

DRAFT MINUTES
CITY OF STEVENSON COUNCIL MEETING
March 19, 2026
6:00 PM, City Hall and Remote

Items with an asterisk (*) have been added or modified after the initial draft publication of the Agenda.

Attending:

Elected officials: **Mayor Jenny Taylor; Councilmembers Dave Cox, Lucy Lauser, Erin Minnis, Tina Van Pelt.**

City staff: **Jayne Borden, Finance Director, Cody Rosander, Stevenson Public Works Director, Robert Muth, City Attorney, Daniel Pitariu, Records and Permit Manager.**

Guests: Skamania County Undersheriff Tracy Wyckoff; Stevenson Downtown Association Executive Director, Kelly O'Malley-McKee; Angie Martin, Director, Skamania County Chamber of Commerce.

Public participants: Rick Jessel, Mary Repar, Brian McNamara, Bob Wertheimer, Scott Robinson, Rick May, **Stan Roth.**

1. CALL TO ORDER/PRESENTATION TO THE FLAG: **Mayor Taylor** called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., led the group in reciting the pledge of allegiance, and conducted roll call.

a) OATH OF OFFICE – COUNCIL POSITION #4

The oath of office was administered prior to the meeting to newly appointed **Councilmember Jeff Breckel** for Position #4.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Rick Jessel commented on communications received from Representative Marie-Gluesenkamp-Perez. He suggested contacting her regarding funding for water projects. Mary Repar read a statement from the League of Women Voters regarding concurrence with their national policy supporting immigrants. She commented on the cost of water, and encouraged getting more property owners to hook up to the sewer system to help reduce overall costs. She also requested a protocol or policy regarding privacy from drones.

Brian McNamara commented on the sewer ordinance and asked the council to schedule a homeowner meeting regarding hook-up requirements.

Bob Wertheimer spoke about conflicting information received from city staff concerning sewer hookups.

Scott Robinson thanked others about articulating sewer issue, and spoke about cyber-vulnerabilities in public utilities.

Rick May asked for figures regarding the costs of operating the sewer system and the numbers of users needed.

3. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA: None noted

4. CONSENT AGENDA:

- a) Minutes of February 19, 2026 City Council meeting.
- b) *Minutes March 5, 2026.
- c) *Approval of Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC) Funding – CAT Transportation Bus (\$10,000). Funding is intended to enhance visitor access and support tourism-related transportation consistent with allowable uses of lodging tax revenues.
- d) *Water Leak Adjustment – The Council is asked to authorize an adjustment for Account No. 22180. The excess usage resulted from a break in her line, which has been addressed by the homeowners. Approval is requested to waive \$130.41 from the customer’s bill due to the leak.

MOTION to approve consent agenda item a - d was made by **Councilmember Cox**, seconded by **Councilmember Breckel**.

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Van Pelt, Minnis, Lauser, Breckel, Cox.**

5. SHERIFF'S OFFICE REPORT: The Skamania County Sheriff's report for activity within Stevenson city limits for the prior month was presented for council review by Skamania County Undersheriff Tracy Wyckoff.

6. GUEST SPEAKERS:

a) Stevenson Downtown Association Update - Kelly O'Malley-McKee, Executive Director, Stevenson Downtown Association.

b) Skamania County Chamber Update - Angie Martin, Executive Director, Skamania County Chamber.

Kelly and Angie co-presented. They shared detailed differences between the work of the Chamber and that of the Stevenson Downtown Association. SDA works primarily in Stevenson. The Chamber provides countywide services to promote tourism and support business development. SDA also participates as a Main Street Community to encourage downtown revitalization efforts through economic development and beautification. They also manage the Stevenson Farmers' Market.

7. COUNCIL BUSINESS:

a)*Action Item – Approval of 2026 Committee Appointments (version 2)
Consider approval of the Mayor’s recommended appointments for 2026 to City boards, commissions, and committees requiring Council confirmation. These appointments include voting members serving on various advisory and statutory bodies. Several changes were made due to recent changes made due to member changes on the Planning Commission and City. Angie Martin with the Skamania County Chamber of Commerce explained who sits on Tourism Advisory Committee.

MOTION to approve the 2026 committee appointments as presented was made by **Councilmember Breckel**, seconded by **Councilmember Minnis**.

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Van Pelt, Minnis, Lauser, Breckel, Cox**

b) Discussion – Sewer Ordinance

Council discussion was held regarding the sewer ordinance moratorium and presentation of options for simplifying and clarifying ordinance language and penalties. Direction may be provided to staff.

Mayor Taylor will provide further information to the Council in preparation for additional discussion at the April 2026 Council meeting. She has developed a matrix regarding the current ordinance, with three possible options to consider. Streamlining and clarifying the ordinance will help create a policy, which in turn will make it easier to receive grants.

Councilmember Breckel called for revisiting some of the recommendations the citizen committee developed.

c) *Action Item – Approval of Rock Creek Intake Rehabilitation

Public Works Director Rosander provided information on the Statement Of Work and Contract to support Phase 2 of the Rock Creek Rehabilitation project to explore the root cause of restricted water flow. He provided details on diver and camera inspections, jetting services, construction/bidding management and design of a new intake. The project is on a stringent timeline. Funding will be redirected from the water system plan (\$170,000) towards this critical need. A supplemental budget request of \$87,745 is being requested, to be used if needed. He is still pursuing grants for the work.

MOTION to approve Grayling Engineering to conduct work related to the Rock Creek Intake Rehabilitation as proposed in the scope of work provided not to exceed \$257,745 was made by **Councilmember Breckel**, seconded by **Councilmember Minnis**.

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Van Pelt, Minnis, Lauser, Breckel**.

Voting no: **Councilmember Cox**.

d) *Action Item – Driveway Standards Resolution

Consider adoption of a resolution updating the City's driveway standards to reflect current engineering practices, improve safety and access, and provide clearer guidance for development and public works projects. **Attorney Muth** advised the resolution had not been included in the meeting packet, as it had just been developed.

Public Works Director Rosander explained current driveway standards are capped at a 20-foot width off their approach, and that width goes 30 feet past the right-of-way. Existing standards were developed in 1999, and vehicles are now larger now. The changes would increase that initial width to 24 feet, with the city standard stopped at the right-of-way. After the right-of-way, a builder or homeowner could go wider. A second change includes a diagram within the standards to clarify the design.

MOTION to adopt the Driveway Standards Resolution as presented was made by **Councilmember Cox**. No second occurred, as **Attorney Muth** stated he would place the resolution on the consent agenda for the April 2026 City Council meeting.

e) Pre-Read – Engineering Standards Resolution

Staff provided a preview of proposed updates to engineering standards. A formal resolution will be presented at a future meeting. **Public Works Director Rosander** noted no motion would be needed as he is slightly modifying the resolution following feedback he received from local contractors and builders. He will send the final version to Councilmembers to review. **Attorney Muth** noted it could also be placed on the consent agenda for April.

f) *Action 2026 Contracted Services Agreement – Skamania Economic Development Council (\$29,731)

The City of Stevenson contracts annually with the Skamania Economic Development Council (EDC) to provide economic development services, including business retention and expansion, technical assistance, grant support, and regional coordination. The proposed 2026 agreement continues this partnership and aligns with the City’s goals of strengthening the local economy, supporting business development, and leveraging regional resources. The total contract amount is \$29,731, which is included in the City’s adopted 2026 budget. **Mayor Taylor** pointed out that payment to the EDC supports lobbying efforts through their lobbying group (CFM Strategic Communications), which helps the city be aware of and obtain grants.

A short discussion took place regarding delayed invoicing by the EDC and Skamania County Elections that resulted in the city budget showing a deficit. Sending timely reminders was proposed in order to eliminate late invoices. **Councilmember Cox** requested a fund balance for accounts be provided.

MOTION to approve the 2026 Contracted Services Agreement with the Skamania Economic Development Council in the amount of \$29,731 was made by **Councilmember Cox**, seconded by **Councilmember Van Pelt**.

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Van Pelt, Minnis, Lauser, Breckel, Cox**

Following the vote **Councilmember Van Pelt** questioned if a penalty for late invoices was a way to encourage timely submissions.

8. INFORMATION ITEMS:

a) City Administrator Recruitment Update

Mayor Taylor provided an update on the City Administrator recruitment process, including a timeline, a revised job description, and next steps. She is developing a broader job description with more leadership responsibilities. It will be put into the personnel policy.

The opening will be posted on Monday, March 23rd, with applications closing April 26th, 2026. She anticipates the position to be filled by mid-to-late July 2026.

Councilmember Cox asked **Attorney Muth** regarding the Clerk Treasurer position and what state law requires. **Muth** noted the city does need to have someone in that position.

b) Financial Report

The Treasurer's Report and year-to-date revenues and expenses through the prior month were presented for council review.

Following a discussion it was agreed to have the financials reported with the past month closed out. Each quarter any budget adjustments needed will be addressed.

9. MAYOR REPORT: Jenny Taylor, Interim City Administrator provided a report on the administrative transition and key operational updates.

Meeting videos will be moving to the Vimeo platform. Past videos will move as well.

Mayor Taylor observed the county planner is doing a good job supporting the city planning needs. **Mayor Taylor** has drafted a scope of work for a consultant for long range planning. She thanked **Daniel Pitariu, Permits & Records Manager**, for his work on streamlining permit processes.

10. STAFF REPORT:

a) Cody Rosander - Public Works Director provided Councilmembers an update on a number of projects, including resolving problems at Cascade, Lasher Street grant progress, insertion/isolation valve replacements, repairs to electrical conduits at the WWTP due to water infiltration, potential playground upgrades in Stevenson, irrigation at the Triangle Park, and tree care at Walnut Park.

b) Jayne Borden - Finance Director reported on city finances.

A final reimbursement invoice was submitted to the U.S. Economic Development Administration for \$350K. She is preparing for the state auditor to review the report for 2025, which is due at the end of May. A full audit will take place later in year.

11. VOUCHER APPROVAL: Vouchers were presented for council review.

MOTION to approve the vouchers as presented was made by **Councilmember Cox**, seconded by **Councilmember Van Pelt**.

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Lauser, Breckel, Minnis, Cox, Van Pelt**

12. COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Councilmember Lauser announced her resignation from the City Council effective March 31, 2026. **Mayor Taylor** thanked her for her service.

13. ISSUES FOR THE NEXT MEETING:

- Vacation rental ordinance needs to be revisited.
- Sewer ordinance. **Mayor Taylor** requested Councilmembers prepare themselves for a discussion at an upcoming meeting. **Councilmember Cox** asked for a public meeting to allow for public input and feedback. **Attorney Muth** advised there are 6 months regarding the moratorium, but only for the penalty provision. He also

pointed to the Council handbook regarding scheduling of meeting times as they relate to ordinances. **Mayor Taylor** shared a schedule she had developed regarding revisions to the sewer ordinance.

- 1st Q budget adjustment.

14. ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT:

Brian McNamara spoke on the revision of the sewer ordinance, and asked for financial justification regarding costs.

Rick Jessel thanked the Mayor and Council for work on the sewer ordinance and the revised city administrator job description.

Mary Repar commented on potential permit needs for Rock Creek, and the EDC contract. She requested the EDC become more publicly transparent. She also spoke regarding the driveway standards to benefit the community, not the developer.

Stan Roth spoke regarding sewer usage, and encouraged additional property owners to hook-up in order to contribute to the system's costs.

Mayor Taylor adjourned the meeting at 8:06 p.m.