



CITY COUNCIL

Work Session Meeting Minutes April 13, 2026

Mayor Primmer called the City Council work session meeting to order at 6:02pm. Present were Councilors Roberts, Linton, Barron, Duron, Hayward, and Kelso. Councilors Myers and McCarthy were excused. City Staff in attendance included: City Manager Byron Smith, Assistant City Manager Mark Morgan, City Attorney Richard Tovey, Finance Director Ignacio Palacios, Police Chief Jason Edmiston, and Deputy City Recorder Heather La Beau.

Public Works Changes

Assistant City Manager Mark Morgan introduced Treyton Moore, P.E., with Anderson Perry & Associates, Inc, joining via Zoom. The Industrial Pre-Treatment Program will need to be added to the city's code language. The changes in the code will be presented to the city council at a future meeting and have been verified as compliant with Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). The changes address items such as right of entry for noncompliance and authority to set fees for the program's applications and permits. Regulated commercial users are those identified as having the potential to cause harm to the sewer system and/or the wastewater treatment plant and therefore requiring additional oversight. This can be commercial users that discharge high volumes of wastewater or wastewater with damaging pollutants, or items that the treatment plant is unable to treat and would cause pollution downstream. A pretreatment program helps protect the city from liability of downstream pollution.

With the attached PowerPoint presentation, Assistant City Manager Morgan spoke about PFAs and potential treatment options. PFAs are not a new issue but being newly regulated. Anderson Perry & Associates, Inc has generally determined filtration of the city's water to reduce the amount of PFAs to under the regulated limit. The upfront cost is in the range of \$23 million with an annual debt cost of approximately \$1 million. The maintenance and replacement of the filters is an additional operational cost of \$1 million a year, for a total cost of \$2 million a year. This increases the total cost of the water system by about 40%. Considering the high cost, staff have asked Anderson Perry for an in-depth analysis of additional solutions and alternatives for water sources, delivery, and storage to allow for review of all options and community benefits available. Councilors discussed source of PFAs, treatment costs to smaller communities, filtration effectiveness, and alternatives.

The existing space for staff at the current Public Works facility has been in place since the 1980s. As equipment and staff have been added no space for staff was added. Consideration will be given if the current location is the best for an industrial use that is surrounded by community and residences.

A portion of Assistant City Manager Morgan's presentation of the City's Aquifer Storage & Recovery project to the Data Center Advisory Committee meeting was shown. The video is available at the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pZLtjrYDf3M> beginning at 4:17 through 4:39. The presentation included water consumption by use, indicating hyperscale data centers do not use any water in the winter months. The Aquifer Storage & Recovery (ASR) project takes the treated drinking water, stores it in the ASR well and recovers it from the existing well when needed. The City's plan is to inject from October to March, storing ~360 million gallons a year. The water is pumped from the Columbia River, treated at the Regional Water Treatment Plant and injected into the aquifer.



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Councilor Baron thanked staff for representing the city well at recent state and national meetings.

Adjournment

After additional discussion and answering questions from the Council, Mayor Primmer ended the work session at 6:58pm and stated the City Council would convene for their regular council meeting at 7:00pm.

Public Works Update
City Council: April 13, 2026

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Agenda

- PFAS
- Industrial Pre-Treatment Program
- Public Works Space-Needs
- Data Centers & ASR
- Staffing
- Project Updates

2

PFAS

- What is PFAS?
 - Chemicals designed to be hard to break down
- Not a new issue; newly regulated
- Where is it?
 - Everywhere

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PFAS Costs

- Solution: Filtration
 - \$22.6M Capital
 - (\$1.2M/yr Financed 30yr)
 - \$1M+ per year operational
- \$2.2M Annual Cost Increase
 - 39% Rate Increase Required

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Industrial Pre-Treatment Program


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IPP

- Local Permitting Program
- What is "Pre-Treatment"?
 - Treat your waste before it gets to our system
- "Industrial" Users required to get a permit
 - Specifies limits, sampling methods, etc.
 - City Staff monitors discharges
 - Users must pay cost of program (new fee)
 - Fines for violating permit


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Public Works Space-Needs


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Existing Spaces

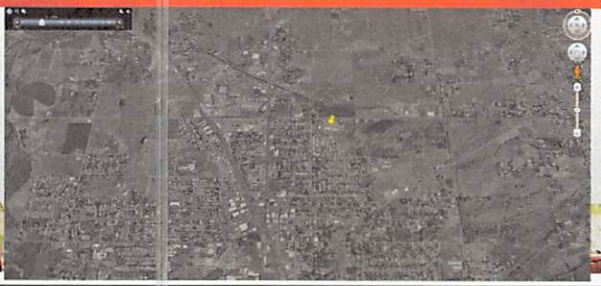
- "Public Works" at current location since pre-1980 (45+ years)
- Recycled Water Plant at current location since early 1980s (40+ years)
- 1980 Population: 9,408
- Added Lift Stations, Booster Pumps, Storage Tanks, Stormwater facilities, etc.
- Added Staff



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Public Works- 1994




9



Public Works- 2025





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Existing Location Considerations

- Traffic?
- Neighbors?
- Higher Value?


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Data Centers & Water


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Governor's AC/DC

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pZLtiYDf3M>



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Mayor Primmer called the regular meeting to order at 7:02pm. Present were Councilors Hayward, Roberts, Duron, Linton, Kelso, McCarthy, and Barron. Councilor Myers was excused. City Staff in attendance included: City Manager Byron Smith, Assistant City Manager Mark Morgan, City Attorney Richard Tovey, Finance Director Ignacio Palacios, Police Chief Jason Edmiston, Planning Director Clint Spencer, Parks and Recreation Director Brandon Artz, Court Administrator Jillian Viles, and Deputy City Recorder Heather La Beau. The pledge of allegiance was given.

Citizen Input on Non-Agenda Items

Captain Karen Primmer with the Umatilla County Sheriff's Office provided information regarding National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week, a time to recognize the dedication and commitment of 911 dispatchers. Telecommunicators Acting Sargeant Cindy Lemmon, and Sargeant Cherry Hutchinson were also in attendance. Captain Primmer gave a brief overview of current staffing and operations of the dispatch center. A total of 143,061 calls were handled last year. This does not include radio transmissions. Bags were distributed to councilors as an example of some of the outreach done by dispatchers at community events. Excellence in Dispatch status has been achieved by Cindy Lemmon and Racheal Howler, while Cherry Hutchinson is on track to this recognition. Captain Primmer spoke of additional achievements and contributions of Ms. Howler, Ms. Lemmon, & Sargeant Hutchinson. These staff capabilities translate to a highly trained workforce providing outstanding service to the community.

Council, staff, and audience joined in applause expressing gratitude to the telecommunicators. Mayor Primmer stated the information presented by Captain Primmer is only a small portion of the work performed by the telecommunicators and thanked them on behalf of the entire city council.

Consent Agenda Items

Councilor Linton asked to remove item N from the Consent Agenda. Councilor McCarthy moved and Councilor Hayward seconded to approve Consent Agenda items A-M, to include:

- A.** Hermiston Urban Renewal Agency (HURA) Annual Report
- B.** Appointment Confirmation for Randall Gerard to the Budget Committee Position #2 ending December 31, 2028
- C.** Appointment Confirmation for Dean Fialka to Planning Commission Position #6 ending March 31, 2029
- D.** Appointment Confirmation for Tami Rebman to Planning Commission Position #5 ending March 31, 2029
- E.** Committee Vacancy Announcements
- F.** Reappointment Recommendation and Confirmation for Janizee Serrano to the Planning Commission Position #4 ending March 31, 2029
- G.** Appointment Recommendation for Janizee Serrano to the Hispanic Advisory Committee Position #1 ending June 30, 2029



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- H. Minutes of the March 4, 2026 Charter Review Committee Meeting
- I. Minutes of the March 9, 2026 Finance Committee Meeting
- J. Minutes of the March 23 City Council Work Session and Regular Meeting
- K. Liquor License Retail On-Premises Sales & Consumption Application for Blue Agave Event Center located at 1835 S Highway 395
- L. Approve Ground Lease Agreement with Windblown Ranch Inc. at the Hermiston Municipal Airport
- M. Authorizing the Acceptance of a Relinquishment Deed to certain rights of way to the City of Hermiston from the State of Oregon

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

Items Removed from the Consent Agenda

N. E Airport Road renaming establishment of hearing date

Councilor Linton requested the Renaming of E Airport Road be moved from the Consent Agenda as she understood there was to be a discussion on which of the roads would be renamed. City Manager Smith stated it was staff's understanding Airport Road was to be renamed. The consent agenda item is to establish a hearing date.

Public Comments

Gary Culp 1200 E Airport Rd- Mr. Culp inquired if staff had received his written testimony. Mr. Culp collected the petition signatures and stated not one person wants to change their address. He asked why there wasn't concern about First Place and First Street.

Cruz Correa 1350 E Airport Rd- Mr. Correa thanked the council for their work. While at his location since 1994, he could count on one hand the number of times packages were delivered to the wrong business. He stated he sent pictures to Councilor Hayward and believes this could be worked out without changing the name and asked why the rename is being considered. He suggested state and other agencies do a better job indicating the names of the road and where businesses are located.

Jodi Oswald 1600 E Airport Road- Ms. Oswald has been at this location for approximately 30 years. She was not notified that this was happening, except for Mr. Culp reaching out to her. She is self-employed and would have personal and business information that would need to be changed if the road were renamed.

Nick Moses 2000 E Airport Road- In the late 1950's his grandparents built the house where Mr. Moses currently resides. His parents were raised in the home, and he is currently raising his family in the same home. He would like the address to remain the same.



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Karyn Jones 1010 W Highland Ave- While not a residence of the road, Ms. Jones sympathizes with the people who live on and operate businesses there. She feels it is an unfair burden on those that have to change their information, stating it will be a huge financial and time burden. She also suggests better signage and looking at renaming other similarly named streets. She asked for the issue to be tabled and not move forward with the hearing.

Lisa Sturgeon- Ms. Sturgeon worked at the airport and stated businesses get packages delivered everyday and are delivered to the wrong location. She stated it is confusing having the road names so close. Several horse trailers go down Airport Way during the fair and suggest larger signage.

Councilor Linton moved and Councilor McCarthy seconded to table Consent Agenda item N and install larger signage for Airport Way. After some discussion, the motion failed 2-5. Councilors Hayward and Linton voted in favor. Councilors Roberts, McCarthy, Duron, Kelso, and Baron voted against.

Councilor McCarthy moved and Councilor Kelso seconded to approve Consent Agenda Item N. The hearing date will be set for May 11. Motion passed 6-1 with Councilors Hayward, Roberts, McCarthy, Duron, Kelso, and Baron voting in favor and Councilor Linton opposed.

Resolution No. 2418: Geer/Harper Realignment Contract Award

Assistant City Manager used the attached PowerPoint presentation to briefly describe the proposed realignment of the intersection which will increase safety and improve traffic flow. There will be significant traffic flow disruptions throughout construction. This contract is for the paving portion and is anticipated to be completed in the fall. The crossing will be closed for over a year, with traffic flow on each side of the crossing opening in the fall. The funding for the paving project is from the State Gas Tax (HB 2017).

Emailed testimony was received, provided to the councilors and is attached. After a brief discussion, Councilor McCarthy moved and Councilor Duron seconded to approve Resolution No. 2418 and lay upon the record. Motion passed unanimously with Councilors Hayward, Roberts, McCarthy, Duron, Linton, Kelso, and Baron in favor.

Resolution No. 2419 Authorizing Participation in Product Liability Litigation and Engagement of Counsel

City Manager Smith stated this is an issue all around the country and litigation has started against manufacturers of some of the chemicals. This request is for authorization to join one of the groups, with the potential for some funding which could help build a treatment facility.

Public Comments

Karyn Jones – Ms. Jones stated it is a serious issue here and is grateful for staff for bringing the potential litigation to their attention. She stated some of the potential health risks of the chemicals and encouraged councilors to vote yes and move forward with this item.



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Councilor Linton moved and Councilor Duron seconded to adopt Resolution No. 2419 and lay upon the record. Motion passed unanimously with Councilors Hayward, Roberts, McCarthy, Duron, Linton, Kelso, and Baron in favor.

Council Stipend Discussion & Possible Action

Mayor Primmer, Councilors Hayward, Roberts, McCarthy, Duron, Linton, Kelso, and Baron each declared a potential conflict of interest.

City Manager Smith stated the current stipend amount has been in effect for 28 years. No action was taken when reviewed seven years ago. Any increase would not take effect until after elections. If there is a consensus for a change in the amount of the stipend, staff would like to return the item to the council with a resolution.

Public Comments

Krista Van Veen 764 W Alder Ave- Ms. Van Veen is a council candidate and appreciates the time and work that is given by the councilors. She does not support increasing the stipend unless it's put before the voters to ensure transparency and maintain public trust.

Karyn Jones- Ms. Jones understands the need for the stipend and as a resident and voter does not have a problem with it increasing to \$200-\$250/month. She doesn't know of anyone who would support \$1,000/month. She suggests staff bring back information about other councilors' compensation in the area.

Councilor Linton originally considered an increase to \$300/month for councilors and an extra \$200/month for the mayor after looking at other cities' compensation. She feels the councilors have dedicated a lot of time and purpose and care about this community. She isn't sure who came up with the \$1,000 amount and doesn't support that amount.

Councilor Duron serves to show gratitude and contribute to the community and didn't know until after she was elected that there was a stipend. She doesn't support a stipend increase.

Councilor Kelso did not realize there was a stipend and ran for council to serve the city. He feels there should be a zero-dollar stipend as receiving a stipend in any amount taints that service.

Councilor Baron stated in 2019 a study of comparable cities was completed. The city had several huge projects on the horizon and did not move forward at that time with increasing the stipend. Councilors forfeited the stipend for a year during the Covid pandemic, and no one left the council over it. He sees the stipend not as a reward but as compensation for the work people are doing. He believes adequate compensation is not too far-fetched. He suggests those who do not want compensation can give it back or donate it to the community. Seven years ago, the budget provided funding to send councilors to training. He suggested increasing the training budget to provide more opportunities for additional training.



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Councilor Roberts hears both sides. The stipend compensates time and that is valuable. He has a hard time increasing the stipend when rates and fees have been recently increased. In certain scenarios at some point, he could support an increase.

Councilor McCarthy stated there have been multiple times to have this discussion, including goal setting sessions. It seems inappropriate to petition for an increase inside of the council meeting.

Councilor Hayward is grateful for the stipend and feels the benefit of serving his community is enough pay for him, and not taking the pay would be the best. He feels the citizens should vote on any pay raise for councilors.

Mayor Primmer stated multiple councilors over the years have donated their entire stipend and that is an option. The year councilors stopped receiving the stipend and reduced the training/conference budget was due to budget constraints. He has seen the poll by Oregon Mayors Association and Hermiston receives more compensation than most, even larger, cities. He feels the amount being given is fair. If the money was not given, he would still serve.

Councilor Kelso moved and Councilor Hayward seconded to eliminate the stipend for the city council and the mayor. After some discussion regarding adequate compensation and donating the stipend, the motion failed 3-4 with Councilors Hayward, Duron, and Kelso voting in favor and Councilors Roberts, McCarthy, Linton, and Baron voting against.

Councilor McCarthy moved and Councilor Hayward seconded to take no action on the discussion. Motion passed 6-1 with Councilors Hayward, Roberts, McCarthy, Kelso, Baron, and Duron in favor and Councilor Linton opposed.

Committee Reports

Councilor McCarthy reminded everyone that the TRT grant applications are due by the end of May.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Primmer spoke regarding:

- Thanked Captain Primmer for her presentation and the information provided
- Candidate Forum April 16
- Oregon LOC Spring Conference in Pendleton April 23-24

Council Presidents Report

Councilor McCarthy also spoke of the Candidate Forum April 16.

Council Reports

Councilor Baron recently attended the National League of Cities conference in Washington, D.C. This was his second time attending and he was able to meet with Congressmen and Representatives to discuss priorities and upcoming grant opportunities. It was a great experience to present in front of legislators.



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He attended several round-table discussions including one on immigration with good information shared. He enjoyed the conversations with other cities and sharing the different issues encountered.

Councilor Hayward thanked the Mayor and city for being able to attend the National Conference. It was his first time in Washington, D.C. and being able to see the Capitol. He is excited to bring other Oregon cities to observe the I Love My City event in May.

Councilor Linton commented regarding a Facebook post concerning the compensation. As a volunteer serving the community, she takes the responsibility very seriously. She questioned how it can be considered a financial gain if the amount hasn't been increased in the last 28 years and asked who came up with \$1,000/month as it was not her. She stated with the upcoming election false things will come out. She took it upon herself to correct the statement. Conversing with constituents while campaigning for the last election, some people said people would vote against her ideas because they do not like her. She responded that she felt that would not happen.

Councilor Kelso attended a Candidates Forum for Oregon Governor, US Representative, and Senator at the Harkenrider Center. The event was fairly well attended. It was great to hear from people at the higher level of government. He expressed thanks to the people who hosted the event.

Councilor Duron thanked the candidates for running and wished them the best, unfortunately she cannot attend the Candidates Forum due to a work conflict. She appreciates all the time and effort being put in by everyone.

Youth Advisory Report

No Youth Advisors were present.

Manager's Report

Placemats were created by Sara Singer Wilson of council's goals, accomplishments, and rules. These will be on the council's dais.

The SEI filings are due April 15.

Recess for Executive Session

At 8:43pm Mayor Primmer announced that the City Council will meet in Executive Session pursuant to ORS 192.660 (2) (g) which allows the Council to meet in Executive Session for the purpose of discussing preliminary negotiations involving matters of trade or commerce. At the end of the executive session, the council will return to open session. The executive session will last approximately 20 minutes.

Reconvene & Adjourn

With no further business, Mayor Primmer reconvened and adjourned the regular City Council meeting at 9:38PM.



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SIGNED: _____

Doug Primmer, Mayor

ATTEST: _____

Heather KP La Beau, Deputy City Recorder

Res. 2418- Geer/Harper
City Council: April 13, 2026

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Geer/Harper

- CIP Since 2019
- Safety
 - RR Crossing Arms
- Traffic Flow
- Construction Flow
- Construction Timeline

2

Geer/Harper

• Silver Creek Contracting:	\$1,005,000
• Bolen Construction:	\$1,114,104
• Tapani, Inc.:	\$1,181,000
• Culbert Construction:	\$1,232,194.63
• Crestline Construction:	\$1,325,075
• Wildish Standard Paving:	\$1,390,685

3

Funding

• State Gas Tax (HB2017):	\$4.5M
• Remaining:	\$1.94M

- Estimated Crossing Arms

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Questions?

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From: [Jessica Horton](#)
To: [City of Hermiston Meetings](#)
Subject: Public Comment – Geer/Harper Realignment Project (Resolution No. 2418)
Date: Monday, April 13, 2026 8:08:45 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] - STOP and VERIFY - This message came from outside of the City of Hermiston

Dear Hermiston City Council,

I appreciate the opportunity to provide public comment regarding the Geer/Harper Realignment Project.

I understand that projects involving multiple agencies—especially a railroad crossing—require coordination, time, and patience. However, I am concerned about the proposed timeline, specifically the potential closure of the intersection for up to a year.

While I can understand a shorter-term closure to safely reconstruct the roadway directly over the railroad tracks, a full year seems excessive for the broader scope of work, particularly where much of the surrounding infrastructure already exists aside from lane widening, signage, and striping updates.

This intersection serves as a critical connector for daily traffic, especially for those traveling from Umatilla, Irrigon, and surrounding areas into Hermiston. Closing it for an extended period will likely place significant strain on already congested routes such as 1st Place, Elm Avenue, and Highway 395—particularly during peak travel times. This could create unnecessary delays, increase safety concerns due to heavier traffic congestion, and impact access to essential businesses and services.

I respectfully urge the Council to consider alternative approaches that would minimize disruption, such as phased construction, partial closures, or limiting full closure to only the most critical portions of the project. Maintaining some level of traffic flow through this corridor would go a long way in reducing the burden on the community.

I recognize the importance of investing in long-term infrastructure improvements and appreciate the City's efforts to support growth and safety. However, I believe it is equally important to balance those goals with the day-to-day realities residents face.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely

Jessica Horton

Hermiston Oregon Resident