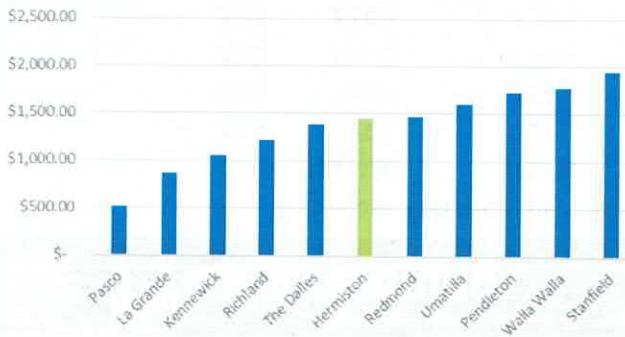
## Industrial Sewer Changes

- Only 1 Industrial Customer
- Current Policy:
  - Sample Discharge Up to 10x/month
  - Average Samples
  - Use Average for monthly billing



## Cost Comparison

#### Total Annual Median Water & Sewer Costs



- Proposed
- Median  
Monthly



## Averaging Limitations

- Very Regular sampling timing (randomness challenging)
- Possible for customer to time discharges (dumping)
- Regular Sampling: Very Uniform
- 1-time random sample: Significantly higher





## Scale of Discrepancy

- 2025 Monthly Billing Avg: ~\$10,000
- 1-Time Sample: Equal to \$200,000



## Why a Problem

- Treatment Plant must have capacity to meet peak demand
- If industry pushes plant close to limit, then capacity needs to be added.
- If industry is only paying 1/20<sup>th</sup> of \*actual\* discharge, the cost of expanded capacity falls to all other customers.



## Delayed Implementation

- Industrial Changes Don't Occur Until 1/1/2027
- Allow customer to make changes
  - Capacity available to allow grace-period



**QUESTIONS?**

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## Introduction

- Goal Structure
- Individual Goal Status
- Discussion



## Goals Structure

- 2025 Goals are organized into the following Hermiston 2040 structure:
  - **Growing + Prosperous**
  - **Safe + Healthy**
  - **Sustainable**
  - **Connected + Engaged**
- Adopted in April 2025
- Update in July 2025



## Growing and Prosperous

- Hermiston is cultivating a vibrant community with a thriving economy, assortment of housing opportunities, high-quality education, and support services to preserve the small-town feel.
  - **Economic Development: Expand, strengthen, and diversify the local economy**
  - **Transportation: Improve mobility and transportation**
  - **Housing: Increase senior, workforce, affordable housing, market rate rentals, and prevent people from becoming unhoused**



## Growing and Prosperous

### • Economic Development

- Examine the expansion of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) for commercial and industrial lands
  - Completed!!!
- Evaluate retail business mix and pursue areas of need
  - Continue to work with Retail Strategies



## Growing and Prosperous

### • Housing

- Attract market-rate rental housing developments to increase middle housing inventory
  - Incentive plan in place; developer finalizing financing
- Study incentive options for market-rate rental housing
  - Ongoing and case by case
- Continue to fund infrastructure improvements to support new housing and enhance livability
  - Always looking for and discussing opportunities to do this



## Growing and Prosperous

### • Transportation

- Complete Transportation System Plan Update (will include sidewalks)
  - Initial public outreach conducted. Process moving forward
- Prioritize sidewalk installation supporting student/pedestrian travel
  - Incorporated into upcoming work plans
- Evaluate personal transportation options
  - Completed – Senior/Disabled/Worc Taxi contract awarded
  - Completed – Ride Sharing allowed under city code
- Implement the safe streets for all plan
  - Not awarded initial grant application
  - Continue to work for funding and implementation



## Safe and Healthy

- Hermiston ensures a healthy and safe environment for all through abundant recreation and wellness opportunities, high-quality health care, collaboration with community partners and a healthy and attractive built environment
  - **Wellness: a healthy community**
  - **Public Safety: Improve traffic safety and align public safety resources with community needs**





## Safe and Healthy

### • Wellness

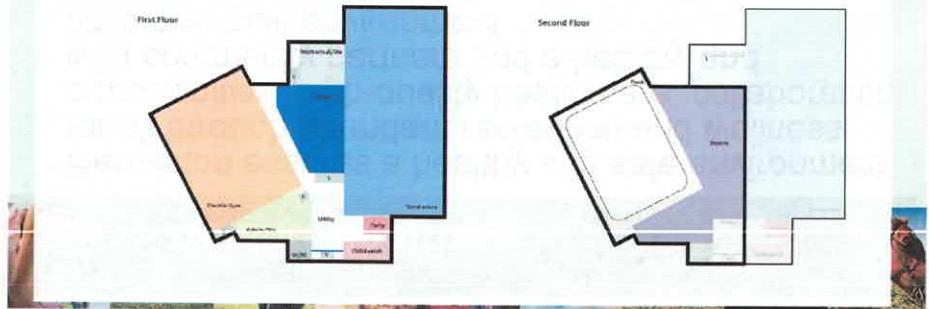
- Complete the feasibility analysis of the HAWC and determine next steps with partnerships and securing land
- Ongoing – almost complete



## Safe and Healthy-HAWC

### 2018 Recreation-Aquatics Center Study

67,000 SF Conceptual Facility



## Safe and Healthy-HAWC

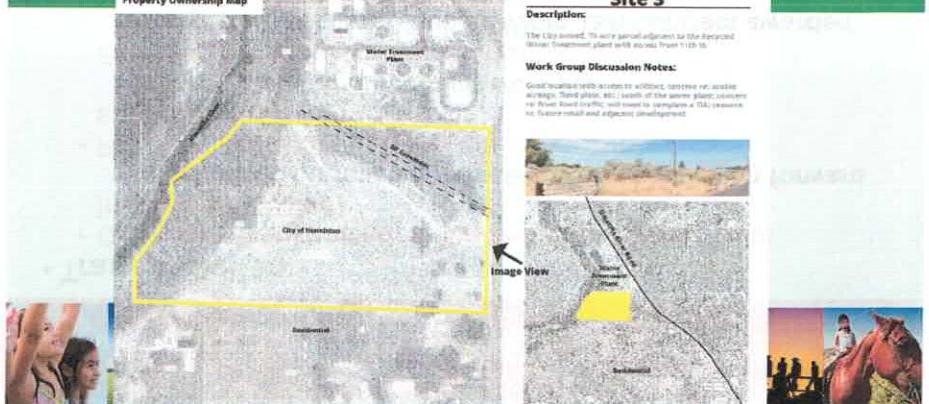
- Evaluated 20+ sites
- Deeper study on ~12 sites
- Four Viable Sites



## Safe and Healthy-HAWC

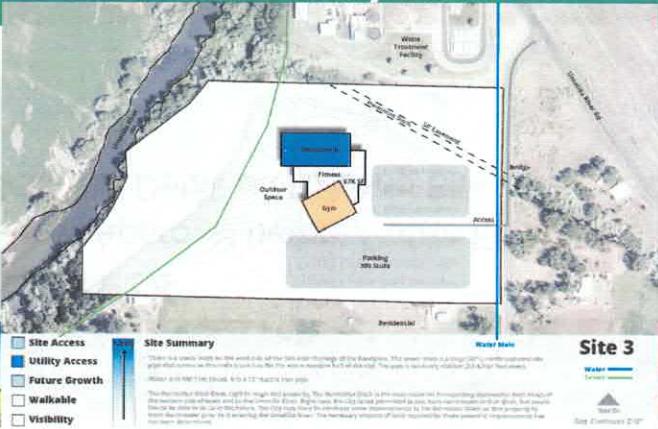
Site 3

### Property Ownership Map



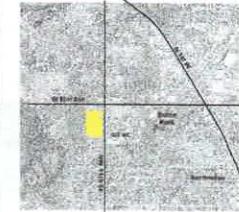
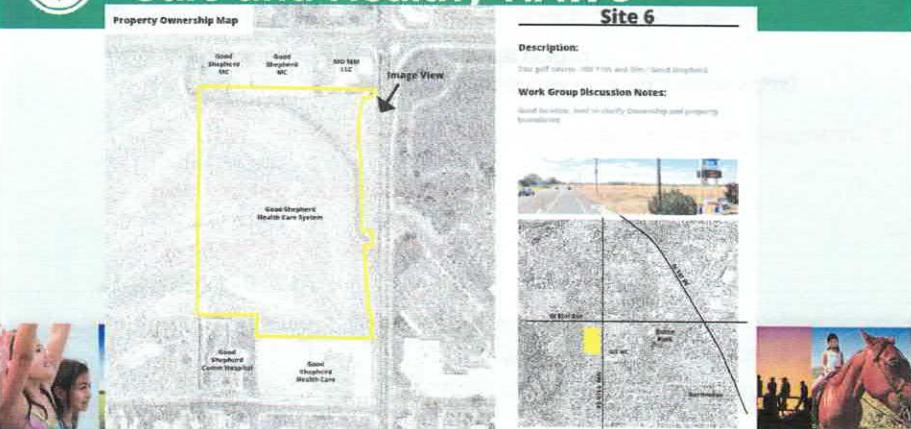


## Safe and Healthy-HAWC

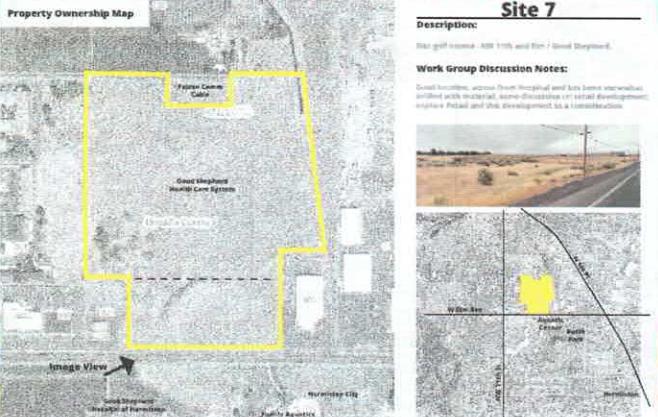


## Safe and Healthy-HAWC

**Site 6**



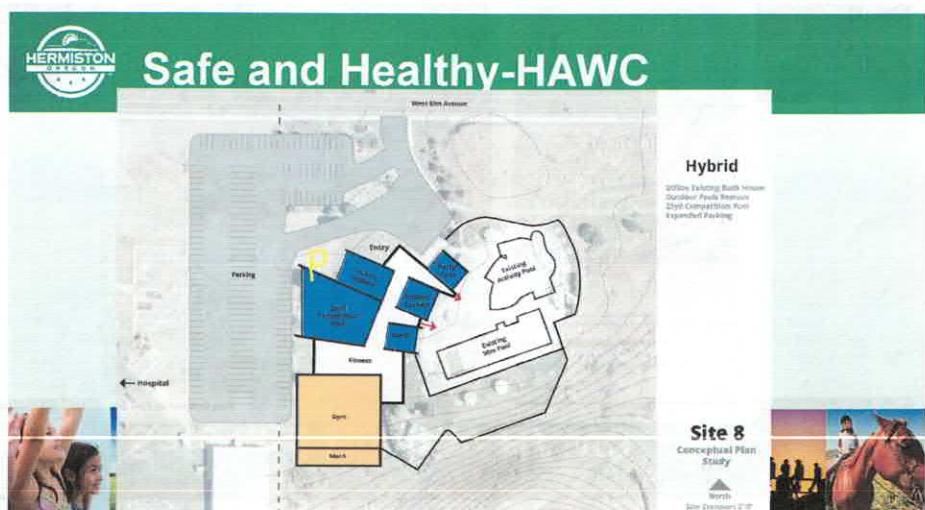
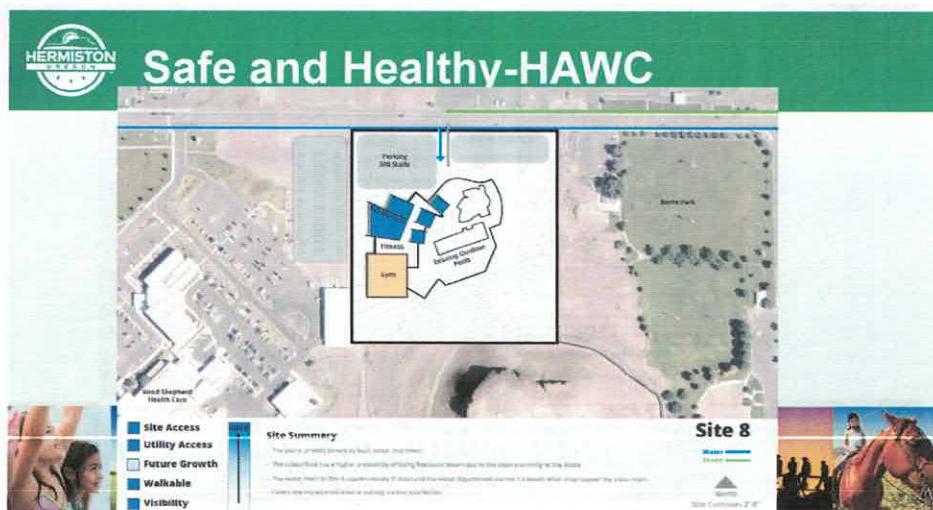
## Safe and Healthy-HAWC



## Safe and Healthy-HAWC

**Site 8**





## Sustainable

- Hermiston responsibly plans and invests in community infrastructure and the built environment to support the critical needs of daily life and sustainable growth for the future
- **City Facilities:** Public facilities that meet the community needs of today and the future
- **Fiscal:** Maintain service levels, strengthen internal operations to support sustainability, accountability, and transparency



## Sustainable

- **City Facilities**
  - Conduct public engagement to identify use scenarios, evaluate all options, and finalize plan for Carnegie Building
    - Outreach completed. Final Report on outreach to council in February/March. Council discussion of options and next steps.
  - Complete Public Library renovation
    - Completed and Reopened!!!
    - Finalize permanent water allocation for EOTEC.
    - Evaluating new water rights owned by the City or partner agencies
  - Reinitiate broadband infrastructure discussion
    - Initial RFP released and additional information gathering to start
    - Partnership with the City of Umatilla
  - Complete public safety center renovation
    - Anticipated reopening in March/April 2026



## Sustainable

- **Fiscal**
  - Evaluate use of TRT for Chamber and Harkenrider contributions
    - Initially resolved in 25-26 budget discussion
  - Develop five-year financial plan to support sustainable staffing and operations
    - In process
  - Evaluate new digital records management/retention
    - Implementation options have been evaluated, and temporary staffing is being sought



## Connected and Engaged

- Hermiston provides opportunities for social connections, celebrates diversity, and honors our historic and cultural heritage to foster a welcoming and inclusive community for all
- **Community Engagement:** Improve engagement and connection with the community
- **Good Governance:** Evaluate core governing documents and processes





## Connected and Engaged

### • Community Engagement

- Explore expansion of engagement with education partners to develop and implement youth engagement plan to increase understanding of and involvement with City
- Enhanced Youth Advisory Committee
- Local Government module taught to all seniors
- Develop a communication and engagement plan identifying goals and metrics
- RFP under development to solicit firms for plan development



## Connected and Engaged

### • Good Governance

- Conduct Charter Review
  - Multiple sessions of the Charter Review Committee have been held
- Re-examine Council Committees, Boards and Advisory Group structure
  - Completed!!!



## Questions/Discussion

*Where Life is Sweet*