City of Capitola
City Council Meeting Minutes
Thursday, August 27, 2026 – 6:00 PM

City Council Chambers
420 Capitola Avenue, Capitola, CA 95010

Mayor: Margaux Morgan
Vice Mayor: Gerry Jensen
Council Members: Joe Clarke, Melinda Orbach, Susan Westman

Regular Meeting of the Capitola City Council – 6 PM

1. **Roll Call and Pledge of Allegiance** – *The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM. In attendance: Council Members Clarke, Orbach, Westman, Vice Mayor Jensen, and Mayor Morgan.*
2. **Additions and Deletions to the Agenda** – *None*
3. **Additional Materials**
   A. *Item 6C – One email received after publication of the agenda packet.*
   B. *Item 6D – One email received after publication of the agenda packet.*
   C. *Item 7C – Four emails received after publication of the agenda packet.*
   D. *Item 7D – One email received after publication of the agenda packet*.
   E. *Item 7E – One email received after publication of the agenda packet*.
4. **Oral Communications by Members of the Public**
   - *Terre Thomas*
   - *Leslie Nielsen*
   - *Kevin Maguire*
   - *Molly Turner*
5. **Staff / City Council Comments**
   - *City Manager Goldstein thanked staff, the community, and the City Council for attending the opening of the Jade Street Park Community Center and Treasure Cove Playground; and advised the public that the City will be hosting a Town Hall meeting on November 19, 2026, at the Jade Street Community Center. He also introduced Interim City Clerk Lesley Milton.*
   - *Community and Economic Development Director Herlihy advised the public that there will be a community meeting to discuss the Cliff Drive Resiliency Project at 5 PM on September 2, 2026.*
   - *Mayor Morgan paused Staff and Council Comments to hear Item 7A, as it was a time-sensitive public hearing.*
   - *Council Member Westman thanked staff for scheduling a Town Hall meeting; clarified her comments from the July 23rd Council meeting about the City Manager's performance evaluation and requested that his evaluation be rescheduled for Spring 2027; and she provided updates from recently attended AMBAG and Seniors Council meetings.*
   - *Vice Mayor Jensen inquired about staff's response to correspondence received related to the use of e-bikes on the Riverview pathway. He provided comments on his attendance at the*

Wharf to Wharf race, National Night Out, a recently attended MBARD meeting, the reopening of the Jade Street Community Center and Park, a recently attended Ecology Action meeting, a community meeting with Congressman Panetta at the Monterey Bay Aquarium, a recently attended RTC meeting, and provided an update on the Grand Jury report received by the RTC.

- *Council Member Orbach requested an agenda item that would authorize the City to send a letter opposing Proposition 43 on the ballot in November. She also requested staff and Council support to recognize "Week Without Driving," held October 1 through October 8.*
- *Council Member Westman agreed with Council Member Orbach's request for an agenda item to provide a letter of opposition to Proposition 43.*
- *Council Member Clarke thanked Vice Mayor Jensen for his efforts representing the City on the RTC and reminded the public of the upcoming Movies on the Beach event on August 28th.*
- *Mayor Morgan thanked the public for attending the Jade Street Park reopening event and thanked Public Works staff for their community outreach efforts related to the Active Transportation Plan and Esplanade Park.*

6. Consent Items

A. City Council Meeting Minutes
Recommended Action: Approve minutes from the regular meeting on July 23, 2026.

B. City Check Registers
Recommended Action: Approve check registers dated June 19, 2026, July 3, 2026, July 17, 2026, and July 31, 2026.

C. Contract Amendment for Planning and Building Services
Recommended Action: Authorize the City Manager to execute 1) Amendment 2 to the Professional Services Agreements with CSG Consultants, Inc. for Planning Consultant Services to increase contract funding by $50,000; and 2) Amendment 1 to the Professional Services Agreement with CSG Consultants, Inc. for Building Consultant Services to increase contract funding by $95,000.

D. Ben Noble Planning Contract
Recommended Action: Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a sole source Professional Services Agreement, in a form acceptable to the City Attorney's Office, with Ben Noble Planning in an amount not to exceed $80,000 for a two-year term to provide General Plan implementation services for Zoning Code updates. ***(Pulled for further discussion by Council Member Clarke)***

E. OPC SB 1 Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Planning Grant
Recommended Action: Authorize staff to submit an application to the Ocean Protection Council's SB 1 Sea-Level Rise Adaptation Planning Grant Program.

F. ECYP Fund Allocation
Recommended Action: Adopt a resolution authorizing an allocation of $40,000 from the Early Childhood and Youth Programming (ECYP) Fund for youth program scholarships for Fiscal Year 2026-27 and approving the corresponding budget amendment to appropriate the funds for this purpose. ***(Resolution No. 4506)***

Council Member Clarke requested to pull Item 6D for further explanation from staff.

Motion to approve Items 6A-C and 6E-F: Council Member Orbach
Second: Council Member Westman
Voting Yea: Council Members Clarke, Orbach, Westman, Vice Mayor Jensen, and Mayor Morgan

7. General Government / Public Hearings

A. Fifth Public Hearing to Receive Community Input and Adopt an Ordinance Transitioning to District-Based Elections
Recommended Action: 1) Conduct a **time-certain duly noticed public hearing at 6:15 PM** to receive community input; and 2) Adopt an ordinance of the City of Capitola amending Chapter 2.04 of Title 2 of the Capitola Municipal Code to provide for the election of City Council Members by four districts with an elected mayor; establish district boundaries and election order for each district; and make other amendments.

City Clerk Gautho provided the staff report.

Public Comment:

- ***Cami Corvin***
- ***Terre Thomas***

The Council thanked staff and the Council Members for their efforts in the districting process and requested clarification on mailing issues. Staff confirmed that mailing issues had been resolved prior to the sending of the second mailer.

Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 1076: Council Member Westman
Second: Vice Mayor Jensen
Voting Yea: Council Members Clarke, Orbach, Westman, Vice Mayor Jensen, Mayor Morgan

B. Agreement with the RTC for the Capitola Trestle Assessment
Recommended Action: Authorize the City Manager to execute a Cooperative Agreement with the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) for the Capitola Trestle Assessment.

Public Works Director Kahn provided the staff report.

Public Comment: None

Council expressed appreciation for the collaboration of the City and the RTC for this cooperative agreement.

Motion to authorize the City Manager to execute a Cooperative Agreement with the RTC for the Capitola Trestle Assessment: Council Member Clarke
Second: Vice Mayor Jensen
Voting Yea: Council Members Clarke, Westman, Vice Mayor Jensen, Mayor Morgan
Voting Nay: Council Member Orbach

C. Stockton Avenue Bridge Existing Conditions Assessment and Project Development Services Agreement
Recommended Action: Authorize the City Manager to execute a Professional Services Agreement with CSW/ST2 for the assessment of Stockton Avenue Bridge's existing conditions and project development services in an amount not to exceed $474,912.

Public Works Director Kahn provided the staff report.

Public Comment:

- ***Keith Cahalen***
- ***Speaker***
- ***Tory Del Favero***
- ***Leslie Nielsen***
- ***Terre Thomas***
- ***Bob Hickman***

- ***Michael Morrissey***
- ***Speaker***
- ***Cheryl***
- ***Mary Beth Cahalen***

The Council discussed the importance of the Stockton Bridge to the City and the impacts that various projects involving the Stockton Avenue Bridge would have upon the community; and discussed condition reports issued by CalTrans and lack of maintenance conducted on the Bridge.

Motion by Vice Mayor Jensen to:

1. ***Direct staff to immediately proceed with obtaining bids for CalTrans recommended polyester concrete overlay and related preventative maintenance for the Stockton Avenue Bridge, in an amount not to exceed $150,000, with the goal of completing the work before the winter season. Funding shall come from available remaining funds from the recent Reposa Paving Project. If additional funding is necessary, it shall come from the City's Emergency Reserve Fund. If the total cost exceeds $150,000, staff shall return to the City Council for additional authorization;***
2. ***Direct staff to proceed with developing a plan to rebuild and preserve the existing Stockton Avenue Bridge, including appropriate debris mitigation efforts;***
3. ***Direct staff to issue a request for proposals for the Stockton Avenue Bridge project, with particular emphasis on soliciting firms with demonstrated expertise in bridge rehabilitation, historic bridge preservation and retrofitting, and successfully working through the CalTrans process, including identifying and securing available funding;***
4. ***Direct staff to continue meaningful community outreach throughout the process and provide the City Council with monthly updates regarding any changes in the Bridge's condition, maintenance activities, engineering analysis, project progress, and community outreach efforts;***
5. ***Direct staff and/or appropriate consultants to inspect the Soquel Creek corridor within the City's jurisdiction and coordinate with the appropriate agencies and property owners to identify and address, where legally permissible and environmentally appropriate, any trees, brush, vegetation, or other debris that could obstruct Creek flow or create a potential hazard during the upcoming winter rains. Staff shall provide the City Council with a written follow-up report identifying the findings, recommended actions, and any work completed or still required.***

Second: Council Member Clarke
Staff requested clarification on the project scope related to portion 3 of the motion and costs for portion 1 of the motion. Staff clarified the expected timeframe to return to the City Council with the items requested.
Voting Yea: Council Members Clarke, Orbach, Westman, Vice Mayor Jensen, Mayor Morgan

The Council took a recess at 8:07 PM and reconvened at 8:12 PM.

D. Underground Utility District No. 6 and Rule 20A Program Update
Recommended Action: Receive information regarding Underground Utility District No. 6 and the Rule 20A utility undergrounding program, including district history, implementation considerations, and utility coordination issues, and provide direction as desired. *(Continued from May 28, 2026, City Council Meeting)*

Public Works Director Kahn provided the staff report.

Public Comment:

- ***Keith Cahalen***

Council thanked Kathy Pace, PG&E's representative, for attending the meeting and answering Council questions. Council discussed the feasibility and merits of the proposed projects utilizing Rule 20A funding and requested that PG&E provide cost estimates for an undergrounding project on a portion of Monterey Avenue.

Motion to continue the item to September 10, 2026, to allow staff to return with additional information: Council Member Westman
Second: Council Member Orbach
Voting Yea: Council Members Clarke, Orbach, Westman, Vice Mayor Jensen, Mayor Morgan

E. Bay Avenue Corridor Safety Improvements
Recommended Action: Direct staff to proceed with the proposed safety improvements at Bay Avenue/Hill Street and Bay Avenue/Center Street.

Public Works Director Kahn provided the staff report.

Public Comment:
- ***Cheryl***

Council thanked staff for their work on this item.

Motion to direct staff to proceed with the proposed safety improvements at Bay Avenue/Hill Street and Bay Avenue/Center Street: Council Member Orbach
Second: Council Member Westman
Voting Yea: Council Members Clarke, Orbach, Westman, Vice Mayor Jensen, Mayor Morgan

F. Discussion Regarding Residency Requirements for Elective Office
Recommended Action: Discuss residency requirements for elective office and provide direction to staff.

City Attorney Tran provided the staff report.

Public Comment:
- ***Heidy Kellison***
- ***Cami Corvin***
- ***TJ Welch***

The Council directed the City Attorney to prepare a draft policy outlining a voluntary residency verification program for Council candidates, elected officials, or appointees. The Council requested that when the item returns for approval, staff includes information about enforcement and an annual verification process.

6. Consent Items Pulled for Discussion

D. Ben Noble Planning Contract
Recommended Action: Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a sole source Professional Services Agreement, in a form acceptable to the City Attorney's Office, with Ben Noble Planning in an amount not to exceed $80,000 for a two-year term to provide General Plan implementation services for Zoning Code updates. ***(Pulled for further discussion by Council Member Clarke)***

Community and Economic Development Director Herlihy provided an oral report.

Public Comment:
- ***Peter Wilk***

The City Council expressed an interest in issuing a one-year agreement with Ben Noble, rather than two, to reduce costs.

Motion to adopt Resolution No. 4505, authorizing a one-year sole-source agreement with Ben Noble Planning: Council Member Westman
Second: Council Member Orbach
Voting Yea: Council Members Clarke, Orbach, Westman, Vice Mayor Jensen, Mayor Morgan

8. Adjournment - *The meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM. The next regularly scheduled City Council meeting is on September 10, 2026, at 6:00 PM.*

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Margaux Morgan, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Julia Gautho, City Clerk