



ORLAND CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, January 20, 2026

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Terrie Barr at 6:01 PM.

ROLL CALL

Councilmembers Present: Councilmembers John McDermott, JC Tolle, Matt Romano, and Mayor Terrie Barr

Councilmembers Absent: Vice Mayor Alex Enriquez

Staff Present: City Manager Joe Goodman, City Clerk Jennifer Schmitke
Arrived at 6:30: Police Chief Joe Vlach, Fire Chief Justin Chaney, City Attorney Scott Drexel

CITIZENS COMMENTS ON CLOSED SESSION - None

MEETING ADJOURNED TO CLOSED SESSION AT 6:02 PM.

CLOSED SESSION ENDED AND RECONVENED TO REGULAR SESSION AT 6:30 PM.

REPORT FROM CLOSED SESSION - Mayor Barr announced that Council met with City Staff and City Attorney Scott Drexel regarding real property negotiations, as noted on the Closed Session agenda. Mayor Barr shared that there was no reportable action.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Orland resident Sharon Lazorko provided the Council with information on the New California State initiative and distributed informational flyers.

County resident Valerie Johnson addressed the Council, stating that she and Hidden Treasures Sanctuary are ready for the feline ad hoc committee to meet and discuss the voucher program.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. Warrant List (Payable Obligations)
- B. Approve City Council Minutes from January 6, 2026
- C. Receive and File the Economic Development Commission Minutes from November 12, 2026

- D. Receive and File Library Commission Minutes from November 10, 2025
- E. Approve Purchase of Wrestling Mat for Rec Center
- F. Consider Ball Field Improvement Budget
- G. Treasurer's Report

ACTION: Councilmember McDermott moved, seconded by Councilmember Tolle, to approve the consent calendar as presented. Motion carried by a voice vote 4-0.

PRESENTATIONS

Police Department Annual Presentation

Chief Vlach delivered a slideshow presentation highlighting the Orland Police Department's (OPD) activities and accomplishments for 2025. The department currently operates with 10 patrol officers, including one K-9 unit and one School Resource Officer (SRO), supported by 2 sergeants and 1 Chief of Police. OPD has successfully filled all non-sworn positions, including an Administrative/Records Supervisor, a Property and Evidence/Community Service Officer (CSO) – Isreal Rivera is currently in the police academy, and a Public Safety Clerk.

Chief Vlach reported that OPD responded to a total of 4,241 incidents in 2025, reflecting a slight decrease from 4,424 incidents in 2024. The most common calls for service included suspicious circumstances, vehicles or persons, followed by disturbing the peace and welfare checks.

Regarding enforcement activity, the most frequently issued citations were for unlicensed or suspended driving (46 citations), speeding (32 citations), expired vehicle registration (33 citations), and failure to stop at stop signs (24 citations). Traffic collisions increased slightly in 2025, with 128 reported incidents, including 119 non-injury collisions and nine injury-related collisions.

Chief Vlach reported that the OPD K-9 Unit, unfortunately, lost K-9 Dutch during the year. Despite this loss, the program continued to perform at a high level, completing more than 289 training hours and participating in eight deployments, which included three narcotics searches, two article searches with finds, and six suspect surrenders.

Chief Vlach also recognized the Orland Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) for their contributions, noting that despite a decrease in membership, the 12 active volunteers donated 832 hours of service. VIPS members supported numerous community events, including vaccination clinics, parades, the Glenn County Fair, Orland High School's Sober Grad Night, and the Avenue of Lights. Chief Vlach expressed appreciation for their continued dedication and positive impact on the department and the community.

Looking ahead, Chief Vlach outlined departmental goals, including the recruitment of additional patrol staff. Once staffing levels increase, OPD will explore the potential creation of a detective or lieutenant position. Continued collaboration with the Orland Fire Department remains a priority, particularly through the radio infrastructure project and future phases of surveillance and keycard access improvements.

Councilmember McDermott thanked the VIPs, Orland Police officers, and Chief Vlach for their service to the community and expressed support for the continued work on the radio project.

Councilmember Tolle also thanked the Police Department and VIPs, inquired about Council participation in police training, and discussed enforcement topics with Chief Vlach, including red light cameras, on which the Chief expressed mixed views. Chief Vlach indicated his interest in inviting Councilmembers to participate in future training opportunities.

Mayor Barr expressed appreciation for Chief Vlach and the Police Department, asked about the reduction in DUI enforcement activity, and inquired about staffing and detective services. Chief Vlach responded by noting multiple contributing factors and provided an overview of ongoing officer training.

Fire Department Annual Presentation

Chief Chaney delivered a slide presentation outlining the Fire Department's 2025 activities, highlighting key accomplishments and future objectives. The Orland Volunteer Fire Department (OVFD) currently operates with 50 volunteers, supported by one full-time office assistant, two assistant chiefs and one head chief. In 2025, the department responded to a total of 660 calls, including 355 calls within city limits (134 medical, 26 fire, and 16 vehicle collision incidents) and 305 calls in rural areas.

Chief Chaney highlighted progress made within the current budget year, including the replacement of critical firefighting equipment: eight sets of turnouts, eight structural helmets, eight pairs of structural boots, and necessary hose replacements. The department also acquired four mobile radios and four portable radios to improve communication capabilities. Additional completed projects included a roof replacement (with help from the rural department funding), replacement of the SCBA compressor, and repaving of the fire department parking lot.

The Council was informed that the average OVFD volunteer dedicates approximately 125 hours annually to training, reflecting a strong commitment to readiness and public safety.

Looking ahead, Chief Chaney outlined departmental goals, which include pursuing grant opportunities, completing the radio infrastructure project, and continuing to enhance communication capabilities.

Councilmember Tolle thanked the volunteer firefighters and inquired about training opportunities for the City Council, with Chief Chaney indicating that live fire trainings would be appropriate to observe. Councilmember Tolle also asked about volunteer firefighter stipends and the availability of training and support related to critical incidents. Chief Chaney explained the department's stipend programs and noted that while the department provides training, tools, and support, exposure to traumatic incidents has impacted firefighters.

Councilmember McDermott thanked the Fire Department for its service, emphasized the challenges firefighters face, expressed interest in increasing stipends in the future, and noted that the volunteer fire program provides significant cost savings to the City.

Mayor Barr requested additional information regarding stipends and expressed a desire to prioritize volunteer firefighters by incorporating stipend needs into future budget planning. Chief Chaney stated he would discuss stipends further with the volunteers.

County resident Jake Hackett addressed the Council regarding the importance of dedicated mental health funding for first responders. Chief Chaney responded that while there is no dedicated mental health budget, support is provided through workers' compensation programs. Councilmember McDermott added that firefighters also have access to the City's Employee Assistance Program, critical incident stress debriefing services, and support from a local chaplain.

Mayor Barr asked about additional infrastructure in need of updates. Chief Chaney responded that the downtown area is the most critical and noted that once the alley project and new pump and tank are completed, staff plans to retest hydrants and use that data to help identify the next priority areas.

Orland resident and 14-year Orland Volunteer Fire Department veteran Nathan Monck addressed the Council regarding the importance of Fire Department personnel. He emphasized that Measure A funds should be used in accordance with voter intent, expressed concerns about the staff report related to Measure A, and stated his hope that all department heads were involved in its preparation. Mr. Monck also reminded the Council of the oath taken upon assuming office.

County resident and 30-year Orland Volunteer Fire Department veteran David Kelly addressed the Council and expressed frustration regarding what he perceived as a lack of acknowledgment of the Fire Department by Councilmember Romano. Mr. Kelly expressed concerns regarding comments Councilmember Romano had made about the Fire Department at other meetings and noted that Councilmember Romano had not experienced difficulty engaging with the department when seeking support during his election. He further expressed concern that the Council does not regularly engage with the Fire Department to better understand its operational needs.

Mr. Kelly emphasized that the Fire Chief and volunteer leadership should play a primary role in developing the department's budget prior to Council consideration. He urged the Council to preserve Measure A funds and to use them in accordance with voter intent, stating that funding decisions should be based on a clear understanding of the department's actual needs. Mr. Kelly concluded by stating that the Fire Department should be supported and appreciated rather than opposed.

Councilmember Romano responded, stating that he is committed to protecting the Fire Department and dedicated public safety funding. He explained that the numbers in the staff report were based on last year's budget and that he also reviewed budgets from the past seven years. Councilmember Romano emphasized that the Fire Department has always had the opportunity to speak with him. The City Attorney advised that further discussion on these matters should take place during the budget portion of the agenda.

Orland resident and Orland Volunteer Fire Department veteran Jerry Kraemer addressed the Council regarding the importance of securing organizational buy-in, from the Fire Chief through department members, then through City staff and ultimately to the Council. He shared a personal example from his time as Fire Chief in which a lack of buy-in negatively impacted the department and cautioned the Council against repeating that outcome.

Chief Justin Chaney addressed the Council, directly confronting Councilmember Romano over alleged false statements regarding the Fire Department and a confidential memo. Chief Chaney expressed frustration about perceived misrepresentation in the staff report and defended the department's integrity.

Orland resident and Orland Volunteer Fire Department veteran Dusty Lefdal addressed the Council regarding Fire Chief Chaney's dedication and passion for the Fire Department. He expressed concern that the City Manager had not visited the department during the six months since his appointment. Mr. Lefdal also noted that while Councilmembers often visit the department during election periods, follow-up visits have been limited, and stated that continued engagement helps volunteers feel appreciated. He emphasized that Measure A was approved due to the efforts of Fire Department volunteers and urged the Council to use the funds responsibly and in accordance with voter intent.

Orland resident and Orland Volunteer Fire Department veteran Gary Campbell remarked that Measure A was passed on the strong support of the Fire Department and stressed the need for transparency regarding how the funds are allocated. He noted that Measure A was intended to support both law enforcement and fire services. Mr. Campbell also expressed concern about the City considering property purchases while operating under a current budget deficit.

Orland resident and 49-year Orland Volunteer Fire Department veteran Bart Caster, who served as Fire Chief when Measure A was passed, highlighted the importance of preserving Measure A funds as originally approved by the community. He explained to the Council that the Fire Department budget is critical for firefighter safety, including equipment and tools that protect volunteers from serious illnesses, diseases, and other hazards associated with firefighting. Mr. Caster emphasized that ensuring volunteer safety must remain a top priority.

Orland resident Barbara Marzolf asked for clarification on the current revenue generated by Measure A, and Mayor Barr stated that it brings in approximately \$1.3 million annually. Ms. Marzolf inquired what portion of that revenue the Fire Department would continue to receive and asked if the department would still receive 66 percent. Mayor Barr responded that a detailed answer would be provided during the upcoming budget discussion.

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

Second Quarter Budget Update and Adjustments

City Manager Joe Goodman presented a second-quarter budget update for the General Fund, Measure A, and Measure J as of December 31, 2025. He reported that while property tax revenues had not yet been received and sales tax was slightly behind projections, two unbudgeted revenue sources totaling \$287,400 were identified, reducing the General Fund deficit to \$242,373. Mr. Goodman discussed efforts to reduce General Fund pressures, emphasized disciplined use of Measure A and Measure J funds consistent with voter intent, and proposed budget guidelines for those measures. He also noted a funding shortfall for ambulance services and requested a \$95,600 supplemental appropriation from Measure J to maintain service through June 30, 2026. The update concluded with an outline of steps to improve budget planning, transparency, and fiscal accountability.

Councilmember McDermott discussed the Fire and Police Chiefs' willingness to allow Measure A funds to assist Public Works with fire hydrant and related street repairs as part of public safety infrastructure. Councilmember Romano asked whether Measure A funds could be used for water line improvements tied to public safety needs. Councilmember McDermott noted rising Fire Department costs and clarified that, historically, "streets" under Measure A includes fire hydrants and related infrastructure rather than road paving. He added that many hydrants have outdated connections unsuitable for modern firefighting and emphasized the Fire Department's practice of saving funds and purchasing equipment and vehicles outright.

Councilmember Romano stated that he has consistently worked to protect dedicated public safety funds and opposed using those funds for General Fund purposes. He highlighted his long-standing support for Westside Ambulance, including serving on the ambulance ad hoc committee and advancing funding for expanded ambulance service. He also noted his advocacy for reinstating the Fire Department roof replacement into the budget after it was removed. Councilmember Romano expressed concern about proposals to use Measure A and Measure J funds for non-public safety purposes, emphasized the need to preserve these funds for public safety infrastructure, including a future public

safety facility, and reiterated his support for expanding police services despite ongoing funding challenges.

Councilmember McDermott addressed rising costs within the Fire Department and clarified that, in the context of Measure A, the term “streets” has historically included fire hydrants and related infrastructure, not road paving. He explained that the Fire Department previously extended an “olive branch” to Public Works by agreeing to fund hydrant replacements through Measure A, noting that many of the City’s hydrants have outdated two-and-a-half-inch connections that are inadequate for modern firefighting needs. He also shared that the Fire Department takes pride in saving funds and paying cash for equipment and fleet purchases.

Mayor Barr spoke regarding the budget process and the overall intent of the Council.

Mr. Goodman apologized and stated that it was not his intention to create negative feelings among staff or the Council, adding that this was his first attempt at developing a balanced budget for Fiscal Year 2026/2027.

Councilmember Tolle asked questions regarding facilities funding outside of public safety. Mr. Goodman explained that when budgets are reduced, cuts often affect the upkeep and maintenance of existing City-owned facilities. Councilmember Tolle expressed concern about the potential use of Measure J funds and questioned whether funds were being shifted to buildings that have been deferred for many years. He further stated his concern about using Measure J funds for items that were not discussed with voters at the time the measure was presented.

Councilmember Tolle also asked whether Mr. Goodman had reviewed the budget numbers with department heads prior to submitting the staff report. Mr. Goodman responded that he had not yet met with department heads and was presenting the information to the Council for direction. Councilmember Tolle expressed disappointment, noting that the Council had previously directed Mr. Goodman to meet with all department heads to “sharpen the pencil.” While acknowledging that Mr. Goodman is new to the role, Councilmember Tolle emphasized the importance of utilizing the expertise of department heads and meeting with the Council as a whole rather than individually with Councilmembers.

Mayor Barr defended Mr. Goodman, stating that he had inherited a challenging situation and should not be criticized for a first effort to provide the financial information requested by the Council.

Following discussion, the Council directed the City Manager to meet individually with each department head to work toward development of a balanced budget for this year and next.

Commissioner appointments

City Clerk Jennifer Schmitke requested direction from the Council regarding appointments to the Library, Economic Development, Recreation, and Planning Commissions. Ms. Schmitke noted that for the Economic Development Commission and Planning Commission, the respective Chairs had reviewed multiple applications and submitted their recommendations to Mayor Barr. Ms. Schmitke then reviewed each vacant seat by commission, after which the Council discussed each appointment and made their determination.

The Planning Commission had one vacant seat with three interested applicants: Daniel Louder, Conner Fleak, and Andy Ramirez (who withdrew his application upon appointment to the Recreation Commission).

Daniel Louder stepped forward to introduce himself to Council.

ACTION: Mayor Barr moved, seconded by Councilmember Romano, to appoint Daniel Louder to the Planning Commission vacancy. Motion carried by voice vote, 4-0.

Ms. Lazorko asked if Mr. Louder could participate in the meeting on January 22nd, Mr. Drexel stated he could do that and he would be sworn in by the City Clerk.

The Recreation Commission had one vacant seat with one interested applicant, Andy Ramirez.

ACTION: Councilmember McDermott moved, seconded by Councilmember Tolle, to appoint Andy Ramirez to the Recreation Commission vacancy. Motion carried by voice vote, 4-0.

The Economic Development Commission had one vacant seat with two interested applicants, Sarah Bosley and Froylan Mendoza.

EDC Chairperson Lane came forward to explain his recommendation to Council.

ACTION: Councilmember McDermott moved, seconded by Councilmember Romano, to appoint Froylan Mendoza to the Economic Development Commission vacancy. Motion carried by voice vote, 4-0.

The Library Commission had two vacant seats with one interested applicant, Deborah Fogarty.

ACTION: Mayor Barr moved, seconded by Councilmember Tolle, to appoint Deborah Fogarty to a vacant Library Commission seat. Motion carried by voice vote, 4-0.

California Voting Rights Act (CVRA) – Approval of Professional Services Agreement with National Demographics Corporation for Election Districting Services

City Attorney Scott Drexel presented a report requesting City Council approval of a Professional Services Agreement with National Demographics Corporation (NDC) to provide election districting and demographic consulting services related to the City's transition from at-large to district-based City Council elections pursuant to the California Voting Rights Act.

City Attorney Drexel noted that on December 2, 2025, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 2025-20 declaring its intent to transition to district-based elections and directed staff to retain a qualified demographer and return with implementation recommendations. National Demographics Corporation was identified as the recommended consultant due to its extensive experience providing districting services to California cities.

The proposed agreement includes development of draft district maps, demographic analysis, public outreach and participation tools, preparation of required reports, management of a project website, and virtual attendance at the required public hearings.

The agreement includes a not-to-exceed amount of \$31,000, which is within the previously identified cost range for a voluntary transition. City Attorney Drexel noted the reduced cost reflects the City's population size and the use of virtual meetings.

County resident Jake Hackett shared his support for using National Demographics Corporation and asked questions regarding the maps. Mr. Drexel shared that once NDC is on board they would be able to help with specific questions .

Mr. Lane asked that if the item is mandated by the State, why the State is not providing funding for it.

Orland resident Janet Jonte thanked the Council for keeping costs low by conducting the meetings virtually. Ms. Jonte stated that she looks forward to learning more about the districting maps and thanked the Council for staying on track and keeping the public informed. She also expressed appreciation for the Police and Fire Departments for their service to the community.

ACTION: Councilmember McDermott moved, seconded by Councilmember Tolle, 1. Approve the Professional Services Agreement with National Demographics Corporation for election districting services in an amount not to exceed \$31,000; and 2. Authorize the City Manager to execute the Agreement and any necessary amendments within the approved budget . Motion carried by a voice vote, 4-0.

City Manager Verbal Report

City Manager Joe Goodman provided the City Council with an update on several ongoing matters throughout the community, including the following:

- The Walker Street well project is underway, and staff continues to seek grant funding to help offset project costs.
- The alleyway water infrastructure project between 3rd/4th Streets and 4th/5th Streets is scheduled to begin on January 26, 2025.
- A hazardous materials survey for the Carnegie Building and the building at 824 Fourth Street is scheduled to begin on January 26, 2025. The survey is expected to take approximately three days to complete, with the final report anticipated within two to three weeks.
- Plan check drawings for the Carnegie Center have been received by City staff and are currently under review.
- A possible future agenda item to consider could be downtown parking enforcement, including the potential implementation of a two-hour parking limit to increase turnover and improve access for patrons.
- A possible future agenda item to consider could be to address landscaping improvements around the water tank and the Walker Street lot. Staff is considering issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for both areas to enhance and beautify the downtown area, a topic that has been discussed at several Economic Development Commission meetings.

CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

Councilmember McDermott:

- Requested discussion of a potential pollinator park and suggested developing conceptual drawings for a park that would include restroom facilities. He noted that a dedicated group of local volunteers is available to assist in completing the project at a low cost.
- Expressed support for the proposed two-hour downtown parking enforcement.

- Requested that the City Manager maintain open communication with all department heads, emphasizing the importance of transparency and collaboration.
- Suggested greater utilization of the City's Commissions to better leverage Commissioner expertise and improve efficiency, thereby saving Council time.

Mayor Barr:

- Thanked community members for attending the meeting and providing public input.

Councilmember Romano:

- Reported no items.

Councilmember Tolle:

- Stated that tense budget discussion could have been avoided through earlier communication with department heads.
- Reported that the Chamber of Commerce is now meeting quarterly and will be scaling back events moving forward.

MEETING ADJOURNED 9:39 PM

Jennifer Schmitke, City Clerk

Terrie Barr, Mayor