



LEBANON CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

March 25, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Library Community Meeting Room
55 Academy Street, Lebanon, Oregon

MISSION STATEMENT

*We provide services that foster a resilient, safe, and growing community,
strengthened by our community connections*

Mayor: Kenneth Jackola

Council President Michelle Steinhebel | Councilor Dominic Conti | Councilor Marcellus Angellford

Councilor Jeremy Salvage | Councilor David McClain | Councilor Dave Workman

6:00 PM – CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL SESSION

CALL TO ORDER / FLAG SALUTE

The meeting was Called to Order at 6:00 PM.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT

Mayor Kenneth Jackola
Councilor - Ward 1 Dominic Conti
Councilor - Ward 1 Marcellus Angellford
Councilor - Ward 2 David McClain
Councilor - Ward 2 Dave Workman
Councilor - Ward 3 Jeremy Salvage
Council President - Ward 3 Michelle Steinhebel

STAFF

City Manager Ron Whitlatch
City Attorney Tre' Kennedy
Finance Director Brandon Neish
City Engineer Mike Trippett
Public Works Director Jason Williams
Chief of Police Frank Stevenson
City Recorder Julie Fisher

Sean Tate, Tate Public Affairs (online)
JL Wilson, Nelson Research (online)

CONSENT CALENDAR

The following item(s) are considered routine and will be enacted by one motion. There will not be a separate discussion of these items unless a Councilor so requests. In this case, the item(s) will be removed from the Consent Calendar and considered separately.

Motion to approve the Consent Calendar made by Councilor - Ward 3 Salvage, Seconded by Council President - Ward 3 Steinhebel.

Voting Yea: Councilor - Ward 1 Conti, Councilor - Ward 1 Angellford, Councilor - Ward 2 McClain, Councilor - Ward 2 Workman, Councilor - Ward 3 Salvage, Council President - Ward 3 Steinhebel

1. AGENDA: Lebanon City Council Agenda – March 25, 2026

PRESENTATION / RECOGNITION

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dr. Elaine Wilder, speaking on behalf of the Aquatics District, provided an update on efforts to secure funding for needed repairs to the community pool. She explained that over the past year and a half the district has worked with the school district to develop a funding plan, with the school district initially committing \$500,000 and the Aquatics District contributing \$250,000 toward a reduced project scope of approximately \$1.2 million. She reported that the school district recently withdrew its contribution due to budget pressures related to teacher pay, creating a significant funding gap and setback for the project.

Dr. Wilder emphasized the pool's importance to the community, noting its use by swim teams, swim clubs, early morning lap swimmers, and third-grade swim lessons. She stated that the Aquatics District has been actively pursuing grants, donations, and other funding sources, including private contributions to address ongoing maintenance needs, but acknowledged that competition for funding is high. She also expressed concern about the aging condition of the facility and the risk that structural damage from events such as an earthquake or flooding could force closure if repairs are not completed.

In response to a Council question about grant opportunities, Dr. Wilder confirmed that the district has explored multiple grant and funding options and continues to seek additional resources. She reiterated that the purpose of her comments was to keep the Council informed of the current situation and to invite any ideas or suggestions that might help address the remaining funding needs for the pool, which she described as an important community asset

PUBLIC HEARING(S)

REGULAR SESSION

2. Kennedy Jenks Wastewater Treatment Plant Design Contract Approval

Public Works Director Williams presented a request for Council approval of an engineering services contract with Kennedy Jenks for the wastewater treatment plant project. Staff explained that the contract would fund development of 30 percent design plans, which would allow the City to refine project scope, improve cost estimates, and better position the project for future funding opportunities. The work would also initiate critical early project elements, including environmental review, engineering and architectural coordination, transportation considerations, and land surveying.

The total contract amount presented for approval was approximately \$2.19 million. Council noted that the project and its background had been discussed extensively in prior meetings.

Motion made to approve the Contract with Kennedy Jenks for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Design by Councilor - Ward 2 Workman, Seconded by Councilor - Ward 3 Salvage.

Voting Yea: Councilor - Ward 1 Conti, Councilor - Ward 1 Angellford, Councilor - Ward 2 McClain, Councilor - Ward 2 Workman, Councilor - Ward 3 Salvage, Council President - Ward 3 Steinhebel

3. Public Defender Contract Renewal for the City of Lebanon

Finance Director Neish presented a proposed renewal of the City's public defender contract. He explained that the current public defender has served under multiple three-year terms and that feedback from Municipal Court staff, the Municipal Judge, and the City Attorney indicated the services provided have been effective and satisfactory in supporting defendants who qualify for appointed counsel.

The proposed renewal maintains the existing contract cycle so that it continues to expire at the end of February and includes a five percent compensation increase, consistent with changes in the Consumer Price Index over the prior contract period.

Motion made to approve the Public Defender Contract Renewal by Councilor - Ward 3 Salvage, Seconded by Councilor - Ward 2 Workman.

Voting Yea: Councilor - Ward 1 Conti, Councilor - Ward 1 Angellford, Councilor - Ward 2 McClain, Councilor - Ward 2 Workman, Councilor - Ward 3 Salvage, Council President - Ward 3 Steinhebel

4. Consultant Guidance for Municipal Jail Levy Process - Information Only

The City Manager introduced a discussion on consulting guidance related to the potential municipal jail operations levy and presented the results of a recent public opinion poll conducted by Nelson Research. The polling results were reviewed by consultant JL Wilson, who explained the survey methodology, sample size, and margin of error, and walked Council through the findings. He reported that while community sentiment generally supported reopening the jail, initial ballot-style support was below a level typically considered viable for passage. However, support increased significantly when respondents were informed that the proposed levy would replace an expiring bond and therefore property tax rates would not increase. He advised that any successful campaign would need to focus heavily on that message, along with the impact of reopening the jail on repeat offenses and community safety.

Sean Tate of Tate Public Affairs echoed the pollster's conclusions, noting that the results were consistent with similar measures in other jurisdictions and that success would depend on a focused and well-planned communication strategy. He emphasized that Council would need to be prepared for a significant effort if it chose to move forward with a ballot measure.

Council members asked several questions about polling demographics, voter turnout assumptions, and the reliability of the data, as well as the influence of external economic factors such as rising fuel prices on respondents' attitudes. Discussion also addressed the potential for competing measures on the ballot and the importance of clear and consistent messaging to avoid voter confusion over the levy's relationship to the expiring bond.

The City Attorney noted that there may be potential future revenue opportunities related to jail operations, while Finance Director Brandon Neish provided detailed financial context, explaining the current general obligation bond rate, how its expiration would offset the proposed levy rate, and how the projected \$1.00 per thousand levy compared to the existing \$1.17 per thousand bond. He also explained how the levy would be structured over a five-year period, how early implementation could require one-time funds, and how additional revenue from housing inmates from other jurisdictions could reduce the amount levied on local taxpayers.

Council members discussed the policy and operational benefits of reopening the jail, including reducing recidivism, improving enforcement accountability, and maximizing the use of existing facilities. Mayor Jackola and Council President Steinhebel both emphasized that if the Council decided to proceed, the effort would need to be led by elected officials rather than staff due to legal restrictions on advocacy. The Mayor concluded by noting that the item was for information only and that the Council would consider whether to move forward with the levy at the April 8, 2026, City Council meeting.

ITEMS FROM COUNCIL

City Manager Whitlatch reported to the Council that he met with Western University to discuss a joint application for a Connect Oregon Grant. The grant would allow for an engineering intern for three years to help with the first phase of campus construction at no cost to the City.

PUBLIC/PRESS COMMENTS

An opportunity for citizens and the press to comment on items of city business.

NEXT SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING(S): April 8, 2026 @ 6PM

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:11 PM.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR TESTIFYING ON AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS:

Everyone is welcome to attend City Council meetings. If you cannot attend, written testimony must be received by noon prior to the meeting via email to city.recorder@lebanonoregon.gov. Persons who desire to access the Zoom meeting to give oral testimony regarding a Public Hearing can contact the City Recorder by email at city.recorder@lebanonoregon.gov by noon prior to the meeting so that the City Recorder can provide instructions.

City Council meetings are recorded and available on the City's YouTube page at:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/CityofLebanonOR/videos>

The meeting location is accessible to persons with disabilities. A request for an interpreter for the hearing impaired or for other accommodations for persons with disabilities should be made at least 48 hours before the meeting to the City Recorder at 541.258.4905.