

**RIO DELL CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 5, 2025**

Mayor Garnes called the regular meeting of the Rio Dell City Council to order at 5:15 p.m.

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

Absent: Councilmember Orr (excused)

Others Present: City Manager Knopp, Chief of Police Phinney, Water/
Roadways Superintendent Jensen, Community Service
Officers Clark and Wolfe, City Clerk Dunham, and
Senior Fiscal Assistant Maciel

Absent: Finance Director Sanborn and Community Development
Director Caldwell (excused)

ANNOUNCEMENT OF ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED IN CLOSED SESSION

Conference with Labor Negotiator – Agency Negotiator: City Manager – Employee
Organizations: Rio Dell Employees Association, Rio Dell Police Officers Association
and all Contract Employees

PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING CLOSED SESSION

No members of the public were present to comment.

RECESS INTO CLOSED SESSION

The Council recessed into closed session at 5:15 p.m. with City Manager Knopp.

RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION

The Council reconvened into open session at 6:00 p.m.

ORAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Garnes announced that the City Council was in closed session to discuss the above-listed matters and had nothing to report from the closed session.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

Mayor Garnes invited public comment on non-agenda matters.

Susanne Campbell, of 65 Davis St., addressed the City Council about a litter problem in her neighborhood. She said that she lives near the Dollar General and the Chevron Station, and kids walk by, throwing their food wrappers and trash along the street. She recommended a trash receptacle be placed near the school crossing.

She also asked if a building permit was required to install new windows, to which City Clerk Dunham responded that a permit was required.

City Manager Knopp explained that the number of public trash receptacles is part of the City's Solid Waste Franchise Agreement with Recology Eel River, and that number is likely maxed out, but agreed to clarify that with Recology.

The consensus of the Council was to place the item of a trash receptacle on the next regular meeting agenda.

CONSENT CALENDAR

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

A motion was made by Carter/Woodall to approve the consent calendar, including the following items:

- 1) Authorize the Chief of Police to Execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Critters Without Litters;
- 2) Approve the Mayor the sign a Letter of Support for SB 349 Related to Transient Occupancy Taxes; and
- 3) Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Comment Letter to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Related to the Surrender Application and Decommissioning Plan for the Potter Valley Project.

The motion carried 4-0.

REPORTS/STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

City Manager/Staff Update

City Manager Knopp reported on recent meetings and activities and said that staff submitted a community highlight article on the Eel River Trail to the North Edge (AEDC) for the upcoming regional economic development conference.

He also reported that staff applied for a 2025 Land and Water Conservation (LWCF) grant for the Davis St. Park acquisition and that staff was hoping to hear back about the grant by the end of the year.

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He commented that the Police Department Bi-Weekly Report was submitted under separate cover and turned the discussion over to Chief Phinney for the introduction of the new Community Service Officer.

Chief Phinney introduced Libbianne Wolfe as the city's newest Community Service Officer and said that she was born in Fortuna and raised in the rural community of Zenia, CA. She earned a Certified Veterinary Assistant Certificate and worked at the City of Fortuna as a kennel attendant, which gave her valuable hands-on experience with animal care and working with the public. It also prepared her for the wide range of duties as a Community Service Officer. He welcomed her to the team and said that she would be an asset to the Police Department and the City of Rio Dell.

Libbianne thanked the City for the opportunity and said that she was grateful to be here.

Councilmember Wilson referred to the City Clerk update and questioned the removal of the overhead service at 439 Northwestern Ave.

City Clerk Dunham explained that PG&E obtained an Encroachment Permit to remove an inactive service at that location.

Mayor Garnes mentioned an accident that occurred with one of the parade entrants and asked for an update on the accident.

Chief Phinney explained that the accident involved an ATV towing a float. The wrong trailer ball was used, causing the trailer to disconnect from the ATV, ejecting the people from the trailer. One person sustained a concussion, and others sustained minor injuries and are doing well.

SPECIAL CALL ITEMS/COMMUNITY AFFAIRS/PUBLIC HEARINGS

Public Hearing – Cost Recovery for the Abatement of 520 First Avenue

CSO Clark provided a staff report and explained that this serves as a public hearing for the cost recovery on the abatement warrant executed on March 18, 2025, and March 19, 2025, at 520 First Avenue. The total cost for the abatement was \$8,977.22.

Councilmember Wilson asked if the lien would be placed on the property taxes, to which CSO Clark responded that it would be.

Mayor Garnes opened the public hearing to receive public comment on the matter. No public comment was received, and the public hearing was closed.

A motion was made by Carter/Woodall to approve the findings and order confirming accounts and assessment for the abatement of 520 First Avenue. Motion carried 4-0.

COUNCIL REPORTS/COMMUNICATION

Councilmember Wilson reported that there would not be an HWMA meeting in August, and that a lot was going on at the Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) and invited council members to contact him if they were interested in the details.

Councilmember Woodall complimented the Rio Dell Fire Department and the Chamber of Commerce for putting together another great Wildwood Days event.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter commented that her mother was here visiting for eight (8) days and said that she commented on Julie Woodall's beautiful flower displays throughout town, and that she loved to see a small town where City officials dance in the street with the kids.

She then announced that the Community Resource Center would be hosting a "Chalk on the Walk" event on August 11-15, where kids will be allowed to draw art on the curvy sidewalk between the Fire Hall and the Library.

She requested that an item be placed on the next agenda, with Mahayla Broussard providing a presentation to the Council on a small art project she is proposing that includes painting on the City's utility box at the south end of town near the bridge. The consensus of the Council was to place the item on the next agenda.

Mayor Garnes thanked everyone involved in helping to make Wildwood Days a huge success.

She thanked Water/Roadways Superintendent Jensen and the public works crew for coming out on Sunday night to take care of a water leak on Berkeley St. She commended them for sticking with the job to make sure residents in the area had water, then came back Monday and completed the repairs.

Susanne Campbell congratulated the City for having such a wonderful Wildwood Days event and commended Councilmember Woodall for the beautiful display of flowers throughout town.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Carter/Woodall to adjourn the meeting at 6:22 p.m. to the August 19, 2025, regular meeting. Motion carried 4-0.

Debra Garnes, Mayor

Attest:

Karen Dunham, City Clerk