



# CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, August 18, 2025 at 7:00 PM  
Sandy City Hall and via Zoom

## MINUTES

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**EXECUTIVE SESSION** Prior to the Regular Meeting, the City Council met in executive session pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(h)

### REGULAR MEETING – 7:00 PM

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

#### ROLL CALL

##### PRESENT

Mayor Kathleen Walker  
Council President Don Hokanson  
Councilor Chris Mayton  
Councilor Laurie Smallwood  
Councilor Rich Sheldon  
Councilor Kristina Ramseyer  
Councilor Lindy Hanley

#### CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

The Council agreed to add a discussion after the Presentations section about recent Oregon Government Ethics Commission (OGE) opinions about serial meetings

#### PUBLIC COMMENT (3-minute limit)

Nicole O'Neill: expressed thanks to the City on behalf of the Historical Museum; provided an update on the 2023-2025 funding received for the internship program; summarized the new exhibit that will be unveiled soon; summarized the work of the new intern highlighting past female city leaders and other historical notes; referenced a recent social media post that received considerable attention.

Khrys Jones: read aloud a letter from the Sandy Area Chamber of Commerce, which referred to comments made during the July 21, 2025 City Council meeting. A copy of the letter is attached to these minutes.

Nikki Skinner: expressed concern that many residents are unaware of the City's wastewater plans; expressed concern about working with another community in a high-tax county; expressed concern about excessive wastewater rate increases; asked where the proposed wastewater pipeline would be placed; expressed concern about possible pipeline breaks;

expressed concern that Gresham would charge the City excessive amounts in the future. It was noted that a final decision about wastewater facilities has not yet been made.

Carl Exner: expressed concern that the cost of water is too high, especially for seniors; concern that increased rates will lower consumption, resulting in revenue problems for the City; concern that the City may be pushing forward on capital projects in an unsustainable manner; and emphasis on the importance of executing favorable intergovernmental agreements with Portland and Gresham, especially with respect to rate setting. In response, discussion with the Council ensued regarding the City's recent \$5 million grant from the State; the lack of equity of the City's grant given the large relative scope of Sandy's needs; the need for community members to help advocate for additional funding assistance; the fact that recent project bids have been favorable in terms of cost now that the City is beyond the initial emergency phase and is able to proceed more deliberately; and the efforts of the City Council to provide effective project oversight, question assumptions, and find cost savings.

With respect to alternative wastewater systems, Mr. Exner expressed appreciation for the efforts to maintain development but expressed concern about installation of portable toilets; expressed concern about additional septic systems within city limits, and about possible public perception that growth in Sandy is not possible.

## **RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS COMMENTS**

(none)

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

1. City Council Minutes: August 4, 2025
2. Policy Approval: Transit Drug and Alcohol Policy Update

### **MOTION: Adopt the Consent Agenda**

Motion made by Councilor Ramseyer, Seconded by Councilor Sheldon.

Voting Yea: Mayor Walker, Council President Hokanson, Councilor Mayton, Councilor Smallwood, Councilor Sheldon, Councilor Ramseyer, Councilor Hanley

**MOTION CARRIED: 7-0**

## **PRESENTATIONS**

3. Overview: 2025 Water Management and Conservation Plan Update

The Public Works Director provided a presentation regarding the draft update to the City's Water Management and Conservation Plan (WMCP). It was noted that updates to the curtailment plan are included in the draft. Feedback from the Council was requested by September 5<sup>th</sup>.

Council discussion ensued on the following topics:

- Consistency between the WMCP and the Water Master Plan
- The need to consider tiered rates in the future; although at this point the intention is only to study the idea in light of the City's infrastructure needs
- The requirement to update the plan every 10 years
- Suggestion to more actively promote water conservation methods, including rain barrels and drought-resistant grass seeds, which could potentially be provided to the community
- Staff's intention to bring a new revision to the utility assistance program to the Council in the near future

## **OGEC DISCUSSION**

### **4. Discussion About Serial Meetings**

The City Attorney provided an overview of the recent OGEC opinion about serial meetings, and the significant impact it poses on the ability of local governments to effectively function.

Discussion topics included the following:

- Overview of the context that led to the OGEC opinion, and the details of the opinion
- Concern that this constitutes overkill and will effectively make it impossible to govern locally, leading to staff making decisions instead
- Emphasis on the need to partner with other entities and lobby the Legislature to head this off, and potentially to engage in litigation to the extent possible
- Overview of the efforts of the League of Oregon Cities (LOC) and the Oregon City Attorney Association on this issue
- Discussion on the need for a legislative fix
- Suggestion that the Legislature not being subject to the opinion constitutes a double standard
- Comparison to the recent public debate over farm stands
- Reflections and input from the City's government relations consultant, Nellie deVries
- Suggestion to cooperate with the efforts of LOC, but move quickly
- Discussion on potentially appealing the OGEC ruling

Following the discussion, Ms. deVries provided remarks on the upcoming special session of the Legislature and expected results related to transportation funding. The City's potential \$1 million in federal funding for wastewater was also discussed.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION** The City Council met in executive session pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(f)

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **5. Alternative Wastewater Systems: Discussion and Policy Direction**

The City Manager summarized the staff report in the meeting packet.

Council discussion ensued on the following topics:

- Overview of the categories and conditions included in the proposed ordinance
- Discussion of whether the City can require properties to connect to the sewer system in the future
- Ability of developers to determine which option to pursue
- Questions as to why the code section was placed in Title 17
- Concern about the City having to monitor septic systems and the lack of staff capacity
- Concern that DEQ and Clackamas County have not been heavily involved in writing the proposed code
- Concern about having too many septic systems in Sandy
- Concern about lack of clarity within the approval process
- Recognition that development would have to meet numerous regulations in addition to alternative wastewater matters
- Suggestion to add language that explicitly states properties can only utilize the alternative wastewater program if no ERUs are available; discussion regarding the parameters and definitions that would be necessary to make this work
- Discussion regarding how a variance process would work
- Suggestion that Option 3 in the staff report is preferred
- Suggestion to apply the discretionary approval language, which was previously reserved for systems other than portable toilets and gray water systems, to all proposed systems

After discussion, the Council directed staff to prepare a revised ordinance consistent with Option 3 from the staff report, but including the following: (1) language that explicitly states properties can only utilize the alternative wastewater program if no ERUs are available, and (2) application of the discretionary approval language, previously reserved for systems other than portable toilets and gray water systems, to all proposed systems. Consequently, there will no longer be two different approval pathways. The revised language is to also clearly define the meaning of 'ERU availability.'

## **REPORT FROM THE CITY MANAGER**

- The City Manager expressed thanks and appreciation to the City Council

## **COMMITTEE / COUNCIL REPORTS**

Councilor President Hokanson

(none)

Councilor Hanley

(none)

Councilor Ramseyer

(none)

Councilor Sheldon

- Questions related to how wastewater rate setting would work if/when the City connects to Gresham's wastewater system

Councilor Smallwood

(none)

Councilor Mayton

- Overview of Meinig Park and Deer Pointe projects discussed at the recent Parks and Trails Advisory Board meeting

Mayor Walker

- Recap of the recent Oregon Mayors Association: suggestions for strategies to address vacant commercial buildings; suggestions for council and community relations; suggestions for addressing homelessness

**STAFF UPDATES**

Monthly Reports: <https://reports.cityofsandy.com/>

**ADJOURN**