

**TUMWATER CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES OF HYBRID MEETING
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CONVENE: 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Mayor Debbie Sullivan and Councilmembers Peter Agabi, Michael Althaus, Joan Cathey, Leatta Dahlhoff, Angela Jefferson, Eileen Swarthout, and Kelly Von Holtz.

Staff: City Administrator Lisa Parks, City Attorney Karen Kirkpatrick, Finance Department Director Troy Niemeyer, Water Resources and Sustainability Department Director Dan Smith, IT Department Director Lance Inman, Community Development Department Director Michael Matlock, Communications Manager Jason Wettstein, Police Lieutenant Carlos Quiles Jr., and Deputy City Clerk Tracey Core.

SPECIAL ITEMS:

**PROCLAMATION:
PUBLIC WORKS
WEEK MAY 18-24,
2025:** Councilmember Swarthout read a proclamation declaring the week of May 18-24, 2025 as *Public Works Week*. The proclamation calls upon the people of the City of Tumwater to learn about the City's public works facilities and services, and to recognize Water Resources & Sustainability and Transportation & Engineering employees for the substantial contributions they make to protect the health, safety, comfort, and quality of life in Tumwater.

Mayor Sullivan presented the proclamation to Georgianna Hupp, GIS Analyst, and Sustainability Manager Alyssa Jones Wood.

Analyst Hupp said this year's theme for National Public Works Week is *People, Purpose, & Present*. The Public Works Departments strives to put people first, completes its work with purpose, and maintains a visible presence in the community. Residents of Tumwater know that employees will be there to help and provide essential services, such as clean and reliable drinking water, stormwater treatments, and sewer services, as well as providing accessible streets and sidewalks. The theme is appropriate as it highlights the integral work accomplished each day to build and maintain a better community. The focus on people aligns with the mission and beliefs. The departments believe in people and working with a purpose for continuous improvement, maintaining a presence in the vibrant community, engaging directly with residents, and making Tumwater a great place to live, work, and play.

Manager Jones Wood said Public Works Week provides a chance to celebrate all the contributions and efforts of public works employees that silently work to support a thriving community. Public works professionals plan, design, build, manage, and maintain infrastructure and right-of-way to enable everyone to enjoy and grow in the community. Whether it is providing water, wastewater, transportation, mapping, resource sustainability, right-of-way management, or fleet services, the public works departments are always at the

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ready to serve the community. On behalf of the two departments and all the colleagues who work together to provide daily and year-round essential public works services, the Council is thanked for its support and the recognition. She invited the Council to join public works employees at Tumwater Historical Park for a picnic on Thursday, June 5, 2025 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**PROCLAMATION:
NATIONAL SAFE
BOATING WEEK,
MAY 17-23, 2025:**

Councilmember Von Holtz read a proclamation declaring *National Safe Boating Week, May 17-23, 2025*. The proclamation encourages all Tumwater residents to dedicate themselves to learning about and practicing safe boating, including wearing life jackets.

Coast Guard Commander Tilson accepted the proclamation from Mayor Sullivan. He thanked Mayor Sullivan and the Council for acknowledging the importance of safe boating by wearing a life jacket. The goal of *Safe Boating Week* is to bring focus on responsible boating and life jacket use. In and around Thurston County, many public water access points have loaner life jackets stations for free use of life jackets. The stations are maintained and inspected by the community who are looking out for children and adults. Coast Guard statistics from 2023 reflect that 87% of boating-related drownings lacked the wearing of life jackets. Wearing life jackets would save countless lives each year.

**PROCLAMATION:
ASIAN AMERICAN,
NATIVE
HAWAIIAN, AND
PACIFIC ISLANDER
HERITAGE
MONTH, MAY 2025:**

Councilmember Dahlhoff read a proclamation declaring the month of May as *Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month*. The proclamation calls upon the people of the City of Tumwater to celebrate the contributions of Asian American, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders in the community and across the nation.

Several individuals representing Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Island (AANHPI) communities thanked the Mayor and the Council for honoring the communities and people. As proclaimed by Governor Inslee in May 2016, May is celebrated in Washington State to recognize the contributions and influence of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders and their history, culture, and achievements for the United States. The Asian and Pacific Islander Coalition of Washington (APIC) is part of a statewide coalition created after the 1996 Welfare Reform Act significantly affected and reduced non-citizens federal eligibility for public assistance programs. After recognizing the need for a collective voice advocating for the rights and equity of foreign-born Asian and Pacific Islanders, APIC began lobbying the Washington State Legislature to address the gap created by federal legislation. Today, efforts continue to honor the history, nourish the community, and commit to equity and justice while leading and building solidarity with the immigrant community. Since December 2024, efforts have organized a series of events and activities to celebrate AANHPI heritage in Washington State. Through the events and activities, it is hoped that people can be informed and educated about AANHPI

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members and offer programs and resources to promote understanding and appreciation of AANHPI history and culture. The community was invited to attend the May 24, 2025 celebration event at the Evergreen's Long House and share stories through the My Story project this year.

Donna Mililani with the Aloha kakou! Moku`aina A Wakinekona Hawaiian Civic Club, expressed gratitude from the club for the honor by Tumwater to issue the proclamation. The club was founded in 2006 by the Baker Family in the Tacoma/Lacey area. Native Hawaiians have been living in the state since 1787. Hawaiian natives were crucial to the fur trade and building Astoria, Oregon. More native Hawaiians live on the continent than there are on the islands. The State of Washington has the second largest population of native Hawaiians next to the State of California.

Bob Nakamura, member of the APIC and Olympia-Kato Sister City Association said he is the President of the Olympia Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League. The chapter furthers relationships between Americans and Japanese communities. Each August, the chapter sponsors a community dance. Kato, Japan is sending a delegation of adults from Japan to America, as well as students to visit the local area.

Mayor Sullivan presented the proclamation to the speakers.

**LOTT STATE OF
UTILITY**

Matt Kennelly, LOTT Executive Director, provided an update on the wastewater utility and future response to growth in the region. The Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater, and Thurston County (LOTT) Clean Water Alliance was formed in 1976 to collaborate and produce one wastewater plant to serve the jurisdictions. A Board of Directors oversees the organization meeting monthly. Councilmember Dahlhoff serves as the City representative on the Board. The mission of the organization is to protect communities and the environment by cleaning water and restoring resources for the community.

LOTT serves approximately 140,000 customers within its service area. The City of Tumwater is responsible for building collection pipes from homes and businesses. The pipes connect with other partner jurisdictions and transmit waste to the main LOTT treatment plant in downtown Olympia. The City of Tumwater bills ratepayers for the collection fee for the City's sewer system and the LOTT treatment fee. Some residents located in the urban growth areas are also served by the cities.

All Tumwater sewer flow is transmitted to the LOTT Budd Inlet Treatment Plant. The plant processes 13 million gallons of waste each day. Along with other infrastructure, LOTT has invested approximately \$1 billion that is managed and maintained by LOTT.

LOTT's treatment process is highly regulated through a permit issued by the

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Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through the Department of Ecology with strict discharge limits for treatment on Puget Sound. Monitoring and reporting involves over 15,000 samples each year to validate the high-level treatment. The EPA also requires maintenance of infrastructure and the capacity to expand when necessary. Performance is documented in the agency's annual reports with reports to the Board of Directors each month. All performance metrics have been achieved. The agency recently completed a new Six-Year Strategic Plan.

LOTT experienced no instances of exceeding pollution discharge limits during the year. LOTT submits data to different agencies to receive validation on the amount of pollution discharge. The LOTT plants offers the highest level of treatment on Puget Sound compared to the other 57 treatment plants located along Puget Sound. LOTT performs at approximately half of its permit limits.

Each year, LOTT compares its rates. LOTT's treatment fee is added to the city charge for collection of wastewater. In Tumwater, the treatment fee is below the average for rates within the region.

LOTT also applies for project awards to validate its work. The recent upgrade of the plant resulted in an award from the state for Project of the Year, as well as a national award as one of eight designs in the country that received an award from the Association of Consulting Engineering Firms.

LOTT also reuses resources. Biogas in the form of methane gas is captured to produce heat and energy powering 15% of the plant's power. The gas is captured in boilers and is used to heat the process as well as heating LOTT's Administration Building and the Hands On Children's Museum. Biosolids are produced from the sewer process. Biosolids are transferred to Eastern Washington as part of a farm-led program. The material, rich in nitrogen and phosphorus, is used to fertilize crops. Another treatment process is water reuse with a portion of the water undergoing a final step to create Class A reclaimed water. The City of Tumwater is the largest user of reclaimed water with the gold course using 600,000 gallons of reclaimed water each day during the summer. A storage tank located off T Street stores reclaimed water for the golf course providing instantaneous daily flow.

Another location using reclaimed water is the Hawks Prairie Infiltration site to infiltrate reclaimed water into the groundwater offering a public park in the Hawks Prairies area of Lacey. LOTT also sponsors the Wet Science Center educating students and families and providing treatment plant tours. All fifth grade classes in the Tumwater School District participate in LOTT programs. A stream located in front of the Hand On Children's Museum produces a demonstration of reclaimed water while providing children with a water splash play area.

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The Budd Inlet Treatment Plant is responsible for only 3% of the bay's oxygen depletion. Capitol Lake affects depletion of oxygen by 62% with external sources (57 other treatment plants) and local non-point sources, such as septic tanks and stormwater runoff also contributing to the depletion of oxygen in Puget Sound and Budd Bay. LOTT's approach considers all sources and providing high-level treatment at the Budd Inlet Treatment Plant, supporting water quality regulations and other treatment plants, supporting the Deschutes Estuary approach for maintaining the estuary, incentivizing septic to sewer conversions through discounts, as well as reducing water quality impacts from unhoused populations through affordable housing connection fee rebates. The holistic approach has benefitted partnerships with the Squaxin Island Tribe through an accord with the tribe signed in 2024.

Septic to sewer rebates are offered to households converting from septic tank to sewer. LOTT charges a connection fee at a 50% discount and a 50% discount for affordable housing. With other incentive packages, more affordable housing will be constructed within the community.

LOTT aligns with regional goals for climate change. In 2015, Thurston County established a benchmark. Since then, there has been a 30% decrease in emissions and a 42% decrease based on a per capita emissions.

Mr. Kennelly described LOTT's annual planning process that includes flow measurements of the system, measuring volume of rainwater, and documenting nitrogen loads. That information in addition to other information forms the basis of a budget and capital improvements plan every two years to develop the right project at the right time.

LOTT does not plan to construct new treatment plants because LOTT is able to process a high level of treatment at the existing plant. LOTT plans to focus on existing treatment facilities rather than adding new plants and collaborating regionally on water quantity, water quality, and sea level rise planning.

LOTT's workforce has a low turnover rate because of LOTT's investment in its workforce.

The secret to the success envisioned in 2050 is continued dedication to the mission of the LOTT with a water quality focus.

Councilmember Agabi asked about the volume of biosolids produced by the plant annually. Mr. Kennelly responded that the plant produces approximately 60,000 pounds of biosolids each day. Stabilized biosolids are considered as Class B biosolids that can be applied in agriculture fields. LOTT has no excess waste because of the farm program in eastern Washington. All methane gas produced from the wastewater process is utilized fully at the plant to run the boilers and engine generators to produce electricity and heat.

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Councilmember Von Holtz asked about LOTT's plans to involve high school and college students to participate in employment tracks for future employment in the wastewater treatment profession. Mr. Kennelly advised that previously LOTT's Wet Science Center focused on involving elementary and middle school students. LOTT is expanding the focus to high schools by visiting local high schools to promote education programming, as well as scheduling more events on the weekends and messaging information on careers in the field.

Mr. Kennelly said the plant provides a variety of jobs ranging from engineering and construction pathways, as well as laboratory and plant operators. LOTT receives a number of applicants who must pass a basic aptitude test for placement with a pool of candidates who are trained by LOTT to become a wastewater treatment plant operator. The program is a 2-/12-year apprenticeship program to be placed as an operator and up to five years for placement for a job in a specialized area.

**PUBLIC
COMMENT:**

Lisa Johnson, 5813 Swayne Drive NE, Olympia, commented on World Relief and its work within the community. She represents Olympia Indivisible and its immigrant justice team. The organization has welcomed 184 refugees to Thurston County since April 2023. As of late January 2025, all federal funds have been eliminated to help sponsor new legal immigrants to the country and all funds to support existing immigrants were rescinded. She has worked for World Relief Thurston County at the local office of the national Refugee Resettlement Agency from May 2023 until the present to welcome a large family of nine from Somalia. She has been impressed with the agency's commitment to justice and to empowerment of those who they welcome. Now they have no funding outside of donations to continue the work. She spoke to the strength of character, motivation, and the kindness of the family that was helped to root and empower them over the last two years within the community. Without immediate local support, new refugees may lose access to vital services that help them establish stability within the community. She requested exploring with the Council ways to help local refugees settle successfully in local cities. The Olympia City Council provided emergency funds to World Relief to help with the effort. She asked the Council to donate as well. Supporting immigrants and refugees aligns with Tumwater's mission of inclusion, equity, and the well-being of its citizens. She thanked the Council for considering the proposal.

Betsey Norton, 1405 Evergreen Park Drive SW, Olympia, spoke on behalf of the South Sound Bird Alliance (formally the Black Hills Audubon Society) regarding the Port of Olympia Airport Master Plan. The organization is concerned about the impacts to wildlife, its habitat, and the surrounding environment. The organization submitted a statement to the Port of Olympia on February 12, 2025, which includes maps and more details explaining why

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development poses a potential extinction threat for Mazama Pocket Gophers and Streaked Horned Larks. Both species are listed as threatened by the Endangered Species Act. Footnotes also include a link to the 2022 U. S. Fish and Wildlife status report and recovery plan for the Mazama Pocket Gopher, which includes interesting specifics about the Olympia Airport threat. The Olympia Airport is the last best habitat for the ESA listed species, which is why U.S. Fish and Wildlife designated 600 acres of the airport property as critical habitat for the species in 2014. The master plan is a threat, as it would remove as much as 340 acres or 56% of the habitat from airport grounds. The airport also has habitat for the federally threatened Streaked Horned Larks, which are only protected through 2029 on airport property through a memorandum of understanding between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). From a wildlife perspective, development on and around the airport that allows for 85% impervious surface per zoning rules, busy roadways, and increased aviation operations pose a significant threat to the survival of those species. Wildlife does not observe parcel boundaries, zoning lines, and project boundaries. An environmental analysis of the impacts to the species must be cumulative especially when contemplating a large buildout plan. Additionally, when the question speaks to survival or extinction of a species, it is critical that impact assessments be comprehensive and rigorous. Which is why, the organization is requesting an Environmental Impact Statement study to be conducted for the Airport Master Plan.

Mayor Sullivan recognized several high school students in attendance.

**CONSENT
CALENDAR:**

- a. Approval of Minutes: City Council Work Session, April 8, 2025
- b. Approval of Minutes: City Council, May 6, 2025
- c. Payment of Vouchers
- d. 2025 Comprehensive Plan Middle Housing Grant Contract with the Department of Commerce Amendment No. 1
- e. Small Government Enterprise Agreement Renewal with Esri
- f. Integrated Planning Grant with Department of Ecology Amendment No. 1
- g. Advisory Board Appointment of Sharie McCaffrey and Matt Brownwell to the Barnes Lake Management District Steering Committee

MOTION:

Councilmember Althaus, moved, seconded by Councilmember Jefferson, to approve the Consent Calendar as published. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.

Mayor Sullivan reviewed the items approved on the Consent Calendar.

**COMMITTEE
REPORTS:**

PUBLIC HEALTH & The May 13, 2025 meeting included updates by Ariana Gomez on the

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SAFETY: FDCARES Program, Crisis Response by Joe Avalos, Executive Director, Olympic Health & Recovery Services, and a Thurston County District Court update by Frankie Peters, Court Executive Officer. The committee also forwarded a recommendation to the Council to discuss Tumwater’s position on Tumwater’s response to ICE and immigration activities.
Peter Agabi

GENERAL GOVERNMENT: The meeting on May 14, 2025 included:
Michael Althausser

- 2025 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update – Lands for Public Purposes and Utilities
- 5901 Black Lake-Belmore SW 10 Percent Annexation Petition (TUM-25-0453)
- Food System Plan – Development Update
- 2025 Comprehensive Plan Middle Housing Grant with the Department of Commerce Amendment No. 1

PUBLIC WORKS: The next meeting on Thursday, May 22, 2025 includes eight agenda topics.
Eileen Swarthout

BUDGET AND FINANCE: The next meeting on May 23, 2025 includes a monthly financial update, consideration of a Bond Underwriter Engagement Letter, and consideration of Ordinance No. O2025-006-S1 Amending TMC 2.14 Execution of Contracts and Other Legal Documents.
Debbie Sullivan

MAYOR/CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: City Administrator Parks reported on the completion of the City’s statistically valid survey. The goal was to receive 250 completed surveys. The effort resulted in 268 completed surveys. The Community Engagement Survey was recently released on the City’s website. Throughout the survey process, the City is providing social media outreach and distribution of a series of flyers.

The first Elevate Fair is scheduled on Saturday, May 31, 2025, sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Department from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the ASHHO Cultural Community Center to celebrate the intersection of arts and sustainability. The fair will highlight local artists using sustainable practices, various cultural approaches, and creative reuse of materials.

Traffic lanes on Littlerock Road are scheduled to be reduced at Somerhill Court SW. Puget Sound Energy is installing new underground power lines. Work will continue through Friday, May 23, 2025 with intermittent one-way traffic to facilitate the project.

City Hall will be closed on Monday, 26, 2025 in observance of Memorial Day.

Mayor Sullivan reported on her attendance to the League of Women Voters *Thurston Forward Conference* on May 10, 2025 and the Thurston Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting on May 14, 2025. The guest speaker was Governor Ferguson. Mayor Sullivan attended a conference for the Association

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of Washington Cities as a member of the Legislative Priorities Committee to review legislative progress and next steps. She also attended the Party in the Park on Saturday, May 17, 2025 to celebrate the end of the youth baseball season.

The next meeting of the Thurston Economic Development Council is Tuesday, May 28, 2025 at the Tenino Agricultural Park.

**COUNCILMEMBER
REPORTS:**

Angela Jefferson:

At the May 8, 2025 meeting, Tumwater HOPES members discussed the medicine take back event outcomes. The event resulted in the collection of two gallons of zip lock bags of medication and distribution of two safe storage containers along with campaign materials and information. In collaboration with the Tumwater Fire Department, ESD 113, and the Washington Healthcare Authority, an event was held focusing on *Hidden in Plain Site*. The event featured a mock teen bedroom where parents learned how to identify 70+ different items that may be indicative of risk behaviors. Parents were able to receive medication pickup boxes and participate in a talk presentation.

At the earlier meeting of Experience Olympia and Beyond, members discussed a candidate selection process for the executive director position. Members narrowed the candidate list to three candidates. Members reviewed legislative updates and discussed the impact of the World Cup to the region. A sports award event is scheduled on June 4, 2025 at South Puget Sound Community College.

Joan Cathey:

The Olympic Region Clean Air Authority (ORCAA) is contending with the new environment under the new Administration. The region is fortunate as some of the funding for clean air in the five-county region is from the state. ORCAA is not as dependent on federal funding for clean air. ORCAA is moving forward on programs and air quality monitoring.

Eileen Swarthout:

Councilmember Swarthout attended the May 8, 2025 electric ferry demonstration at the Olympia Port Plaza. The event featured a 12-passenger electric boat built by an Ireland company. The company is working on a 150-passenger boat expected to be launched later in the year. A memorandum of understanding was executed for manufacturing services with Delta Marine, a luxury boat builder in Tukwila, Washington. Ferry service to the South Sound is in its infancy stages with first services possibly offered at Des Moines, Washington.

On Saturday, May 17, 2025, Councilmember Swarthout attended the South Sound Climate Action Convention at The Evergreen State College. The program included a series of different sessions on electric cars, climate and

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heat plans, and land use plans.

Michael Althaus: The Regional Housing Council has scheduled a retreat on Friday, May 27, 2025 to engage in strategic planning and review goals, mission, and vision.

Leatta Dahlhoff: Members of the Thurston County 911 Administration Board reviewed the 2024 report. Tumwater fire and EMS received 4,734 911 calls compared to 16,409 calls in Lacey, and 15,252 calls in Olympia. Law enforcements events in Tumwater totaled 19,347 versus Olympia at 55,545 and Lacey at 43,420. Moving forward in 2025, TCOMM is working with data to track trends to help support the development of policies in support of fire and police.

The LOTT Clean Water Alliance Board of Directors is also reviewing updates of policies.

Councilmember Dahlhoff requested an update about some options on collaboration and support for community members and World Relief.

City Administrator Parks advised that Assistant City Administrator Adams is working with Lisa Johnson and others. She has also engaged in conversations with colleagues at the City of Lacey and City of Olympia. A report will be provided to the Council in the next several weeks once she reviews progress with Assistant City Administrator Adams. Councilmember Dahlhoff asked that the conversation with the Council include consideration of monetary support from the general fund as well.

Peter Agabi: At the last Transportation Policy Board meeting, members received a presentation from Mr. Kennelly on LOTT Clean Water Alliance. Members discussed a high capacity transportation policy statement. Staff provided information to members with action scheduled at the June meeting. Members discussed bicycle connectivity strategies. Recently, the Governor signed a bill enabling Washington cities to establish shared streets where bicycles must yield to pedestrians, and cars must yield to bicycles.

The Joint Animal Services Commission has changed to meeting every other month.

Kelly Von Holtz: Upcoming meetings include Intercity Transit Authority meeting on Wednesday, May 21, 2025. The agenda includes a vote on the contract for bus operators.

Councilmember Von Holtz attended the last meeting of the Tumwater Public and Health Committee. During the meeting, Chair Agabi addressed some false community claims that ICE was present in the area, had visited Home Depot and Costco, and was apprehending people. The rumors included participation by the Tumwater Police Department in support of apprehensions by ICE. That

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information was inaccurate. The City's has policy that is reflective of the Police not detaining individuals solely to determine their immigration status. She had previously requested that the City promote its policy in terms of police actions regarding immigration actions.

ADJOURNMENT: With there being no further business, Mayor Sullivan adjourned the meeting at 8:26 p.m.

Prepared by Valerie L. Gow, Recording Secretary/President
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