



Faith-Based Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes of April 21, 2026

Present were committee members Dan Mahon, James Lajolette (arrived 4:19pm) and Joe Sharon. Chaplain Terry Cummings and Rafael Vargas were excused. Planning Assistant Heather La Beau was in attendance as was Council Representative Allen Hayward. Council Representative Jackie Linton was absent. No Youth Advisors attended the meeting. Joe opened the meeting in prayer at 4:07pm.

Public Comment

Amy Palmer, Hermiston Coordinator for the National Day of Prayer, presented information regarding ways to participate in the upcoming event on Thursday, May 7. The website found here: nationaldayofprayerhermiston.org has information on multiple events being hosted by various churches and organizations. Events are held at different times and places throughout the day and evening and are open to everyone. In previous years there was one gathering. Ms. Palmer will attend the upcoming council meeting to present a proclamation for the National Day of Prayer. Councilor Hayward suggested the website include a link to donate.

Members commented on how wonderful it is to see the churches working together and multiple churches participating. It was suggested that other communities in the county be included on the website. It would be great to see coordinated prayer more often than one day a year. A Street Prayer Ministry was discussed with prayer stations in various city locations. Consistency of volunteers will be an important part of the ministry.

Minutes

James moved and Joe seconded to approve February 3, 2026, minutes. Motion carried unanimously with Dan, James, and Joe all voting in favor.

James Moved and Joe seconded to approve March 3, 2026, minutes. Motion carried unanimously with Dan, James, and Joe all voting in favor.

Stepping Stones Alliance (SSA) Updates: SSA Executive Director Jesalyn Cole delivered an update on Stepping Stones to include:

- The Treasurer position on the Board has been filled
- Board Retreat was recently held
- Ready to expand services with focus on youth homeless (18-24 year olds)
- Need to expand city services to facility
- Outdoor Kitchen structure delivered and ready to assemble
- Additional lights and new motor for electric gate
- Volunteers for AM breakfast check-out and PM dinner check-in always needed

National Law Enforcement Appreciation Week May 10-16

Police magnets are available for businesses, organizations, and people to show their support of our law enforcement.



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Faith and First Responders/I Love My City

This event will be held on May 16. A lunch at McKenzie Park will be held after the work projects (noon). It is an opportunity for the faith community and first responders to interact and to bless the first responders with food and prayer. There will also be emergency vehicles to tour and other activities.

The website to register for work projects is: <https://www.ilovehermiston.com/>

Councilor Hayward shared the City of Hillsboro will have representatives attending to observe the day's activities as they are interested in hosting a similar event.

Food Insecurity Updates

Dan shared that Robert Longoria is now the Interim Executive Director of Eastern Oregon Mission, following the departure of Mark Gomolski. There is hope an evening food distribution may become available to serve those that work during the day. The organization needs more and younger volunteers, specifically a truck/trailer driver and board members. Joe shared the LDS Bishop Central Storehouse was able to make a large food donation to Agape House on April 1. James will investigate the hospital's community garden as a possibility for any excess food that may be able to be given to Agape House. James also mentioned that some service organizations have older mobile food units that may be able to be restored and used to serve as a mobile lunch distribution. The Catholic Church has garden space available if there is an interest from gardeners to assist.

It was shared that Marissa, the Director for Euvalcree, recently stepped down from the position.

School Adoption Updates

Teacher Appreciation Week is May 4 – 8 and is a great opportunity for churches to do something special at their adopted schools.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for May 5, 2026, at 4pm at City Hall.

There was no further business and James closed the meeting in prayer at 5:07pm.