

DRAFT MINUTES
CITY OF STEVENSON COUNCIL MEETING
February 19, 2026
6:00 PM, City Hall and Remote

Attending:

Elected officials: **Mayor Jenny Taylor; Councilmembers Dave Cox, Erin Minnis, Pat Rice, Tina Van Pelt, Lucy Lauser.**

City staff: **Jayne Borden, Finance Director; Cody Rosander, Stevenson Public Works Director; Robert Muth, City Attorney; Daniel Pitariu, Permits and Records Manager.**

Guests: Skamania County Undersheriff Tracy Wyckoff; Jeff Breckel, Chair, Stevenson Planning Commission.

Public participants: Mary Repar, Brian McNamara, Rick Jessel, Scott Robinson, Mitch Patton, Stacy Patton, Sam Kinestead.

1. CALL TO ORDER/PRESENTATION TO THE FLAG: **Mayor Taylor** called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., led the group in reciting the pledge of allegiance and conducted roll call.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Mary Repar provided comments regarding the search for a new city administrator; the sewer ordinance; vaults (retention ponds) in subdivisions; and the need for a full-time city planner.
- Rick Jessell thanked **Mayor Taylor** for taking on the city administrator position; RCW's pertaining to resignation of a council member; and requested continued posting of YouTube recordings to help him process City Council meeting actions. The subtitles help to clarify statements and discussions. He urged **Councilmember Rice** to reconsider his resignation.
- Brian McNamara spoke about the sewer ordinance. He suggested direction communication with each affected property owner regarding mandatory connections and costs. Fees should be waived.
- Scott Robinson commented on the cost of hooking up to the sewer lines and having to take his existing working septic system out of service.
- Sam Kinestead spoke in favor of keeping YouTube recordings of City Council meetings as a way of communicating with citizens. He questioned how to attract applicants for the city administrator position due to recent staff turnovers.
- Mitch Patton called for retaining the YouTube video recordings of city meetings as he uses them to review the meetings. Subtitles help him understand conversations. He thanked **Councilmember Rice** for his service.

3. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA: None

4. CONSENT AGENDA: The following items were presented for Council approval.

a) Minutes from Stevenson City Council meeting of January 2026.

b) Water Leak Adjustment Acct. 13200 - The Council was asked to authorize an adjustment for Account No. 13200. The excess usage was a result of a significant water leak on the customer's property, that has since been repaired. The requested leak forgiveness amount is \$1,234.91, which exceeds the maximum allowance of \$1,000 and therefore requires a vote by Council. Council is asked to authorize waiving \$1,234.91 from Acct. 13200 due to a water leak.

MOTION to approve consent agenda items a-b was made by **Councilmember Lauser**, seconded by **Councilmember Cox**.

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Lauser, Minnis, Rice, Van Pelt, Cox**

5. SHERIFF'S OFFICE REPORT:

a) Sheriff's Report - The Skamania County Sheriff's report for activity within Stevenson city limits for the prior month was presented for council review by Skamania County Undersheriff Tracy Wyckoff. He noted the Council had report information in their meeting packets, and thanked Councilmember Rice for serving.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None presented.

7. COUNCIL BUSINESS:

a) Formal Acknowledgment of Resignation and Declaration of Vacancy – Formal Acknowledgment of Resignation of Councilmember Pat Rice and Declaration of Vacancy – Position #4 (Effective February 28, 2026)

MOTION to adopt Resolution 2026 - 648 of the City Council of the City of Stevenson, Washington, declaring a vacancy in City Council Position No. 4 and establishing a process to fill said vacancy was made by **Councilmember Cox**, seconded by **Councilmember Lauser**. **City Attorney Muth** advised the resolution acknowledges the resignation and sets up the process of replacement. **Councilmember Rice** can withdraw his resignation up until the effective date noted in his letter.

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Van Pelt, Lauser, Minnis, Rice, Cox**.

b) Approval of Professional Services Agreement – Consideration and possible approval of a Professional Services Agreement with Prothman & Associates for City Administrator executive recruitment services.

Mayor Taylor noted the firm has been used in the past. She expects to serve as an acting administrator until a short-term interim city administrator is found. A permanent replacement is anticipated to be in place within 2 to 3 months.

MOTION to approve Professional Services Agreement with Prothman & Associates for City Administrator executive recruitment services in the amount of \$16,500, and authorization for up to \$3,500 for related expenses; and authorization for interim administrative placement services in an amount not to exceed \$12,000, for a total of \$32,000 was made by **Councilmember Rice**, seconded by **Councilmember Van Pelt**.

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Lauser, Minnis, Rice, Van Pelt, Cox.**

c) Ordinance Discussion – Discuss Moratorium and next steps.

Mayor Taylor proposed delaying the implementation of the sewer ordinance in order to hold further discussions leading to a simpler, easier to administer process. **City Attorney Muth** advised the agenda listing the discussion of the ordinance is actually a resolution calling for a moratorium. The ordinance will remain in place. He explained the council is resolving to put a pause/moratorium on fees, fines, penalties and the collection process over a set timeline.

MOTION to adopt a resolution ~~ordinance~~ establishing a six-month moratorium on the implementation and enforcement of the Sewer Ordinance, effective immediately upon passage, to allow Council time for further review and analysis, and to schedule the required public hearing within the statutory timeframe was made by **Councilmember Cox** , seconded by **Councilmember Lauser**.

Prior to the vote it was clarified the duration of the moratorium would not go beyond August 31, 2026.

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Minnis, Lauser, Rice, Van Pelt, Cox**

d) Discussion Council Meeting Recording and YouTube Posting Practices - A discussion was held regarding Council meeting recording formats and YouTube publication practices, including evaluation of public records retention obligations, storage and archiving protocols, associated costs, and operational impacts, with direction on future procedures. Several Councilmembers spoke in favor of retaining and posting recordings as a public service. No motion was brought forth. Staff was directed to review and provide a proposal for a governmental grade remote meeting platform with additional security, close captioning, and the ability to meet requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act.

e) Vacation Rental Home Ordinance – Planning Commission Recommendations

Jeff Breckel, Chair of the Stevenson Planning Commission provided the history and background of the Planning Commission's work on recommendations regarding short term and vacation rentals within the city of Stevenson. During the presentation by **Breckel, City Attorney Muth** advised the recommendation to allow only residents of Stevenson to have short-term rental properties was found to be illegal in other regions.

Recommendations on licensing, safety inspections, guest limits, parking, noise restrictions, and current zoning laws were also considered. **Councilmember Rice** expressed appreciation for the work of the Planning Commission.

MOTION to direct staff and legal counsel to prepare draft amendments to Chapter 5.20 consistent with the Planning Commission's February 9, 2026 recommendations for Council review at a future meeting was made by **Councilmember Cox**, seconded by **Councilmember Rice**.

Prior to the vote **Councilmember Van Pelt** confirmed changes could be made later.

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Van Pelt, Lauser, Minnis, Rice, Cox.**

f) Janitorial Office Cleaning Services

MOTION to approve personal services contract for MBO Cleaning for \$532.43/month starting March 1st and running month to month was made by **Councilmember Lauser**, seconded by **Councilmember Cox**.

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Cox, Lauser, Minnis, Rice, Van Pelt**,

8. INFORMATION ITEMS:

a) Financial Report - The Treasurer's Report and year-to-date revenues and expenses through the prior month were presented for council review.

Finance Director Borden noted a narrative was available explaining the budget position, with invoices and checks included for review. Questions regarding several contractor payments were addressed through contract and scope of work amendments. All invoices have been paid.

Mayor Taylor advised in the future clearly defining a scope of work and task orders would be worthwhile.

9. MAYOR AND STAFF REPORTS:

a) Jenny Taylor, Mayor

Mayor Taylor reported she has been working with the city staff every day recently to learn the processes of how work gets done. She is working to find ways to be more efficient.

b) Cody Rosander, Public Works Director

Rosander provided a number of updates on the Cascade project, the Lasher Street grants, logging near the reservoir, replacement of aging isolation valves, finalization of the treatment plant project, lift station grants, parking, recent tree removals along Rock Creek, and flag maintenance.

The long-term water supply within Rock Creek is a concern due to damage at the intake.

Repairs are necessary to ensure a stable water source. **Rosander** will research grant and bond opportunities and discuss potential options at the March 2026 Council meetings.

10. VOUCHER APPROVAL:

MOTION to approve the vouchers as presented was made by **Councilmember Minnis**, seconded by **Councilmember Cox**.

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Lauser, Minnis, Rice, Van Pelt, Cox**

11. COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS:

None provided

12. ISSUES FOR THE NEXT MEETING:

None provided

13. ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Stacy Patton spoke in favor of retaining the YouTube recordings of city meetings.

Mary Repar encouraged keeping the meeting recordings posted for public accountability and transparency. She is opposed to the PUD making decisions about tree removal.

She expressed concern about traffic on Russell Street coming up the one way the wrong way.

She suggested Stevenson consider following the Dark Sky initiative with lights for aesthetic and safer bird migration purposes.

Mitch Patton asked the Council to keep in mind which platform for recording meetings has the longest retention period.

He stated there are too many regulations on property owners and the city should focus on enforcement of the ones in place. Reviews should be built into any new regulations.

He will talk with **PW Director Rosander** about the Rock Creek intake.

14. ADJOURNMENT - **Mayor Taylor** adjourned the meeting at 7:59 p.m.