



CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

September 03, 2025 at 5:30 PM

Council Chambers at City Hall - 1123 W. Lake St. Sandpoint, Idaho

Call to Order

Mayor Grimm called the regular meeting of the Sandpoint City Council to order at 5:31 p.m. on Wednesday, September 3, 2025, in Council chambers at City Hall, 1123 W. Lake St., Sandpoint, Idaho.

Roll Call

PRESENT

Mayor Jeremy Grimm
Councilor Deb Ruehle, Council President
Councilor Joel Aispuro
Councilor Justin Dick
Councilor Kyle Schreiber
Councilor Pam Duquette
Councilor Rick Howarth

As required by the City's adopted Code of Ethics and Civility, as the presiding officer, Mayor Grimm identified law enforcement personnel serving as sergeant-at-arms for the meeting: Lieutenant Steven Chamberlain.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Grimm led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements and Reports

Mayor Grimm offered condolences to Councilor Howarth, whose mother had passed away earlier that day.

The Mayor provided instructions for those who wished to testify during the public hearing or during general public comment time. He also provided a number of updates, including a report of the candidates who had declared candidacy for the November 4 general election, at which time Sandpoint voters will elect three Council members for the seats currently held by Councilors Aispuro, Dick, and Howarth. Councilors Aispuro and Howarth have declared their candidacy, along with Sandpoint citizens Torrez Joshua and Joe Tate.

Council members provided reports from recent meetings of the citizen advisory boards on which they serve as Council liaison.

Community Planning and Development Director Jason Welker fielded a Council question, providing a report on the status of the trees planted at Travers Park, followed by a general update from his department.

Public Comments

Mayor Grimm recited the rules and procedure for public comment during the meeting and offered an opportunity for members of the public to address Council regarding items included on the Consent Calendar and Old and New Business topics on the agenda or other general matters relevant to the business of the City of Sandpoint. Information only; no Council action.

Consent Calendar

1. The minutes from Council's August 20, 2025, meeting were approved as presented.
2. The bills presented were approved for payment in the amount of \$1,338,376.59 (\$235,642.46 for regular payables and \$1,102,734.13 for payroll).
3. **Resolution 25-032** Amending USDA Forest Service Bald Mountain Communication Site Lease (City Agreement A21-1600-2) - approved
4. **Resolution 25-033** First Amendment to Professional Services Agreement with Stantec Consulting Services, Inc. (City Agreement A25-3257-2) - approved

Public Hearing

5. Mayor Grimm announced that the purpose of the public hearing was to take testimony on proposed amendments to City Code Title 12, Chapter 1, Development Impact Fee Regulations. He noted, for the record, that any written comments received were forwarded to Council if received in time to do so. He and the Council members confirmed no conflict of interest as pertained to the proposed code amendments.

Mr. Welker provided a brief presentation, with the ordinance proposing amendments that would remove reference to the City's area of impact, update the definitions of "Capital Improvements Plan" in order to reference the 2025 Plan, "development requirement" in order to add reference to subdivision or a development permit, and "unit(s) of development" in order to specifically reference the City's 2025 Capital Improvement Plan and Development Impact Fee Study and provide a distinction between the protocol for a credit and a reimbursement. Mr. Welker noted that, per Idaho Code, the earliest the ordinance could take effect was 30 days following adoption, which, if adopted this evening, would be October 3, 2025.

Mayor Grimm provided instructions for public testimony and then opened the public hearing. The following Sandpoint residents testified: Jayce Bordenave, Tom Russell, and David Eacret, speaking for additional time gifted by Barbara Eacret. The following, who were not Sandpoint residents, also testified: Ben McGrann, representing Averill Hospitality, and Paul Vogel. With all those who wished to speak having had an opportunity to do so, the Mayor closed the public hearing.

6. **Ordinance 1431** Amendments to Title 12, Chapter 1, Development Impact Fee Regulations

Following the public hearing, Council deliberated, with questions fielded by Mr. Welker, City Planner Bill Dean, and City Attorney Fonda Jovick.

Councilor Ruehle made a motion to amend the proposed ordinance to reflect an effective date of January 1, 2026, clarifying that this delay would be for the purpose of allowing City staff the time needed to implement the updated fee schedule.

Motion made by Councilor Ruehle, Seconded by Councilor Schreiber.

Voting Yea: Councilor Ruehle, Councilor Aispuro, Councilor Schreiber, Councilor Duquette

Voting Nay: Councilor Dick, Councilor Howarth

Motion passed, amending the effective date of the proposed ordinance to January 1, 2026.

At the Mayor's request, the clerk read aloud the title of the ordinance as follows:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF SANDPOINT, A MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF THE STATE OF IDAHO, AMENDING CERTAIN SECTIONS OF SANDPOINT CITY CODE TITLE 12, CHAPTER 1, DEVELOPMENT IMPACT FEE REGULATIONS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR PUBLICATION AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Motion that the Ordinance pass its first reading by title only, and the Summary is approved.

Motion made by Councilor Ruehle, Seconded by Councilor Dick.

Voting Yea: Councilor Ruehle, Councilor Aispuro, Councilor Dick, Councilor Schreiber, Councilor Duquette, Councilor Howarth

Mayor Grimm announced that the Ordinance had passed its first reading by title only, and the Summary was approved.

Motion that the rules requiring three separate readings, once in the Ordinance's entirety, be suspended and that the Ordinance pass its second and third readings under suspension of the rules.

Motion made by Councilor Ruehle, Seconded by Councilor Dick.

Voting Yea: Councilor Ruehle, Councilor Aispuro, Councilor Dick, Councilor Schreiber, Councilor Duquette, Councilor Howarth

Mayor Grimm announced that the motion passed, and the Ordinance was considered read, passed and adopted under suspension of the rules. Per the approved amendment to the Ordinance, following newspaper publication, it will become effective on January 1, 2026.

New Business

7. Bonner County Historical Society Lease Agreement

Following Mayor Grimm's introduction of this item, Bonner County Historical Society Executive Director Hannah Combs and Board President Tonya Sherman provided a presentation, with a request for City Council to approve a lease expiration date that extends beyond the term currently proposed. Information only; no Council action at this time.

8. Resolution 25-034 Sole Source Procurement Declaration - Huber Technology, Inc. Q-Press

Public Works Director Holly Ellis and Nick Smith, Principal Project Manager with Stantec, the City's consultant, provided a presentation on the request and recommendation to declare Huber Technology, Inc., a sole source vendor for purposes of procuring two Q-Press screw presses, including associated parts, for the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) in accordance with Idaho Code § 67-2808, with this procurement approach ensuring compatibility with the existing solids handling building at the WWTP, minimizing risk of downtime and accelerating replacement of the failing belt presses.

Along with Mayor Grimm, Ms. Ellis and Mr. Smith fielded questions from the Council members.

Motion to approve the Resolution declaring sole source procurement for the Q-Press and related equipment from Huber Technology.

Motion made by Councilor Ruehle, Seconded by Councilor Aispuro.

Voting Yea: Councilor Ruehle, Councilor Aispuro, Councilor Dick, Councilor Schreiber, Councilor Duquette, Councilor Howarth

Following the required 14-day legal advertisement in the newspaper, provided no challenges are received, the City will make this purchase in an amount not to exceed \$1,500,000.

9. Authorization to Solicit RFQ for City Beach RV Campground and Beach Parking Lot Improvements

Mr. Welker reviewed his staff report with the Council, noting that, now that the Idaho Parks and Recreation grant award for funds that will be allocated to City Beach RV campground improvements has been secured, the next step is a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for professional design and engineering services. For this solicitation, staff propose including design and engineering services for the City Beach parking lot improvements project, as well. Mr. Welker relayed that completed design documents for the parking lot will enable the City to pursue a combination of parks capital improvement funds, parking in-lieu fees, and future grant opportunities, such as a Waterways Improvement Fund grant for FY2027, to fund lot construction, with the parking lot improvements ideally scheduled to occur alongside the campground construction or in the following off-season, contingent on funding availability.

Following Council questions, fielded by Mr. Welker, Councilor Schreiber made a motion to approve issuance of the RFQ for the RV campground only, removing the parking lot from the scope. The motion died for lack of a second, and no vote was taken.

Motion to approve issuance of the RFQ for design and engineering services for both the City Beach RV campground and the City Beach parking lot improvements.

Motion made by Councilor Ruehle, Seconded by Councilor Dick.

Voting Yea: Councilor Ruehle, Councilor Aispuro, Councilor Dick, Councilor Duquette, Councilor Howarth

Voting Nay: Councilor Schreiber

Old/Unfinished Business

10. Discussion: Citizen Advisory Boards

Mayor Grimm introduced this item, noting concerns about the manner in which the City's citizen advisory boards (commissions and committees) are operating without clear direction from the Council and Mayor, proceeding with work that may not necessarily be aligned with the priorities established by the City's elected leadership and potentially straining staff resources, relaying a desire to confirm and reestablish the Council and Mayor as the accountable authority for directing board work, with scope and assignments provided up front for a focus on the City's priorities.

Discussion ensued, with the Mayor fielding questions from Councilor Duquette, pointing out that City Code does not require the advisory boards to meet every month, although all of the current boards have a standing monthly meeting. He remarked on the challenges of limited staff resources.

Councilor Dick suggested that each board meeting agenda include a roundtable discussion, where board members would have an opportunity to propose topics to be addressed by the board, then these ideas would be taken into consideration depending on how they align with the City's plans and priorities.

Councilor Ruehle concurred and suggested a wish list from each board containing their suggestions of three to five top priorities, which could then come before Council for consideration and direction, with the possibility of suggestions for "low hanging fruit" projects that could be addressed at the staff level. She also suggested that specific direction could reduce the need for standing subcommittees, which sometimes may actually slow the review and decision-making process, noting that additional meetings add to the need for staff resources. City Clerk Melissa Ward provided information on the level of staff involvement in assisting with meetings of the current standing subcommittees.

Councilor Schreiber remarked that confining the boards to topics and concerns that only the elected officials direct may eliminate important feedback from the community, and he sees value in the use of subcommittees. He also pointed out that, as an example, for some boards, making suggestions for the budget, for instance, is included in their list of duties as provided by City Code but that Council and/or staff may not be seeking recommendations from the boards in a timely manner. He would like to see the commissions and committees expanded, where the City could fully utilize this volunteer force. He isn't necessarily in support of placing additional rules on these boards but was open to directing a list of three to five strategic projects per year.

Councilor Howarth relayed that it would be frustrating to be a board member, spending time working on a project that never comes to fruition, where the City needs to ensure that the work the boards are doing is beneficial, with projects they can see to completion; otherwise, the City may lose the experienced and talented citizens who serve on these boards. He appreciates the public involvement and summarized the suggestions for improvements as a desire for better synergy, where the elected leadership can do a better job of guiding their work.

Councilor Aispuro concurred with much of what had already been said and remarked on the pace of government projects, noting that, in his experience, he may have different expectations of the boards and was uncertain of the Council liaison role. He would like to see a better flow and agreed with providing some direction, which, in turn, would result in gains for Council and the City and allow the elected officials to work together with the community members.

Mayor Grimm observed, from the feedback received, a desire for a balance of elevating opportunities for suggestions from the boards, and the elected body having an opportunity to consider and endorse those ideas to ensure the valuable time of these volunteers is spent in an efficient and meaningful way. He will move forward and direct actions accordingly.

Adjourn

With no further business before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

I presided over this meeting and can confirm that the foregoing minutes, prepared by the City Clerk, were approved by City Council during their meeting held _____, 2025.

Jeremy Grimm, Mayor

Attest: Melissa Ward, City Clerk