

MEETING MINUTES

TUMWATER CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
June 9, 2026



CONVENE: 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Mayor Leatta Dahlhoff and Councilmembers Peter Agabi, Joan Cathey, Angela Jefferson, Meghan Sullivan, Eileen Swarthout, Kelly Von Holtz, and Brandon Weedon.

Staff: City Administrator Paul Simmons, Assistant Administrator Kelly Adams, City Attorney Karen Kirkpatrick, Fire Chief Brian Hurley, Finance Director Troy Niemeyer, Information Technology Director Lance Inman, Communications Director Jason Wettstein, Parks & Recreation Director Chuck Denney, Water Resources & Sustainability Director Dan Smith, Deputy Community Development Director Sharon Lumbantobing, Associate Planner Dana Bowers, Police Services Specialist II Patrick Long, Police Strategic Advisor Oliver Bowers, Acting Deputy Police Chief Ken Driver and Administrative Services Director Michelle Sutherland.

**BATTERY ENERGY
STORAGE SYSTEMS
BRIEFING:**

Planner Bowers presented options for regulating battery energy storage systems (BESS), which are currently prohibited under local code. The council was asked to choose between Option A, which directs staff to draft tailored local codes regarding zoning, safety, and electronic recycling, and Option B, which leaves regulation entirely up to the state.

Councilmembers favored Option A, emphasizing the importance of maintaining local control to better address public health, fire safety, noise impacts, and environmental sustainability. Planner Bowers said that moving forward, staff and fire officials will conduct deeper research to address specific council questions and fully vet the local ordinance before bringing it back for approval.

**CODE ENFORCEMENT
PRESENTATION:**

Administrator Simmons opened by noting that code enforcement issues drive up to two-thirds of the community feedback he receives. Assistant Administrator Adams presented a high-level overview of the city's current complaint-based code enforcement system, which emphasizes public education. Specialist II Long highlighted that over 80% of cases which are mostly cyclical issues like overgrown vegetation and improperly stored household goods are resolved voluntarily right at the initial "courtesy letter" stage.

Councilmembers asked if complaints were kept anonymous and specifically questioned the process regarding staffing levels. Staff responded that two full-time officers currently split their duties with police transport services, and they recommended exploring further centralized staffing enhancements in the upcoming biennial budget. Staff recommended a near-term budget amendment to increase funding for legal and abatement fees. Additionally, they proposed structurally centralizing the program under a new program manager during the upcoming biennial budget process.

**MAYOR/CITY
ADMINISTRATOR'S
REPORT:**

Administrator Simmons inquired with Councilmembers Agabi and Cathey about their participation in the 4th of July Parade.

Mayor Dahlhoff had no report.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Dahlhoff adjourned the meeting at 7:17 p.m.

Prepared by City Clerk, Melody Valiant.