

DRAFT MINUTES
CITY OF STEVENSON COUNCIL MEETING
November 20, 2025
6:00 PM, City Hall and Remote

ATTENDING

Elected Officials: **Mayor Scott Anderson; Councilmembers Dave Cox, Michael Johnson, Lucy Lauser, Chuck Oldfield, Pat Rice.**

City Staff: **City Administrator Wesley Wootten; Jayne Borden, Finance Director; Cody Rosander, Public Works Director; City Attorney Robert Muth.**

Public participants: Mary Repar, Jeff Breckel, Sam Kinestead

1. CALL TO ORDER/PRESENTATION TO THE FLAG: **Mayor Anderson** 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:

Sam Kinestead thanked outgoing members for their service.

Mary Repar thanked the Councilmembers as well for their public service. She commented on the parking design change on Russell Street and the proposed power transmission cable planned to go under the Columbia River via the state Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council (EFSEC). She pointed out no representatives from Stevenson or North Bonneville had been appointed as required.

Jeff Breckel attended the recent Chamber of Commerce meeting highlighting the State of the County. He complimented **Wes Wootten, City Administrator** for his update on the City of Stevenson's programs and activities.

3. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:

Changes to the meeting agenda occurred following approval of the consent agenda.

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

- a) Water Leak Adjustment - The Council is asked to authorize an adjustment for Account No. 25425. The excess usage was a result of a leak, which was subsequently repaired with a new water main line and the house being re-piped. Council was asked to authorize waiving \$433.08 from the customer's bill due to the leak.
- b) Water Leak Adjustment - Council was asked to authorize an adjustment for Account No. 14730. The excess usage was the result of a broken outdoor water faucet which was immediately fixed by the homeowners once it was discovered. Council was asked to authorize waiving \$182.78 from the customer's bill due to the error.
- c) 2026 Tourism Funding Awards - The Tourism Advisory Committee presented its recommendations to receive tourism funds in 2026 for Council approval in the amount of \$606,870.

- d) Christmas Eve Office Closure Request - City staff requested to close City Hall on Wednesday, December 24th prior to the December 25th holiday. Staff taking the day off would use vacation time, comp time, personal time or leave without pay.
- e) Stevenson City Council Meeting Minutes of October 16, 2025.

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

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Johnson, Oldfield, Lauser**.

Voting nay? No vote was observed or heard for Councilmember's Cox and Rice

Following the vote on the consent agenda **Councilmember Rice** stated he had sent in a request to have items added to the agenda. **Attorney Muth** shared information on the process to amend the agenda. **Rice** requested the current contract for IT services be reviewed and potentially sent out to bid as he had a concern regarding a potential conflict of interest.

MOTION to amend the New Business portion of the current meeting agenda to include a discussion on the Radcom contract and whether to issue a request for bids for IT services was made by **Councilmember Rice**, seconded by **Councilmember Cox**.

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Johnson, Oldfield, Cox, Rice**.

Abstained: **Councilmember Lauser**.

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 by Skamania County Undersheriff Tracy Wyckoff. There were no questions raised by Councilmembers.

City Attorney Muth advised there are contract negotiations still taking place between the City and Skamania County. December 1st, 2025 is the intended date to have the final drafts of contracts available to the Council in order to allow time for review. The 2026 city budget does need to be approved by December 7th, 2025. The budget can be approved without passage of the contracts, as the amounts can then be revised through a budget amendment later.

6. PRESENTATIONS FROM OUTSIDE AGENCIES:

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

- a) Public Hearing - 2026 Budget & Property Tax Levy - A public hearing for the 2026 City of Stevenson budget and property tax levy took place.

The Public Hearing opened at 6:15 p.m.

Staff report: 1% is the annual increase; the amount is restricted by state statute.

Public comment: None received

The Public Hearing closed at 6:18 p.m.

8. SITUATION UPDATES:

None provided

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

10. COUNCIL BUSINESS:

Council Discussion:

Councilmember Cox asked if \$10,800 was the amount the 1% levy increase would result in. **Attorney Muth** explained the 1% = \$5,808.82. Adjustments for new construction, annexation, and any increases in State Assessments bring the total to \$10,800.

Councilmember Rice asked about budget documents contained in the meeting packet.

Wes Wootten, City Administrator clarified they were a summary of the budget adjustments made following the budget priority discussion the Council held recently.

Councilmember Johnson pointed out there are three separate votes to be taken, with the budget being one item.

- a) Resolution 2025-461 Ad Valorem Tax Levy 2026 - Council is asked to approve Resolution 2025-461 authorizing the 1% increase of the ad valorem tax levy for the 2026 budget.

MOTION to approve Resolution 2025-461 approving the 1% ad valorem tax levy was made by **Councilmember Lauser**, seconded by **Councilmember Johnson**.

Following the motion **Councilmember's Rice and Cox** suggested the small increase could be declined by the city and the budget show a reduction in that amount.

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Johnson, Oldfield, Lauser**.

Voting nay: **Councilmembers Cox, Rice**.

- b) Ordinance 2025-1232 Ad Valorem Tax 2026 - Council was asked to approve Ordinance 2025-1232 fixing the amount to be raised by ad valorem taxes for fiscal year 2026.

MOTION to approve Ordinance 2025-1232 fixing the amount to be raised by ad valorem taxes for fiscal year 2026 was made by **Councilmember Lauser**, seconded by **Councilmember Johnson**.

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Johnson, Oldfield, Lauser**.

Voting nay: **Councilmembers Cox, Rice**.

- c) Ordinance 2025-1233 - 2026 Budget - Council was asked to approve Ordinance 2025-1233 authorizing the budget for fiscal year 2026.

Prior to the vote further discussion took place on the allocation of service costs and fees and review of a final version of the draft budget.

MOTION to approve Ordinance 2025-1233 - 2026 Budget - authorizing the budget for fiscal year 2026 was made by **Councilmember Lauser**, seconded by **Councilmember Johnson**.

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Johnson, Oldfield, Lauser.**
Voting nay: **Councilmembers Cox, Rice.**

Following the vote Councilmembers heard a presentation by **Councilmember Cox** on the Sheriff's Office contract negotiations. There is a \$10,000 increase in the contract for one year plus a CPI (Consumer Price Index) raise. Language was removed regarding animal control, mental health, and code enforcement for city ordinances. Traffic control for events for permitting purposes was amended so organizers would be responsible for the costs of traffic control. The monthly cost for the Sheriff's Office contract in 2026 will be approximately \$27,3293.

- d) Discussion: Preamble for Expenditures - **Councilor Oldfield** summarized a proposal outlining a preamble for expenditures he had brought to Council for approval at the previous Council meeting. **Councilmember Rice** added his request regarding the timeline for vouchers could be reviewed.
City Attorney Muth confirmed the information requested would be part of the staff presentation. **City Administrator Wootten** suggested he and the Finance Director would develop a form for Council to review at a future meeting. He noted vouchers are processed up to each meeting date.
- e) Radcomp contract renewal - Councilmembers held a discussion on auto renewal of contracts. **Councilmember Rice** called for putting the existing IT contract out to bid instead of automatically renewing it annually. The current Radcomp contract renews December 1. It was agreed via consensus to contact Radcomp requesting a 3-month extension of the contract and direct staff to develop and publish a Request for Proposal (RFP).

11. 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.
- b) Planning Commission Minutes - Minutes were attached from the Planning Commission meeting from October 14th, 2025.

Councilmember Cox requested information on costs for items in the financial report. **Public Works Director Rosander** explained there are grant funds still to be received. Submissions to the Public Works Board also need to be processed.

12. CITY ADMINISTRATOR AND STAFF REPORTS:

- a) **Cody Rosander, Public Works Director, provided an update on current projects and programs.**
There have been some delays on the Cascade Project, as the concrete is thicker than anticipated. All laterals have been tied in to the sewer.
Unmarked fiber optic lines caused delays along Groper, Russell and Leavens.
He explained what pipe bursting means and how it is less costly than trenching.

Priority is paving Cascade and Russell if weather holds.

b) Wesley Wootten, City Administrator

Report in packet

13. VOUCHER APPROVAL: Vouchers will be presented prior to the meeting for council review.

a) October 2025 Payroll

MOTION to approve vouchers pending proper documentation for 3 items was made by **Councilmember Rice**, seconded by **Councilmember Johnson**.

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Lauser, Cox, Oldfield, Rice, Johnson**,

14. MAYOR AND COUNCIL REPORTS:

Councilmember Lauser received permission to read a statement regarding violence against trans people in commemoration of Trans Remembrance Day.

Councilmember Oldfield commented on the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council (EFSEC) proposed transmission line project and recent public hearing. He noted the lack of communication about the project to the City of Stevenson. The draft plan does not allow public comment.

Mary Repar stated the project has to go through SEPA/NEPA, needs a permit to go through the Gorge Scenic Area.

Jeff Breckel noted the process was less than transparent. The public hearing provided no advance notice. As soon as the hearing was closed no public comment was accepted. He shared his concerns about state agencies overriding land use controls.

Mayor Anderson thanked those who are willing to serve as public officials.

Councilmember Cox addressed **Councilmember Lauser's** comments and thanked her.

15. ISSUES FOR THE NEXT MEETING:

None provided.

16. ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mary Repar commented on mental health supports removed from the Sheriff's budget.

17. EXECUTIVE SESSION -

No Executive Session was scheduled.

18. ADJOURNMENT - Mayor Anderson adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m.