

**RIO DELL CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
NOVEMBER 4, 2025**

Mayor Garnes called the regular meeting of the Rio Dell City Council to order at 6:00 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:** Present: Mayor Garnes, Mayor Pro Tem Carter, Councilmembers Orr and Wilson

Absent: Councilmember Woodall (excused)

Others Present: City Manager Knopp, Finance Director Sanborn, Wastewater Superintendent Moore, Chief of Police Phinney, City Clerk Dunham, and Senior Fiscal Assistant Maciel. Community Development Director Caldwell attended remotely.

Absent: Water/Roadways Superintendent Jensen (excused)

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS**

Mayor Garnes invited public comments on non-agenda matters. No public comments were received.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

Mayor Garnes asked if any council member, staff, or members of the public would like to remove any item from the consent calendar for separate discussions. No items were removed.

CarterOrr/Wilson made a motion to approve the consent calendar, including the following items:

- 1) Approve Minutes of October 21, 2025, Regular Meeting.

The motion carried 4-0.

**REPORTS/STAFF COMMUNICATIONS**

City Manager/Staff Update

City Manager Knopp announced that the city received a letter from the Rio Dell Elementary School District regarding a 14-day notice of a proposal to implement developer fees (notice attached to these minutes). A public hearing will be held at the school on November 13<sup>th</sup> in which the Board will consider a resolution implementing school facilities fees in accordance with Education Code Section 17620.

**NOVEMBER 4, 2025 MINUTES**  
**Page 2**

He then reported on potential funding through HCAOG for a Zero Emission Study and said that the city submitted an application for potential zero emission vehicle funding in the future. He also reported that he would be attending the Redwood Coast Region Economic Development (RCRED) summit in Lakeport later this week.

Wastewater Superintendent Moore announced that Kevin Nasset passed his Water Treatment Grade II exam, Andrew Lewis passed his Wastewater Treatment Operator II exam, and Andres Lopez passed his Wastewater Operator I exam.

The Council congratulated them for their accomplishments.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter commented that there were 2 dogs and 1 cat transported to Miranda's Rescue over the past 3 weeks. She extended thanks to all city staff.

Councilmember Wilson asked for clarification on the proposed school fee and whether it was a one-time fee.

City Manager Knopp explained that it would be a one-time fee on new construction and residential additions over 500 square feet. He said that it could potentially make the school eligible for additional grant funding through the state. Staff will keep the council informed of any updates on the subject.

## **SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS/STUDY SESSIONS**

### Unmet Transit Needs Public Hearing

City Manager Knopp provided a staff report and said that each year, as established by the California Development Act (TDA), the Humboldt County Association of Governments (HCAOG) is required to conduct a citizen participation process to identify any "unmet transit needs" within Humboldt County. This process is required prior to allocations of TDA funding for the following fiscal year. All comments deemed to meet the definition of an unmet transit need will then be analyzed and reviewed by HCAOG's Social Services Transportation Advisory Council to determine if the need is reasonable to meet. Comments that are operational in nature are then forwarded to transit operators. All public comments received by December 31, 2025, will be discussed by the advisory council and a Report of Findings brought to the HCAOG Board in 2026.

He said the recommendation is to open the public hearing and receive input on any unmet transit needs in the community, close the public hearing and make a motion to direct staff to send a letter to HCAOG relaying the comments made during the public hearing.

Stevie Luther from HCAOG was present via Zoom to answer any questions. He announced that citizens can go on HCAOG's website and comment through their survey under the public transportation page and submit written comments related to any unmet transit needs at [hcaog.net](http://hcaog.net), or phone in comments to the HCAOG office.

Mayor Garnes opened the public hearing at 6:10 P.M.

**John Snyder** asked if the city had any known unmet transit needs at this time.

Mayor Garnes explained that the purpose of the public hearing is to receive any comments related to unmet transit needs specific to Rio Dell.

There were no further public comments, and the public hearing was closed.

Presentation on the Year-End Financial Report for FY 2025-26

Finance Director Sanborn provided a power point presentation on the *City of Rio Dell Fiscal Year 2024-25 Year-End Financial Report*.

He began by stating that the Annual Financial Report summarizes and analyzes the City's financial performance for FY 2024-25. The report details revenues and expenditures incurred during the fiscal year and explains any material differences between these figures and the adjusted budget. Financial reserves and fund balances are also updated at the end of the fiscal year. This report was created using unaudited financials as of June 30, 2025. The official audit is expected to be completed in early 2026.

He explained that the City has three main fund types for consolidating its finances: the General fund, Enterprise funds, including Water and Sewer, and Special Revenue funds. City expenses exceeded revenues by just over \$104,000, mainly due to a \$725,000 reduction in Special Revenue funds, which involves required drawdowns of the CDBG Program Income (PI) and ARPA Funds.

Next was a comparison of actual revenues and expenses to the budgeted amounts for major funds. All fund revenues outside the Water Fund exceeded the budgeted amount. The Water Fund budget included the entire \$12+ million Water Infrastructure Improvement Project, which was expected to be completed in FY 2024-25. Due to project delays, most of the revenues and expenditures will now occur in the current fiscal year. All funds except the Streets fund had budgeted expenditures below the original budget. General Fund expenditures were 25% lower than planned, mainly because of scheduled capital projects and unfilled positions in the police department.

Finance Director Sanborn commented that the City's Fund Balance totaled over \$9.7 million at the end of the fiscal year but expects it to decrease during the current fiscal year because of ARPA revenues received that must be spent, and large infrastructure projects that are being initiated from the list of projects resulting from the December 2022 earthquake.

**NOVEMBER 4, 2025 MINUTES**  
**Page 4**

General Fund revenues were approximately 1% higher than budgeted with expenditures \$545,000 under budget, mainly due to unspent capital projects that were planned out but not completed in addition to lower spending across departments.

Street Fund revenues were 7% higher than budgeted, Sewer Enterprise revenues were 12% more than budgeted, and Water Enterprise revenues exceeded the budget by 47%, primarily due to funds received from CalOES for projects linked to the December 2022 earthquake that have not yet been completed. In addition, expenditures were 19% less than budgeted.

Finance Director Sanborn noted that other significant funds in the special revenues fund include the Building fund, the Supplemental Law Enforcement Services Fund (SLESF), and the CDBG fund. The building fund receives an annual transfer from the General fund to cover expenses that exceed revenues. The SLESF provides additional support for law enforcement, including salaries and benefits. The CDBG fund must be fully drawn down before using the City's CDBG Program Income (PI) revenues. These funds are currently under contract with the County of Humboldt to offer loans to qualified applicants affected by the 2022 earthquake disaster.

He concluded the presentation and called for questions from the Council.

Councilmember Wilson questioned the \$11,332 variance in the City Council budget.

Finance Director Sanborn explained that there were additional expenditures related to legal fees.

## **ORDINANCES/SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS/PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Introduction and First Reading (by title only) of Ordinance No. 416-2025 Removing Section 10.05.780 and Amending Section 10.05.020 and 10.05.790 of the Rio Dell Municipal Code (RDMC) Restricting Parking of Specific Commercial Vehicles in Designated Areas Within the City

City Manager Knopp provided a staff report recommending the introduction of Ordinance No. 416-2025 related to parking restrictions for commercial vehicles in designated areas within the city.

He said that over the past years, there have been concerns with commercial truck parking in Rio Dell related to the damage to infrastructure, traffic safety, and neighborhood impacts related to aesthetics and visibility concerns for residents.

He explained that currently, the Rio Dell Municipal Code (RDMC) lacks adequate provisions to address these issues effectively. The proposed ordinance would permit local authorities to regulate parking of commercial vehicles with a manufactured gross vehicle weight rating of 10,000 pounds or more on designated streets or in residential

districts. The California Vehicle Code authorizes local regulations of commercial vehicle parking when appropriate signage is erected.

The matter was presented to the Traffic Committee twice before bringing the draft ordinance to the City Council.

City Manager Knopp reviewed key provisions of the ordinance which included the following:

- 1) Definitions
- 2) Permit system
- 3) Specific Street Restrictions
- 4) Exemptions
- 5) Enforcement
- 6) Permit Transferability

City Manager Knopp said that the City Council might want to direct staff to bring forward a resolution restricting all vehicles to 2-hour parking along the 600 block of Wildwood Avenue, rather than just commercial vehicles.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter thought that 2-hour parking for all vehicles was a good compromise but wondered about exceptions such as the Blood Mobile that routinely parks in front of City Hall.

City Manager Knopp commented that there could be exceptions for situations that provide public benefit.

Councilmember Orr provided the scenario of a commercial vehicle moving the vehicle every 2 hours to avoid a citation and asked if there could be a distance in which the vehicle had to be moved to be exempt.

Knopp said that language could be included in the ordinance to make it clear.

Councilmember Wilson asked if the regulations for establishing 2-hour parking for all vehicles would come back to the Council as a future agenda item.

City Manager Knopp explained that it would come back to the Council in the form of a Resolution and it would be restricted to the area in front of City Hall. Memorial Park and Blue Star Park.

Councilmember Wilson asked about the status of the recent truck parking on Northwestern Avenue.

**NOVEMBER 4, 2025 MINUTES**  
**Page 6**

City Manager Knopp said that it was likely unrelated to the current discussions on truck parking and if space at that site is available for rent, the information could be provided to other local commercial vehicle owners.

Mayor Garnes suggested language be added to the “No More Than 2-Hour Commercial Truck Parking” sign to say that “No Overnight Parking is Allowed” even though it is implied.

City Manager Knopp said that staff could bring back draft language for the signs in accordance with state law.

Mayor Garnes asked for clarification that the transfer of parking permits would only be transferable to the same person with a different truck and not to another person.

City Manager Knopp explained that it would apply to a person who needed to change trucks for whatever reason and that they would need to notify the Police Department of the change.

Mayor Garnes called for public comments on the proposed ordinance.

**John Snyder** said that a truck could be left idling for 2 hours to keep warm and suggested no idling of commercial vehicles be allowed, as the trucks could pump out fumes in the air.

A motion was made by Carter/Wilson to approve the introduction and first reading (by title only) of *Ordinance No. 416-2025 Removing Section 10.05.780 and Amending Section 10.05.020 and 10.05.790 of the Rio Dell Municipal Code (RDMC) Restricting Parking of Specific Commercial Vehicles in Designated Areas Within the City* and to continue the item to the November 18, 2025 regular meeting for its second reading and potential adoption.

Chief of Police Phinney suggested the motion include directions to staff to draft a resolution related to 2-hour parking on the 600 block of Wildwood Avenue for all vehicles.

The motion was amended as requested. The motion then carried 4-0.

## **COUNCIL REPORTS/COMMUNICATION**

Mayor Pro Tem Carter reported on upcoming meetings and events and said that she would be attending a Fire Commissioner’s meeting on November 13<sup>th</sup> followed by the Rio Dell School Board meeting. She attended a Chamber of Commerce meeting yesterday where Christmas planning is underway. She said that they would be putting up Christmas decorations on November 22-23 and volunteers were welcome to join in

**NOVEMBER 4, 2025 MINUTES**  
**Page 7**

and help. She announced December 6<sup>th</sup> as the date for the Annual Tree Lighting Event beginning at 5 p.m.

In other news, she announced that the new laundromat was now open for business as well as a new dog grooming business at 99 Wildwood Ave. opening soon. In addition, the Rio Dell Barber Shop and Emerald Z will be hosting Toys for Tots this year on December 14-16, and a free Community Dinner will be held on November 22<sup>nd</sup> from 3-6 p.m. at the Rio Dell School for anyone who would like to attend. She noted that there was great collaboration between the Community Resource Center, the Rio Dell Fire Department, the Rio Dell School, The Journey Church, Liberty Tabernacle, and the Rio Dell Church of Christ who worked together to organize the event.

Councilmember Orr commented that it was great to see all the kids out on Halloween and that the Fortuna High School is doing their annual MAD (Make a Difference) Projects and need volunteer hours if there are any organizations in town that need volunteer work done.

Councilmember Wilson said that he would be attending a Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) meeting on Monday instead of Thursday because of the Thanksgiving holiday falling on the regular meeting day.

Mayor Garnes said she would be attending a Humboldt Transit Authority (HTA) meeting tomorrow at 9 a.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Carter/Orr made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 p.m. to the November 18, 2025, regular meeting. Motion carried 4-0.

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Debra Garnes, Mayor

Attest:

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Karen Dunham, City Clerk