



ORLAND CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, December 3, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by Mayor Chris Dobbs at 6:30 PM.

ROLL CALL

Councilmembers present:

Councilmembers Bruce T. Roundy, John McDermott, Jeffrey A. Tolley, Vice Mayor Matt Romano and Mayor Chris Dobbs

Councilmembers absent:

None

Staff present:

City Manager Pete Carr; City Attorney Greg Einhorn; Assistant City Manager Rebecca Webster; Police Chief Joe Vlach; City Clerk Jennifer Schmitke; City Engineer Paul Rabo, Library Director Jody Meza; Public Works Director Zach Barber

STATEMENT OF RESULTS FOR THE GENERAL ELECTION HELD NOVEMBER 5, 2024

- A.** Adopt Resolution 2024-16 Certifying the Canvass and Statement of Results for the General Election held November 5, 2024: Results to be provided on December 3rd - Mayor Chris Dobbs

ACTION: Mayor Dobbs moved, seconded by Councilmember Roundy, to adopt Resolution No. 2024-16 certifying the Canvass and Statement of Results for the General Election held November 5, 2024. The motion carried by a voice vote 5-0.

RECOGNITION OF COUNCILMEMBERS BRUCE T. ROUNDY, JEFFREY A. TOLLEY AND CHRIS DOBBS

Mayor Dobbs, on behalf of the City Council, presented plaques to Mr. Tolley and Mr. Roundy, while Vice Mayor Romano presented a plaque to Mayor Dobbs on behalf of the Council.

Orland resident Byron Denton expressed his gratitude and commended the outgoing council members for their dedication to the City.

OATH OF AFFIRMATION OF ALLEGIANCE FOR NEW COUNCILMEMBERS

City Clerk Jennifer Schmitke administered the Oath of Affirmation to the newly elected Councilmembers JC Tolle, Brandon Smith, and Terrie Barr. Each will serve a four-year term.

ELECTION OF MAYOR AND VICE MAYOR FOR 2024-2025

City Clerk Schmitke opened the floor for nominations for Mayor for the 2024-2025 term. Councilmember JC Tolle nominated Councilmember John McDermott, then Councilmember Brandon Smith nominated Vice Mayor Matt Romano. With no additional nominations, the nomination period was officially closed.

ACTION: Upon roll call vote, Councilmember McDermott received two affirmative votes and three non-affirmative votes for Mayor. (Ayes: McDermott and Tolle, Nays: Councilmembers Barr, Smith and Romano. Vice Mayor Romano received four affirmative votes and one non-affirmative vote for Mayor. Vice Mayor Romano was declared Mayor for 2024-2025. (Ayes: Councilmembers McDermott, Barr, Romano and Smith; Nays: Councilmember Tolle)

City Clerk Schmitke called for nominations for Vice Mayor for the 2024-2025 term. Councilmember McDermott nominated JC Tolle, Councilmember Tolle nominated Councilmember McDermott, and Councilmember Barr nominated Councilmember Smith. With no additional nominations, the nomination period was closed.

ACTION: Upon roll call vote Councilmember Tolle received three affirmative votes and two non-affirmative votes for Vice Mayor. Councilmember Tolle was declared Vice Mayor for the 2024-2025 year. (Ayes: Councilmembers McDermott, Tolle and Smith; Nays: Councilmember Barr and Mayor Romano)

CITY COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

A. Appointments/Reappointments of Residents to City Commissions

City Clerk Schmitke presented the following community members for confirmation by City Council:

Public Works and Safety Commission – Three (3) vacancies with new terms expiring December 31, 2026.

Applicants: Byron Denton, James Paschall and Emil Cavagnolo (Consider Reappointment)

Action: Councilmember McDermott moved, seconded by Vice Mayor Tolle to approve reappointments of the above listed with terms expiring December 31, 2026. Upon voice vote, the motion carried 3-2.

Arts Commission – Four (4) vacancies with new terms expiring December 31, 2028.

Applicants: Rae Turnbull, Steve Elliott, Patricia Turnbull and Mason Greeley (Consider Reappointment)

Action: Councilmember Barr moved, seconded by Councilmember McDermott to approve reappointments of the above listed with terms expiring December 31, 2026. Upon voice vote, the motion carried 4-1.

Recreation Commission – Three (3) vacancies with new terms expiring December 31, 2026
Applicants: Shannan Ovard, Joser Rosales and Larry Carmona (Consider Reappointment)

Action: Mayor Romano moved, seconded by Councilmember Smith to approve reappointment of the above listed with term expiring December 31, 2026. Upon voice vote, the motion carried 5-0.

Economic Development Commission (EDC) – Three (3) vacancies with new terms expiring December 31, 2026
Applicants: Dee Dee Jackson (Consider Reappointment) and Two open seats

Action: Councilmember Smith moved, seconded by Councilmember Barr to approve reappointments of the above listed with terms expiring December 31, 2026. Upon voice vote, the motion carried 5-0.

City Clerk Schmitke informed the Council that City staff would post notices regarding the two vacancies and bring the submitted applications back to the Council for review and consideration.

Library Commission – Two (2) vacancies with new terms expiring December 31, 2026
Applicant: Sherry Romano and Mary Viegas (Consider Reappointment)

Action: Mayor Romano moved, seconded by Vice Mayor Tolle to approve reappointments of the above listed with terms expiring December 31, 2026. Upon voice vote, the motion carried 5-0.

Planning Commission – Two (2) vacancies with new terms expiring December 31, 2028
Applicants: Stephen Nordbye and Wade Elliott (Consider Reappointment)

Action: Councilmember McDermott moved, seconded by Mayor Romano to approve reappointments of the above listed with terms expiring December 31, 2028. Upon voice vote, the motion carried 5-0.

City Clerk Schmitke requested the Council's direction regarding the two applicants, Claire Arano and Alex Enriquez, who applied for the Planning Commission seat in October. After deliberation, the Council appointed Alex Enriquez to the Planning Commission.

Action: Councilmember Smith moved, seconded by Mayor Romano to appoint Alex Enriquez to the Planning Commission open seat. Upon voice vote, the motion carried 5-0.

B. City Council 2025 Appointments to Boards and Commissions

City Clerk Schmitke requested that Council members review the current appointments and submit their preferences and availability for each Board and Commission to the Mayor. This will allow City staff to prepare a draft list by December 12th, ahead of the next Council meeting scheduled for December 17th. City Attorney Greg Einhorn clarified that the LAFCo appointment will be confirmed by the City Selection Committee.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- A.** Warrant List (Payable Obligations)
- B.** Approve City Council Minutes from November 19, 2024
- C.** Letter of Interest in Co-funding an Assessment Study to Determine the Feasibility of the City Joining Pioneer JPA
- D.** Adopt Resolution 2024-17 Authorizing City Manager to execute Agreements with State Board of Equalization for Implementation of Local Transactions and Use Tax
- E.** Approve Agreement for preparation to administer and operate City's Transactions and Use Tax Ordinance
- F.** Approve Agreement for State Administration of City Transactions and Use Taxes
- G.** Approve First Amendment to Agreement for Use and Transaction Tax Services with Hinderliter de Lamas and Associates
- H.** Adopt Resolution 2024-18 Authorizing Examination of Sales, Use and Transactions Tax Records

ACTION: Councilmember McDermott moved, seconded by Vice Mayor Tolle, to approve the consent calendar as presented. Motion carried by a voice vote 4-1

PRESENTATIONS

A. PUBLIC WORKS & ENGINEERING PRESENTATION

Public Works Director Zach Barber delivered the annual review of the department's activities and accomplishments over the past year. He outlined the department's ongoing efforts to manage and maintain critical city infrastructure, including water and sewer mains and lines, streets, parks, storm drains, building maintenance, fleet vehicles, and tree removal and replacement.

City Engineer Paul Rabo provided a preview of key projects slated for 2025, including dredging the wastewater treatment plant, repaving East Swift Street accompanied by water and sewer line upgrades, improvements to the M1/2 area, and the enhancement of lift stations throughout the city.

Mayor Romano inquired about the status of current well projects. City Engineer Paul Rabo reported that the Eva Well project has been completed, work on the Walker Street Well is underway and will be completed despite a funding change through the Department of Water Resources (DWR), and progress on the Sixth Street Well is currently on hold pending additional funding.

Regarding the lift station project, Director Zach Barber stated that agreements have been finalized, and the contractor is now conducting measurements and ordering materials. Mayor Romano also asked about the consultant hired to address sewer pond improvements. Director

Barber noted that Public Works staff is actively collaborating with the contractor, and Mr. Rabo indicated that the matter is expected to return to the Council for review in the coming months.

Councilmember McDermott raised concerns about road and drainage issues at the 500 block of Walker Street, asking if Caltrans could address them. Mr. Rabo explained that Caltrans has a project planned for 2029-2030 to improve storm drainage in the downtown area.

Councilmember Barr asked for an update on DWR funding and requested it be presented at a future meeting. Mr. Rabo agreed to provide the update. Mayor Romano suggested maintaining a running report on DWR-related projects for periodic Council review.

Councilmember Smith inquired about the size of the Public Works staff and whether it is sufficient to handle the department's workload. Director Barber stated that the team consists of nine staff members and three mechanics. He expressed that additional personnel would enable the department to complete more projects.

Vice Mayor Tolle discussed the need to update or replace certain signs and asked Director Barber how many additional staff members he would find ideal. Director Barber suggested that increasing the team to 12-13 employees, in addition to the three mechanics, would better meet the department's needs. He added that with more equipment and staff, he would like to see his staff take on more road improvement projects in-house.

The Council collectively thanked the Public Works Department and the City Engineer for their hard work and dedication over the past year, as well as their collaboration with other city and county entities to benefit the community.

B. ADMINISTRATION PRESENTATION

Assistant City Manager/Director of Administrative Services Rebecca Webster outlined her responsibilities and highlighted the essential operations overseen at City Hall. She introduced her team and detailed the wide range of activities and projects City Hall staff work on daily, including utility billing, accounts payable and receivable, payroll, staff and departmental support, records maintenance, and business licensing. Ms. Webster commended her team's dedication and emphasized their critical role in ensuring efficient daily operations and exceptional service to the community.

Ms. Webster highlighted several unique projects currently underway at City Hall. These include digitizing historical documents to ensure easy and efficient access when requested, managing the DWR Emergency Water Project—which involves invoicing, customer outreach, and meticulous record-keeping—and overseeing a major financial software upgrade, transitioning the City's system from MOMS to Tyler Technologies.

Councilmember Barr inquired about the state of technology across City departments. Ms. Webster noted significant upgrades have been made, though progress remains gradual and prioritized as needed.

Councilmember McDermott commended City Hall as a "well-oiled machine" that is often underappreciated, expressing gratitude for the presentation, which highlighted the extensive effort required to keep City Hall running efficiently.

Councilmember Smith echoed his appreciation, thanking City Hall staff for managing the many behind-the-scenes operations that keep the City functioning.

Vice Mayor Tolle also expressed gratitude to Ms. Webster and her team for their dedication to the community. He asked if staffing levels were sufficient, to which Ms. Webster responded that having at least one additional staff member would be beneficial.

Mayor Romano praised Ms. Webster for leading the Tyler software upgrade and commended City Hall staff for their professionalism, helpfulness, and significant contributions to the City's success.

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS

A. Employee Training Agreements: Public Works

Mr. Carr presented to the Council a proposed policy aimed at enhancing employee retention by offering City-funded training in exchange for a two-year employment commitment following the completion of training. This initiative was developed collaboratively with bargaining unit representatives.

He emphasized that retaining skilled employees has been a persistent challenge for the Public Works Department. While the City invests heavily in employee training, certifications, and experience, many staff members leave for higher-paying opportunities elsewhere.

Mr. Carr noted that the current MOU with the General Unit obligates the City to cover certification costs but does not require funding for training, which discourages some employees from pursuing necessary qualifications. Despite competitive salaries and license stipends, these efforts have not been sufficient to address retention issues in today's labor market.

The Council inquired about the costs associated with training and certifications and deliberated on the proposed agreement. City staff provided insights into these costs, as well as the City's pay rates compared to those in the private sector.

Orland resident Byron Denton expressed his support for the proposed agreement.

County resident Vernon Montague highlighted the value of CalPERS as part of employees' benefits.

County resident Joanie Woods inquired whether the agreement would be available to all departments or limited to Public Works. Mr. Carr clarified that the agreement applies to the General Unit, which includes staff from the Library, Public Works, and City Hall.

ACTION: Councilmember McDermott moved, seconded by Councilmember Smith, to approve the employee training agreement. Motion carried by a roll call vote 4-1.

B. Services Agreement for CPA Advisor

Mr. Carr informed the Council that the City's current CPA, Roy Seiler—who also serves Corning and Biggs—will retire in January 2025. For many years, the City of Orland has used a

contracted CPA for financial oversight, a cost-effective arrangement with annual expenses of \$30,000–\$40,000. These services include monthly accounting, financial analysis, budgeting assistance, and audit preparation, eliminating the need for a full-time finance director.

In preparation for Mr. Seiler's retirement, City staff, in collaboration with Corning and Biggs, has been working to identify a replacement CPA service. The goal is to secure an affordable, regional provider with expertise in municipal finance and familiarity with Tyler systems, while considering the practicality of remote services. After conducting a thorough search, three top candidates were identified: 1. Regional Government Services (RGS), 2. JJACPA, and 3. LSL.

Ms. Webster explained that City staff will assume responsibility for some of the tasks previously handled by the CPA. She expressed confidence in the staff's ability to successfully manage these duties.

Councilmembers discussed the advantages and disadvantages of working with a single on-site CPA that would be hands-on and in the office with City staff versus partnering with a firm that would be remote. Mr. Carr clarified that while RGS would assign a dedicated CPA to the City, other skilled professionals from their team would also be available to support the City as needed. Councilmembers asked question regarding cost for the CPA's travel time, City Manager explained.

Tammie Oliveras raised a question about whether an analysis of the separation of duties had been conducted regarding outsourced tasks and expressed concerns about increasing the workload for City staff. In response, Ms. Webster explained that the new firm would handle regular reviews and audits. She noted that while she would be taking on bank reconciliations, she also oversees the accounts payable staff. She assured the Council that safeguards are in place to prevent conflicts, ensuring that the same individual does not handle both payables and bank account balancing.

Mr. Carr added that the City's auditor also monitors task assignments to maintain separation accountability in payment processing and bank reconciliations.

ACTION: Councilmember McDermott moved, seconded by Vice Mayor Tolle, to authorize City Manager to enter an agreement with RGS for financial advising services and execute a contract not to exceed \$24K annually. Motion carried by a roll call vote 4-1.

C. Streetscapes Phase 1 Project Options

Mr. Carr provided a brief overview of the 2018 Walker Street Streetscape Master Plan and the funding allocated by the City Council from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) for pedestrian-friendly improvements on 4th and 5th Streets. He emphasized that in 2023, City staff-initiated discussions on the initial proposal concepts, gathered public input, and presented these ideas at both Council and Economic Development Commission (EDC) meetings, where additional feedback was received. Staff worked closely with local business owners to refine the concepts, which were then brought back to Council for approval. The Council authorized the installation of paired lampposts to support decorative lighting and improve the pedestrian experience. To move the project forward, OHS welding students fabricated the lampposts, while staff procured additional street furnishings.

Mr. Carr provided an update on the lampposts and street furnishings, noting that permits have been secured from PG&E, a local electrician has been engaged, and business owners have been consulted. He shared that some lampposts are currently being powder-coated, and parking bumpers have been installed to mitigate vehicle risks. Benches and trash receptacles are installed.

Mr. Carr also highlighted that the Orland Arts Commission recommended painting or staining the pedestals an earthy brown; staff suggested an acid wash followed by a stain and sealer for enhanced durability and aesthetic appeal.

Regarding the lampposts, Mr. Carr noted that the current clearance is 13-14 feet, but adjustments are necessary. Options include extending the existing lampposts by 12-18 inches with telescoping steel bases, adding taller center posts in tree pits for cross-street lighting on 4th Street or repurposing the current lampposts for Walker Street and installing taller replacements.

For the cross-street lighting, one option involves stringing lights between buildings with property owner permission. Alternatively, the cross-street lighting could be deleted in favor of sidewalk lighting only, as recommended by the Arts Commission.

Councilmember Barr raised concerns about the lamppost designs, engineering, and construction standards. She questioned the custom design and fabrication process, with Mr. Carr confirming the lampposts were specifically designed for Orland. Mr. Rabo proposed reaching out to a structural engineer to review the footings, and Barr suggested a certified welder inspect the poles due to their fabrication by high school students without building department oversight. She emphasized that City projects should follow the same standards as private property projects, including permits, plans, and inspections.

Barr also asked about the project budget and the progress of the completed poles. Director Barber confirmed that 16 poles had been finished, and Mr. Carr provided an update on the remaining materials. She expressed concerns about potential vehicle damage to the lamppost bases and recommended redesigning the bases to achieve higher quality. Furthermore, Barr emphasized the importance of keeping the public well-informed about the project's developments.

Councilmember McDermott shared he would like to see a compromise or fix on the lampposts and stated he believes the high school welding teacher is certified in welding. Councilmember McDermott stated he was in favor of aesthetically raising the lamppost higher without adding extra expenses to the project.

Councilmember Smith expressed his initial enthusiasm for the lamppost project, highlighting the potential benefits of enhanced lighting and improved safety for the downtown area. However, he believed that the current installations on 4th and 5th Streets differ significantly from the designs presented during the initial meetings. He emphasized the importance of reassessing the pedestals and lampposts to better align with community expectations. While recognizing that design choices may not satisfy everyone, he expressed support for the involvement of high school students in working on the poles, emphasizing his confidence in the welding teacher's certification and expertise. Councilmember Smith proposed relocating the lampposts to another part of town as a potential solution.

Vice Mayor Tolle inquired whether the pole heights on SR 32 would differ from those on 4th and 5th Streets. Mr. Carr clarified that the lampposts on SR 32 would match the height and theme of those currently installed on 5th Streets. Echoing the sentiments of other Councilmembers, Vice Mayor Tolle expressed concern that the installed poles do not reflect the designs depicted in the original drawings. He recommended that the City pause and reevaluate the project.

Mayor Romano emphasized the importance of ensuring the structural integrity of the lampposts and their concrete bases, recommending that a structural engineer conduct a thorough review. He also suggested enhancing the aesthetic appeal by incorporating a decorative element into the concrete bases. Mayor Romano praised the appearance of the trash receptacles and benches downtown, noting how impressive they looked during his walk through the area.

County resident Valerie Johnson expressed her desire for the lamppost design to be more decorative and visually appealing.

Mr. Denton voiced his approval of the lampposts and stated his support for the City.

Orland resident Ron Lane proposed replacing the concrete bases of the lampposts with bollards for a different aesthetic and functional approach.

Orland resident Jan Walker shared her dissatisfaction with the lampposts, pointing out her view that the current installations on 5th Street do not align with the examples presented in the Streetscapes plan. She also offered suggestions for changes she would like to see implemented.

Orland resident Helen Tolle expressed her desire for the lampposts to reflect the charming and quaint character of Orland. She also shared her enthusiasm for the idea of stringing lights across 4th and 5th Streets, noting how it would enhance the area's appeal.

County resident Marilyn Ponci expressed her disappointment with the project, citing examples of lampposts in Chico that feature more streamlined designs without large concrete bases.

Ms. Oliveras shared her concerns about the lampposts installed on 5th Street, emphasizing the potential liability for the City if vehicles collide with the poles. She criticized the approval process, asserting that the project was not properly finalized. Ms. Oliveras stated, "The buck stops at the top," and named Pete Carr as the individual responsible for the project. In response, Mayor Romano clarified that ultimate responsibility rests with the Council and shared accountability for approving the project.

Ms. Woods acknowledged that opinions on the aesthetics of the lampposts would vary among individuals. She expressed concerns about the concrete bases, parking availability, and whether the parking layout might change with the upcoming Caltrans project. She suggested increasing the height of the poles and called for a reevaluation of the design. Additionally, she shared her support for adding lights crossing the street instead of along the sidewalks.

The Council posed questions to City staff regarding the possibility of moving the lampposts closer to the buildings, the project budget, and repurposing the completed lampposts for another area of town. They also discussed the need for a structural engineer to review the project. Mayor Romano emphasized that citizens are calling for the removal of the pedestals, a

lamppost height of 17-18 feet, and an artistic review. Mr. Carr confirmed that a structural analysis could be presented at a January meeting.

The Council agreed to pause the project and requested that City staff return with the cost of installing 18-foot poles at the curb, as well as the expense of dismantling the current bases. Councilmember Barr suggested forming an ad hoc committee involving members of the business and artistic communities. Mayor Romano directed Mr. Carr to place this discussion on the next agenda.

ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Mr. Denton suggested adding a lift to the Carnegie meeting location to improve accessibility, noting that the Carnegie venue offers better microphones and a more comfortable environment compared to the other meeting location.

Ms. Walker expressed concerns about the disappearance of trees throughout town.

Orland resident Monica Rossman announced that she has been working to have Glenn County host its first Veteran Stand Down on January 24th at the Fairgrounds.

CITY COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

Councilmember Barr:

- Asked about the Cat program. (Mayor Romano shared the money was approved, Mr. Carr shared that the County has been directed to work with the Sheriff on the logistics)
- Thanked the audience for coming out.

Councilmember McDermott:

- Nothing to Report.

Councilmember Smith:

- Shared that the Orland varsity football team lost the section championship.
- Would like to see a vision planning meeting at future meeting.
- Would like to see the plan for the long term ambulance.

Vice Mayor Tolle:

- Happy to be here.

Mayor Romano:

- Would like to see the Westside Ambulance – on a future agenda regarding subsidizing operations.
- Would like to see a visioning planning meeting at a future meeting.
- Would like to have a City Hall/PD building discussion.
- Would like to get the Fire Department roof on a future agenda.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:9:52PM

Jennifer Schmitke, City Clerk

Mathew Romano, Mayor