



LEBANON URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY AND BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

April 16, 2026 at 1:00 PM

Library Community Meeting Room - 55 Academy Street,
Lebanon, Oregon

MISSION STATEMENT

*We provide services that foster a resilient, safe, and growing community,
strengthened by our community connections*

CALL TO ORDER - Mayor Jackola

The meeting was Called to Order at 1:00 PM

ROLL CALL - Julie Fisher, City Recorder

PRESENT

Kenneth Jackola
Michelle Steinhebel
Dave Workman
David McClain
Dominic Conti
Tom Wells
Lance Caddy
Robert Waterhouse
Shantel Schroeder
Lawrence (Larry) Martin
Charlotte Wiebe

ABSENT

Jeremy Salvage
Rebecca Grizzle
Marcellus Angellford

NOMINATIONS

1. Election of Chair - Mayor Jackola

Motion made to appoint Chantel Schroeder by McClain, Seconded by Steinhebel.
Voting Yea: Jackola, Steinhebel, Workman, McClain, Conti, Wells, Caddy, Waterhouse,
Martin, Wiebe
Voting Nay: Schroeder

2. Election of Secretary - Committee Chair

Motion made to appoint Councilor McClain by Steinhebel, Seconded by Workman.
Motion made by Steinhebel, Seconded by Workman.
Voting Yea: Jackola, Steinhebel, Workman, Conti, Wells, Caddy, Waterhouse,
Schroeder, Martin, Wiebe
Voting Nay: McClain

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3. 2025-05-06 City of Lebanon and Urban Renewal Agency Budget Committee Minutes

Motion made to approve the 2025-05-06 City of Lebanon and Urban Renewal Agency Budget Committee Minutes by Workman, Seconded by McClain.

Voting Yea: Jackola, Steinhebel, Workman, McClain, Conti, Wells, Caddy, Waterhouse, Schroeder, Martin, Wiebe

PRESENTATION(S)

4. **Receive the FY 2026/2027 Proposed Budget** - *Brandon Neish, Finance Director*

Finance Director Neish explained that the budget document includes both the Citywide budget and the Lebanon Urban Renewal Agency budget and provided an overview of how to navigate the document in both print and electronic formats. He directed members to the general fund section beginning on page 130 and described the structure of the budget book, including the introductory message from the City Manager, financial policies, demographic information, organizational structure, revenue summaries, expenditure summaries, and fund-by-fund detail sections required by the State.

He highlighted the importance of understanding differences in beginning fund balance reporting, explaining that the budget reflects both the adopted beginning balance and an adjusted "projected" beginning balance based on actual year-end results. As an example, he noted that the general fund had been budgeted to begin fiscal year 2026 with approximately \$3.7 million but actually began with approximately \$1.6 million. He explained that these adjustments are necessary to reconcile budgeted figures with real-world financial outcomes.

Neish also pointed out that the online budget document includes interactive features such as expandable charts, hidden tables, and additional data views to assist users in reviewing financial information. He noted that the back of the document includes a summary of City debt service by fund for informational purposes, with detailed payment information included within individual fund sections. He concluded by indicating that staff would be available for questions as the Committee reviewed the budget.

5. **FY 2026/2027 City of Lebanon Budget Message** - *Ron Whitlatch, City Manager (Budget Officer)*

City Manager Ron Whitlatch presented the fiscal year 2027 budget message to the Budget Committee, outlining a comprehensive financial plan with total proposed appropriations of \$87,849,997, excluding transfers and unappropriated balances. He explained that the budget is structured to maintain essential City services while addressing ongoing financial constraints, and reflects the second year of implementation of the City's five-year strategic plan. The message emphasized continued progress in infrastructure investment, public safety, utility services, and organizational effectiveness, while acknowledging limited capacity for service expansion due to financial limitations.

Whitlatch reported that the City's budgeting approach remains conservative and data-driven, incorporating multi-year forecasting to better anticipate revenue and expenditure trends. He noted that although the budget is balanced for fiscal year 2027 as required by Oregon local budget law, long-term projections indicate a structural imbalance in the general fund, requiring continued monitoring and corrective action.

He highlighted the City Services Fee, adopted in December 2024, which generates approximately \$2 million annually and has stabilized the general fund by addressing a prior structural deficit. He noted that without the fee, the City would have relied heavily on fund balance to support operations, an approach he described as unsustainable over time. The fee supports existing service levels but does not provide capacity for new or expanded services.

The City Manager also described several budget and organizational changes intended to improve efficiency and transparency, including the elimination of internal utility cost allocation journal entries between funds, which simplifies accounting and reduces administrative

complexity while maintaining proper tracking of utility revenues and expenses. He further outlined departmental restructuring within engineering, planning, and public works to improve coordination on capital projects, as well as adjustments to staffing levels based on operational review. This included the proposed restoration of a finance manager position to address workload demands and improve financial operations, and the addition of a transit manager position for the growing LINKS transit system, fully funded through state and federal grants.

Whitlatch noted that the City continues to operate with lean staffing levels, which limits the ability to expand services without additional resources. He reviewed major capital projects included in the budget, such as transportation improvements, park upgrades, wastewater treatment plant work, and utility infrastructure replacements, and noted the final year of the Northwest Urban Renewal District, which will result in increased general fund revenue upon closure.

He reported that while the City's financial outlook has improved compared to prior years, projected deficits remain in future years, including an estimated shortfall in fiscal year 2027 and additional deficits projected in later years. He emphasized the need for continued fiscal discipline, cost containment, and strategic planning to maintain service levels.

The message also addressed long-term infrastructure funding challenges, including declining street maintenance resources, anticipated water and wastewater capital needs, and increased regulatory and environmental costs. Whitlatch noted that securing grants and external funding will be increasingly important but will require significant administrative capacity.

He concluded that the proposed budget reflects a balanced and responsible financial plan aligned with Council priorities, including infrastructure investment, continued efforts toward reopening the municipal jail, and maintaining core services. He thanked Finance Director Brandon Neish and City department leadership for their work in preparing the budget.

ADJOURN & CONVENE

6. *Temporarily adjourn as the Lebanon Budget Committee and convene as the Urban Renewal Agency Budget Committee*

PRESENTATION(S)

7. **Receive the FY 2026/2027 Lebanon Urban Renewal Agency Budget** - *Brandon Neish, Finance Director*

Finance Director Neish presented the FY 2027 Lebanon Urban Renewal Agency budget. He explained that the Urban Renewal budget is separate from the City's main budget and functions independently, with all revenues and expenditures tied specifically to district projects and associated debt service.

8. **FY 2026/2027 Lebanon Urban Renewal Agency Budget Message** - *Ron Whitlatch, Agency Manager (Budget Officer)*

City Manager Ron Whitlatch stated that the Agency continues to prioritize strategic investment, disciplined financial management, and the timely return of property tax value to the community. As the urban renewal districts mature, the Agency is shifting its focus from development to stewardship, with an emphasis on reducing outstanding debt and preparing districts for closure.

Mr. Whitlatch noted that, over the past several years, the Agency has taken a deliberate approach to accelerating debt repayment in order to reduce long-term interest costs and return property tax revenues to overlapping taxing districts sooner.

For FY 2027, he highlighted that the Northwest Urban Renewal District will see a significant reduction in tax increment financing, while the Downtown Urban Renewal District will be reduced to zero. These actions are expected to return more than \$1 million in property tax

revenue to local taxing districts, and both districts are anticipated to close at the end of the fiscal year. He emphasized that these closures represent a major milestone and reflect both the success of prior investments and the Agency's commitment to completing its work efficiently.

He further explained that while some districts are nearing closure, others remain active. The North Gateway Urban Renewal District continues to support infrastructure and development projects aimed at encouraging private investment, job creation, and long-term growth in assessed value.

Mr. Whitlatch concluded by reiterating that urban renewal is intended to be a temporary tool. The Agency remains committed to managing resources responsibly, minimizing debt, and returning revenues to the broader tax base in order to strengthen the financial capacity and long-term stability of the community and its partner taxing districts.

ADJOURN & CONVENE

9. *Adjourn as the Urban Renewal Agency Budget Committee and reconvene as the Lebanon Budget Committee*

BUDGET MEETINGS SCHEDULE

The committee reviewed possible dates for the Lebanon Urban Renewal Agency and Budget Committee meetings and by consensus meetings at noon on May 18 and May 20 were scheduled.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 1:34 PM.

Meetings are recorded and available on the City's YouTube page at:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/CityofLebanonOR/videos>

The meeting location is accessible to persons with disabilities. A request for an interpreter for the hearing impaired or for other accommodations for persons with disabilities should be made at least 48 hours before the meeting to the City Recorder at 541.258.4905.