



CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

August 20, 2025 at 5:30 PM

Council Chambers at City Hall - 1123 W. Lake St. Sandpoint, Idaho

Call to Order

Mayor Grimm called the meeting of the Sandpoint City Council to order at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, August 20, 2025, in Council chambers at City Hall, 1123 W. Lake St., Sandpoint, Idaho.

Roll Call

PRESENT

Mayor Jeremy Grimm
Councilor Deb Ruehle, Council President
Councilor Joel Aispuro
Councilor Justin Dick
Councilor Kyle Schreiber
Councilor Pam Duquette
Councilor Rick Howarth

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Grimm led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements and Reports

Mayor Grimm provided instructions for those who wished to testify during the public hearings that were on the agenda to complete a public comment sign-up form. He also announced that, for anyone interested in running for city elected office, there would be an election this November for three City Council seats, currently held by Councilors Aispuro, Dick, and Howarth. The two-week window for candidates to declare candidacy and get on the November ballot was open, with a declaration deadline of August 29.

Council members reported on the recent meetings of the City's citizen advisory boards on which they serve as Council liaison. With a number of fires in our area, Councilors thanked those involved in the firefighting effort and encouraged donation of snacks and incidentals to the firefighters.

At the request and invitation of the Mayor, Department directors provided updates and reports on activities in their respective departments.

Public Comments

Mayor Grimm recited the rules and procedure for public comments during the meeting and offered an opportunity for members of the public to speak on items included on the Consent Calendar and Old and New Business topics on the agenda or other general matters relevant to the business of the City of Sandpoint. Information only; no Council action.

Consent Calendar

Mayor Grimm recited for the record the amount of the bills for payment approval, and the Consent Calendar was approved as presented.

Motion made by Councilor Schreiber, Seconded by Councilor Aispuro.

Voting Yea: Councilor Ruehle, Councilor Aispuro, Councilor Dick, Councilor Schreiber, Councilor Duquette, Councilor Howarth

1. The minutes from Council's August 6, 2025, meeting were approved as presented.
2. Bills were approved for payment in the amount of \$476,011.45 for regular payables.
3. The July 2025 Monthly Financial Report on Cash and Investment Transactions was accepted.
4. **Resolution 25-029**, Updating Procurement and Contract Policy, was approved.
5. Notice of Decision re: Great Northern Commerce Subdivision Preliminary Plat (City File #PS250001) was approved.

Public Hearings

Mayor Grimm reported, for the record, that written comments received regarding the public hearing topics on the agenda were forwarded and provided to Council if received in time to do so.

6. Fiscal Year 2026 Budget

The Mayor announced that the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget was the first public hearing topic, offering Council members an opportunity to ask questions of staff.

With no questions from Council, Mayor Grimm recited public testimony instructions and then opened the public hearing. No one testified, and the Mayor closed the public hearing.

7. Deliberation/Decision: Annual Appropriation Ordinance FY2026

Councilor Schreiber expressed concern regarding certain aspects of the budget.

The City Clerk read the title of the Ordinance as follows:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF SANDPOINT, A MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF THE STATE OF IDAHO, TERMED THE ANNUAL APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE, PURSUANT TO IDAHO CODE § 50-1003, APPROPRIATING \$49,927,665 TO DEFRAY THE NECESSARY EXPENSES AND LIABILITIES OF THE CITY OF SANDPOINT, IDAHO, FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING OCTOBER 1, 2025, LEVYING A SUFFICIENT TAX UPON THE TAXABLE PROPERTY AND SPECIFYING THE OBJECTS AND PURPOSE FOR WHICH SAID APPROPRIATION IS MADE; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY, PUBLICATION AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

The Mayor called for a motion that the Ordinance pass its first reading by title only.

Motion made by Councilor Aispuro, Seconded by Councilor Ruehle.

There was a brief discussion prior to the vote, with Mayor Grimm fielding Council member questions.

Voting Yea: Councilor Ruehle, Councilor Aispuro, Councilor Dick, Councilor Duquette, Councilor Howarth

Voting Nay: Councilor Schreiber

The Mayor announced that the Ordinance had passed its first reading by title only.

Motion that the rules requiring three separate readings, once in the Ordinance's entirety, be suspended and that the Ordinance pass its second and third readings under suspension of the rules.

Motion made by Councilor Ruehle, Seconded by Councilor Dick.

Voting Yea: Councilor Ruehle, Councilor Aispuro, Councilor Dick, Councilor Schreiber, Councilor Duquette, Councilor Howarth

Mayor Grimm thanked Finance Director Sarah Lynds, the other department directors and staff and City Council, with congratulations on adoption of the City's Fiscal Year 2026 Budget.

8. **Resolution 25-030** Certifying the Amount of Forgone Increase to be Included in the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget

With the budget adopted, there was a motion to approve the Resolution certifying the amount of forgone increase to be included in the Budget.

Motion made by Councilor Dick, Seconded by Councilor Howarth.

Voting Yea: Councilor Ruehle, Councilor Aispuro, Councilor Dick, Councilor Schreiber, Councilor Duquette, Councilor Howarth

Motion passed, and the Resolution was approved.

9. City Fees - Proposed New Fees and Fee Increases in Excess of 5%

Mayor Grimm announced that, next, there would be a public hearing to take testimony on proposed new City fees and fees proposed to increase more than 5%, offering Council members an opportunity to ask questions of staff.

With no questions from the Council, Mayor Grimm provided public testimony instructions and then opened the public hearing. Ben McGrann, who was not a City resident, testified on behalf of the conditional use permittee developing the hotel/resort at 56 Bridge Street, with time gifted by Rick Decker, also not a City resident. With no additional testimony, the Mayor closed the public hearing.

10. **Resolution 25-031** Adopting New City Fees and Approving Changes to Existing Fees and Fee Schedule

Council discussed and deliberated the fees contained within the proposed City Fee Schedule, with questions fielded by Mayor Grimm, City Attorney Fonda Jovick, Community Planning and Development Director Jason Welker, Central Services Director Cheryl Hughes, and City Planner Bill Dean. Mr. Welker clarified that the Development Impact Fees, although indicated on the proposed chart as taking effect immediately, would not take effect, at the earliest, until the City is legally able to implement those fees following approved code amendments, which will be presented to Council at their September 3 meeting, and an additional 30 days following approval. It was further clarified that the parking permit fees, although indicated on the proposed chart as taking effect on October 1, 2025, will not actually be effective until the recently-approved parking management plan is implemented and, further, that Council would have an opportunity to adjust these fees prior to that implementation.

The motion to approve the Resolution adopting new City fees and approving changes to existing fees and the Fee Schedule resulted in a tie vote of Council and was ultimately approved with an affirmative tie-breaking vote cast by the Mayor.

Motion made by Councilor Ruehle, Seconded by Councilor Aispuro.

Voting Yea: Mayor Grimm, Councilor Ruehle, Councilor Dick, Councilor Schreiber

Voting Nay: Councilor Aispuro, Councilor Duquette, Councilor Howarth

Old/Unfinished Business

11. **Ordinance 1430** November 4, 2025, Election Ballot Question - City of Sandpoint Wastewater Treatment Plant Bond

Mayor Grimm announced that first under Old Business was approval of ballot language proposed for the November 4, 2025, general city election, where the City will seek voter approval of bonding to help fund a new wastewater treatment plant.

Following an introduction by Public Works Director Holly Ellis, the City's bond counsel, Danielle Quade with Hawley Troxell, and Amy Holly with City consultant Portman Square provided an update on the community survey and information on the ballot language for the proposed bond election and, along with Ms. Ellis and Kyle Meschko with Keller Associates, fielded questions from the Mayor and Council members.

Following Council member remarks, there was a motion to approve a bond election to be held on November 4, 2025, for Sandpoint voters to consider the proposition of the issuance of up to \$130,000,000 negotiable wastewater revenue bonds to finance the design, acquisition and construction of improvements to the City's wastewater system and facilities.

Motion made by Councilor Aispuro, Seconded by Councilor Ruehle.

Voting Yea: Councilor Ruehle, Councilor Aispuro, Councilor Dick, Councilor Schreiber, Councilor Duquette, Councilor Howarth

The City Clerk read the title of the Ordinance as follows:

AN ORDINANCE CALLING A SPECIAL MUNICIPAL REVENUE BOND ELECTION TO BE HELD FOR THE PURPOSE OF SUBMITTING TO THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF THE CITY OF SANDPOINT, BONNER COUNTY, IDAHO, THE PROPOSITION OF THE ISSUANCE OF UP TO \$130,000,000 NEGOTIABLE WASTEWATER REVENUE BONDS OF THE CITY OF SANDPOINT, BONNER COUNTY, IDAHO, TO FINANCE THE DESIGN, ACQUISITION AND CONSTRUCTION OF IMPROVEMENTS TO THE WASTEWATER SYSTEM AND FACILITIES OF THE CITY OF SANDPOINT, BONNER COUNTY, IDAHO, PROVIDING FOR THE ISSUANCE AND PAYMENT OF SUCH BONDS AND DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF SAID IMPROVEMENTS, AND PROVIDING FOR RESERVE FUNDING AND PAYMENT OF COSTS OF ISSUANCE OF THE BONDS.

Motion that the Ordinance pass its first reading by title only and the summary is approved.

Motion made by Councilor Dick, Seconded by Councilor Aispuro.

Voting Yea: Councilor Ruehle, Councilor Aispuro, Councilor Dick, Councilor Schreiber, Councilor Duquette, Councilor Howarth

Mayor Grimm announced that the Ordinance had passed its first reading by title only, and the summary was approved.

Motion that the rules requiring three separate readings, once in the Ordinance's entirety, be suspended and that the Ordinance pass its second and third readings under suspension of the rules.

Motion made by Councilor Ruehle, Seconded by Councilor Schreiber.

Voting Yea: Councilor Ruehle, Councilor Aispuro, Councilor Dick, Councilor Schreiber, Councilor Duquette, Councilor Howarth

Mayor Grimm announced that the motion passed and that the Ordinance was considered read, passed and adopted under suspension of the rules and would be forwarded to the Bonner County Clerk for the question to be included on the ballot for the November 4th election.

With consensus from Council, Item #13 was taken up next, prior to item #12.

13. Presentation/Discussion: Potential Amendment to City Code 3-2-9, Open Container Law

Mr. Welker provided information on the potential for allowing alcohol at City Beach Park, at portions of Travers Park, including the James E. Russell Sports Center, and at the building the Lions Club leases from the City at Lakeview Park and, along with Mayor Grimm and Police Chief Corey Coon, fielded questions from the Councilors.

Council members weighed in with their thoughts on the prospect of alcohol being allowed at each of these locations, providing staff with guidance to bring a proposed ordinance for Council consideration at a future meeting.

12. Deliberation/Decision: Amendments to City Code Title 9, Chapters 1 and 5, Alleys and Off-street Parking Areas/Facilities

Mayor Grimm announced that a public hearing on these proposed code amendments was held and closed on August 6, 2025, with Council postponing deliberation to this meeting date, August 20.

Council revisited this item and deliberated, with Mr. Dean, Mayor Grimm, and Mr. Welker fielding questions, and Council President Ruehle suggesting a motion prior to any additional deliberation.

Councilor Dick made a motion to approve the amendments to City Code Title 9, Chapters 1 and 5, as presented, seconded by Councilor Duquette.

Following this motion, additional discussion ensued, with Councilor Schreiber making a motion to amend the motion to approve, to state that the amendments would be approved as presented, with the exception of the expansion of the parking-exempt zone. This motion to amend the main motion was seconded by Councilor Duquette.

Result of the vote on the motion to amend:

Voting Yea: Councilor Schreiber, Councilor Duquette

Voting Nay: Councilor Ruehle, Councilor Aispuro, Councilor Dick, Councilor Howarth

The motion to amend failed with all but Councilors Schreiber and Duquette dissenting.

Result of the vote on the main motion to approve the amendments to City Code Title 9, Chapters 1 and 5, as presented:

Voting Yea: Councilor Ruehle, Councilor Aispuro, Councilor Dick, Councilor Duquette, Councilor Howarth

Voting Nay: Councilor Schreiber

Motion passed, with Councilor Schreiber dissenting.

Mayor Grimm announced that an ordinance would be presented at Council's next regular meeting for official adoption in order to effect these changes in City Code.

New Business - none

Executive Session

14. Council voted to convene in Executive Session pursuant to Idaho Code § 74-206(1)(f) for the purpose of communicating with legal counsel to discuss the legal ramifications of and legal options for pending litigation or controversies not yet being litigated but imminently likely to be litigated.

Motion made by Councilor Ruehle, Seconded by Councilor Aispuro.

Voting Yea: Councilor Ruehle, Councilor Aispuro, Councilor Dick, Councilor Schreiber, Councilor Duquette, Councilor Howarth

15. Mayor Grimm asked those not attending the session to please exit the room, announcing that the meeting recording would end, and an executive session was held pursuant to Idaho Code § 74-206(1)(f), as described above.

Adjourn

Following conclusion of the executive session, the meeting was reconvened and then immediately adjourned at 9:22 p.m.

I presided over this meeting and can confirm that the foregoing minutes, prepared by the City Clerk, were approved by City Council during their meeting held _____, 2025.

Jeremy Grimm, Mayor

Attest: Melissa Ward, City Clerk