

**RIO DELL CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 18, 2025**

Mayor Garnes called the regular meeting of the Rio Dell City Council to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present: Mayor Garnes, Mayor Pro Tem Carter, Councilmembers Orr, Wilson and Woodall

Others Present: City Manager Knopp, Water/Roadways Superintendent Jensen, Wastewater Superintendent Moore, Sergeant Landry, City Clerk Dunham, and Senior Fiscal Assistant Maciel. Community Development Director Caldwell attended remotely.

Absent: Finance Director Sanborn and Chief of Police Phinney (excused)

CEREMONIAL MATTERS

Honoring Our Veterans

Mayor Garnes said that this is a time to honor our veterans and give thanks and appreciation for their service. A video was shown that included theme songs of each of the branches of the U.S. Armed Services. Veterans in attendance were asked to stand when the theme song from the branch of service in which they served was played.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

Mayor Garnes invited public comments on non-agenda matters.

Tommy Norton, owner of Shotz Coffee, addressed the Council regarding the sewer rate schedule for coffee shops. He requested a review and reclassification of the current sewer strength category for Shotz Coffee and said that they are currently classified as "high" strength, the same as full-service restaurants. (staff later verified that Shotz is currently classified as "medium" strength). He said that this does not accurately reflect the true nature of their wastewater discharge into the sewer system since they do not have a dishwasher, garbage disposal and do not dispose of grease or fats. He recommended their rate be reclassified to medium or low strength along with car washes and laundromats which have minimal organic load and suspended solids.

He pointed out that under Prop 218; all utility rates must be based on proportional cost to provide the service. The City's sewer rates are differentiated by business types and strength classifications but must be fair and equitable.

Elizabeth Warren reminded the Council that the fire hydrants still need to be installed at the Rio Dell Dog Park.

City Clerk Dunham then read a public comment submitted by email from Angelina Lasko related to various matters (attached to these minutes as Attachment 1).

CONSENT CALENDAR

Mayor Garnes asked if any council member, staff, or members of the public would like to remove any item from the consent calendar for separate discussions.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter removed the consent calendar number related to school impact fees.

Carter/Orr made a motion to approve the consent calendar, including the following items:

- 1) Approve Minutes of November 4, 2025, Regular Meeting;
- 2) Approve Resolution No. 1652-2025 Authorizing a Budget Transfer within the FY 2025-26 Police Department Budget for Replacement of Outdated Taser Devices from Axon Enterprises, Inc. in the Amount of \$44,563.80; and
- 3) Receive and File the Check Register for October.

The motion carried 5-0.

ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT CALENDAR

Receive and File Rio Dell Elementary School District's Developer Fee Justification Study – School Impact Fees Report

Mayor Pro Tem Carter provided an update on November 13, 2025, meeting of the Rio Dell School Board related to the discussion on School Developer Impact Fees. She explained that the school is not eligible for Prop 2 funding unless all local sources of funding are exhausted. The school hired a consulting firm to prepare a Developer Fee Justification Study and look for a potential exemption for the Rio Dell School District; however, the school did not qualify for an exemption. The study concluded that the district was justified and recommended adoption of residential impact fees of up to \$5.17 per square foot on new residential construction and residential additions, with additions of 500 square feet or less exempt from the fees. The study recommended construction of commercial and industrial buildings be assessed a fee of \$0.84 per square foot with mini storage units at \$0.06 per square foot.

She said that a local contractor attended the meeting and addressed the School Board on the implications of imposing high impact fees. None of the school board members wanted to do anything to deter development in the city and voted 3-2 on imposing a \$1.00 per square foot residential impact fee rather than \$5.17 as recommended in the study. She pointed out that the \$1.00 fee is lower than the City of Fortuna's fee at \$1.20

per square foot. The fee for commercial/industrial development was assessed at \$0.75 per square foot as opposed to the recommended \$0.84 per square foot.

Councilmember Wilson asked for clarification that at the last regular council meeting, the council was informed that the school board imposed the impact fees.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter explained that at the last meeting on November 4, the Council received the notice of the November 13, 2025 public hearing at such time, the Board held the public hearing and voted on the reduced impact fees.

Councilmember Wilson asked if it is mandatory that the city collect the fees on behalf of the school district.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter explained that the city would not be responsible for collecting the fees. As part of the process for obtaining a building permit for new construction, the applicant would be required to go to the school and pay the impact fee and bring verification of payment back to the city before issuing the permit.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter commented that Senior Housing Projects would be exempt of the impact fee since they would not have kids attending the school.

Councilmember Orr commented that if the exemptions are based on not having kids in the school, families with kids going to out-of-district schools should not have to pay the fee.

Mayor Garnes called for comments from the public.

Heather Watkins asked when the impact fees would become effective and if the information would be on the school website.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter explained that the impact fees would become effective 60 after the adoption (60 days from November 13, 2025).

Carter/Woodall made a motion to receive and file the Rio Dell Elementary School District's Developer Fees Justification Study – School Impact Fees Report.

The Motion carried 5-0.

REPORTS/STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

City Manager/Staff Update

City Manager Knopp provided highlights of the staff update and said that he attended a meeting of the Humboldt Housing & Homeless Coalition with a discussion focused on concerns regarding a change in federal funding that would potentially shift away approximately 70% of existing funding that supports operations in Permanent

Supportive Housing towards shorter term housing programs. He noted that the timeline is unclear, but he would continue to monitor the situation and report back to the Council on potential impacts to Rio Dell.

Councilmember Wilson asked if the Rio Dell School District had come up with a price for the Davis St. Park the city is interested in acquiring.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter explained that the school can't have the parcel appraised until the city receives approval on the grant application. Once the property is declared as surplus, the city will only have 60 days to enter into a purchase agreement.

Mayor Pro Tem Carter announced that once again, there were zero cats transported to Miranda's Rescue.

ORDINANCES/SPECIAL RESOLUTIONS/PUBLIC HEARINGS

Second Reading (by title only) and Adoption of Ordinance No. 416-2025 Removing Section 10.05.780 and Amending Section 10.05.020 and 10.05.790 of the Rio Dell Municipal Code (RDMC) Restricting Parking of Specific Commercial Vehicles in Designated Areas Within the City

City Manager Knopp provided a staff report recommending the second reading and adoption of Ordinance No. 416-2025 related to parking restrictions for commercial vehicles in designated areas within the city.

He said that over the past years, there have been concerns with commercial truck parking in Rio Dell related to the damage to infrastructure, traffic safety, and neighborhood impacts related to aesthetics and visibility concerns for residents.

He explained that the ordinance has been reviewed by the Traffic Committee, a representative of the local truckers, and several meetings were held before coming up to the final draft ordinance.

He noted that there are provisions in the ordinance for exemptions as mandated by law for delivery vehicles and vehicles used for construction activity as well as emergency vehicles.

City Manager Knopp said that the cost of implementing the 2-hour parking is dominus with new signage erected on Wildwood Avenue. He added that based on council direction at the November 4th meeting, staff are working on a resolution to restrict all vehicles to 2-hour parking along the 600 block of Wildwood Avenue. He said the other issue broached at the last meeting was to prevent circumvention of the 2-hour parking by simply moving the vehicle a few feet.

Councilmember Woodall asked about the language on the signage and when the ordinance would become effective.

City Manager Knopp said that the signs would limit commercial truck parking to 2 hours and that staff would come back to the Council with a Resolution restricting the area within the 600 block of Wildwood Avenue to 2- hour parking for all vehicles. He noted that the ordinance, if adopted tonight, would become effective in 30 days, December 18, 2025.

Councilmember Woodall suggested courtesy warnings be given to truck drivers before issuing citations.

Mayor Garnes asked if signs limiting 2-hour parking for commercial vehicles would be erected once the ordinance becomes effective or if the signage would wait until the resolution is adopted limiting all vehicles to 2-hour parking.

City Manager indicated that the city has some signs that could be temporarily placed until new signs are purchased.

Mayor Garnes called for public comments on the proposed ordinance. There were no public comments received.

A motion was made by Woodall/Carter to approve the second reading (by title only) and adoption of *Ordinance No. 416-2025 Removing Section 10.05.780 and Amending Section 10.05.020 and 10.05.790 of the Rio Dell Municipal Code (RDMC) Restricting Parking of Specific Commercial Vehicles in Designated Areas Within the City.*

The motion carried 5-0.

COUNCIL REPORTS/COMMUNICATION

Mayor Pro Tem Carter reported on upcoming meetings and events and said that the next two RREDC meetings were canceled because they align with Thanksgiving and Christmas. She said that the next Chamber of Commerce meeting is December 1st at the Community Resource Center, the Tree Lighting and Truck Parade Event will be on December 6, 2025, beginning at 5 p.m. and said if anyone is interested in helping put up Christmas decorations, it will be done on November 22-23.

Most importantly, the Community Resource Center, the Rio Dell Volunteer Fire Department, the Rio Dell School and a couple of local churches would be hosting a free Thanksgiving dinner at the Rio Dell School cafeteria on Saturday, November 22nd from 3-6 p.m. for anyone who would like to attend.

Councilmember Wilson asked if the item related to the utility rate review for Shotz Coffee would be coming back to the council on a subsequent agenda.

Mayor Garnes said that the request was that staff review the rates for possible reclassification of their sewer strength.

NOVEMBER 18, 2025 MINUTES
Page 6

Councilmember Wilson said that he would be attending a Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA) meeting on Monday instead of Thursday because of the Thanksgiving holiday falling on the regular meeting day. He also announced the opening of southbound lanes at the Indianola Undercrossing today which is great news.

Councilmember Orr said he would be attending an HCAOG meeting on Thursday with the focus on the meeting being on unmet transit needs in Humboldt County.

Councilmember Woodall announced there would be a Nuisance Advisory Committee meeting here tomorrow at 3 p.m. and said that she was stuck in Georgia for the past 2 months and if you must be stuck somewhere, Georgia is the place to be.

Mayor Garnes said she would be attending a Great Redwood Trail Retreat in Ukiah and Hopland this week and wished everyone a Happy thanksgiving.

ADJOURNMENT

Carter/Woodall made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:38 p.m. to December 2, 2025, regular meeting. Motion carried 5-0.

Debra Garnes, Mayor

Attest:

Karen Dunham, City Clerk

Karen Dunham

From: Angelina M. Lasko <angelinal@humboldt.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, November 4, 2025 4:34 PM
To: Public Comment
Subject: Public Comment - meeting 10/4/2025

Rio Dell Council.

I am writing on a few matters.

First, is a general comment on the Davis Street park. I would hope the council would consider a skate park. It would be a great way to bring people and commerce to Rio Dell. The new Willow Creek skate park has been a huge success.

Second, when looking at the budget it seems we need to find other ways to continue to bring a more diversified revenue stream. Has the council ever considered a "sin tax" on alcohol and cigarettes? We have a cannabis tax, and with the bar and liquor store being our other main business seems like something to consider.

Third, I have been requesting through email and calling, but I have gotten no return call on the city budget. It seems the general fund is pretty straight forward, which is why I can give a clear public comment on that topic, but the enterprise funds is where it seems to get more confusing and unclear. I cannot follow the flow of money from those funds.

I see \$807,172 in revenue after expenses in the water fund to fund the City Manager and whatever else. I see \$41,804 after expenses in the sewer fund in revenue. When added together that is \$848,976 in revenue in both water and sewer, which is considered the enterprise fund. These numbers are not matching up in what I see in the summary table. Can someone please explain and help me understand this.

As far as the special revenue fund, I am not sure that that consists of.

I have emailed Travis to try and better understand but he only said for me to attend the meetings and study sessions. If there is a study session I am not aware of, could someone please let me know when that is so I can attend.

Thank you very much for your time.

Angelina

ATTACHMENT 1