

DRAFT MINUTES
CITY OF STEVENSON COUNCIL MEETING
June 18, 2026
6:00 PM, City Hall and Remote

Attending:

Elected officials: **Mayor Jenny Taylor; Councilmembers Dave Cox, Jeff Breckel, Adi Elliott, Erin Minnis. Councilmember Van Pelt** was excused.

City staff: **Robert Muth, City Attorney; Daniel Pitariu, Records and Permit Manager.**

Guests: Skamania County Undersheriff Tracy Wyckoff.

Public participants: Rick Jessel, Karen Douglass, Mary Repar, Brian McNamara, Ann Leuders, Greg Stafford, Kelly O'Malley-McKee.

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:

Brian McNamara commented on sections of the sewer ordinance that concern septic system failures, and pointed to comments he had submitted in writing.

Rick Jessel commented on the First Street viewpoint and potential safety issues with truck traffic.

Mary Repar spoke about curb placement near the First Street viewpoint. She also commented regarding communications with the Department of Ecology on LDB's application to modify its discharge permit.

Karen Douglass thanked the city for providing office space for One Prevention Alliance. She gave a brief overview of the programs OPA offers. These include parenting programs, National Night Out, and information provided to middle and high school students regarding the risks of fentanyl.

3. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:

Mayor Taylor removed the action item for agenda item b under Council business.

4. CONSENT AGENDA:

City Attorney Muth requested the dollar amount of the utility bill waiver be included in the item text.

a) Minutes of May 21st, 2026.

b) Liquor and Cannabis Board: Notice of special occasion license application for Veterans Support Group at Skamania County Fair.

c) Utility bill forgiveness: The Council was asked to authorize utility bill forgiveness for Account No. 25942. The balance originated from a tenant who occupied the property under a previous owner and current owners were unaware of the outstanding balance when they bought the property. The amount requested for forgiveness was \$526.17.

Prior to the vote **Councilmember Cox** requested clarity on a provision within the liquor license application to exclude sales for off-site consumption. The original motion to approve the consent agenda was then revised.

MOTION to approve consent agenda items a-c to subject to ensuring restrictions on the liquor license application were in place was made by **Councilmember Breckel**, seconded by **Councilmember Minnis**.

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Elliott, Minnis, Breckel, Cox**.

The Council returned to public comments to provide Greg Stafford a chance to speak. He shared concerns regarding the denial by the Stevenson Planning Commission of a Conditional Use Permit from the River Christian Church in 2024. He contended the church has constructed a playground and opened a school despite the CUP dismissal.

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. **Councilmember Cox** asked about first responders following a recent traumatic incident. A new Emergency Management Coordinator is in the process of being hired.

6. COUNCIL BUSINESS:

a) Sewer Ordinance - Second Reading.

A number of comments, clarifications, and additions were provided to the City Council concerning the current proposed revisions to the sewer ordinance. **Attorney Muth** noted previous changes have been presented.

Many of the text changes were in response to comments regarding ordinance language that required property owners with functioning on-site septic systems (OSS) to connect to the sewer system when available.

- Mandatory hookups for properties with functioning septic systems are no longer required.
- Incentives (waiving System Development Charges for up to one year/365 days) are in place for homeowners who wish to connect to existing sewer lines, or to those when new lines become available.
- Developers with short plats will have to connect only if the sewer system is available. **Councilmember Breckel** clarified language regarding connection time limits.

Public comments were opened:

- Once a stub out is in place and the sewer line is complete, the 365 day waiver period begins.
- More time to review the revised language was requested.
- Sewer availability is determined by when the working sewer line abuts the property.
- The city can require an inspection if a homeowner states their system is operational. If it fails and is deemed not repairable via the public health authority, the homeowner will be required to connect to the sewer line if and when available.
- Vacant lots are not required to connect to an abutting sewer line until a residence is constructed.

- Expansion to a home will only require upgrades or new installations when public health determines it is needed.
- **Councilmember Breckel** questioned the definition of 'not feasible or reasonably necessary' connection requirements for sites where sewer connections are not available.
- For subdivisions with five or more lots, the public health agency will determine if the site is feasible for septic systems. If not, sewer lines will be required to be installed with costs borne by the developer.

Following the close of public comments, **Attorney Muth** noted the changes he will add to the ordinance for Council review prior to the July 2026 Council meeting.

A final discussion took place regarding how and when septic inspections could be required.

b) Conditional Use Permit Review Process Ordinance Amendment - Council considered an ordinance amending the conditional use permit review process so that the Planning Commission would conduct the open-record public hearing and provide a recommendation, with City Council making the City's final decision based on the record developed before the Planning Commission.

Following a brief discussion it was determined to continue having the Planning Commission review the initial condition use permit applications, but then have the City Council make the final decision, which could be appealed in court. **Attorney Muth** will draft an ordinance for review at the July 2026 City Council meeting. The Planning Commission would retain the ability to review existing CUP's to ensure conformity. No motion was presented.

c) *Discussion: Downtown/C1 Parking Reform and Parking Wayfinding - Council discussed potential direction to staff regarding C1/downtown parking minimum reform and a separate first-phase parking wayfinding effort.

Councilmember Elliott led a discussion on the issues surrounding parking in Stevenson's downtown core. A parking survey was done several years ago through the city. It was agreed to take a more strategic look at the issue at the upcoming Council retreat. Wayfinding signs indicating available parking sites are needed. Kelly O'Malley-McKee with the Stevenson Downtown Association will be invited to participate and share information and ideas.

d) Discussion: ADU Code Amendment Direction - Council discussed potential amendments to the City's accessory dwelling unit regulations, including the detached ADU proximity standard in SMC 17.40.040. The purpose of the discussion was to provide direction for the Planning Commission to review the issue and make a recommendation to City Council for future consideration.

City Attorney Muth related at the recent Board of Adjustment hearing one applicant requested permission to place an ADU (Accessory Dwelling Unit) more than 40' from a main residence. Since Stevenson put in a statute limiting ADU placement to no more than 40' from a residence to align with state requirements, the state has changed the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) to remove the 40' requirement. **Attorney Muth** will revise Stevenson's statute to be in compliance with the state, and will have a draft for Council review.

The Planning Commission will also be asked to review the changes. There are other provisions through the Growth Management Act that need to be addressed. At the BOA no decision or determination was reached, and the variance hearing for that application was continued to a date TBD.

e) Resolution Authorizing CPA Advisory and Financial Oversight Services - Council considered a resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute a Personal Services Agreement with Teresa D. Johnson CPA, Inc. for CPA advisory and financial oversight services in an amount not to exceed \$15,000 through December 31, 2026. **Mayor Taylor** explained the purpose for the resolution, noting it would help ensure accountability.

MOTION to approve the resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute a Personal Services Agreement with Teresa D. Johnson CPA, Inc. for CPA advisory and financial oversight services in an amount not to exceed \$15,000 through December 31, 2026 was made by **Councilmember Cox**, seconded by **Councilmember Breckel**.

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Breckel, Elliott, Minnis, Cox.**

7. MAYOR AND STAFF REPORTS:

a) Cody Rosander, Public Works Director

A number of projects were reported on.

A new paving contractor for Cascade Avenue has been obtained. The paving work has been redone and is greatly improved. Just a few items are left to finalize before completion.

Leavens Street project-Public Works will work seek grants in 2027 following a meeting with the Transportation Improvement Board.

A FEMA application is being finalized. A resolution adopting the emergency funds needs to be approved by the Council. **Attorney Muth** is assisting with the proposal.

The McAvoy water line damage has been repaired.

Rock Creek water levels are being monitored; the repair work is ongoing at the intake.

The Waste Water Treatment Plant will shut down in July for epoxy work on the Rock Creek pump station.

Paving and chip sealing is taking place with county help. Striping and crosswalks need work.

Councilmember Breckel-When realigning Columbia Street it would be good to look at curbing issues raised earlier.

b) Jayne Borden, Finance Director

Mayor Taylor provided the finance report. Year to date revenue is 81% of budgeted amount. The general fund balance is \$1.8M, fire fund is \$2.2M or \$2.3, sewer is \$1.7M, and tourism is \$1.6M. As of June, 19% of budgeted expenses have occurred. **Mayor Taylor** is looking to having an auditor review reports.

c) Jenny Taylor, Mayor

The selected applicant for the City Administrator position declined at the last minute.

Interviews are continuing. A workshop to discuss directions was scheduled for July 9th, 2026 @2pm.

8. VOUCHER APPROVAL:

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

Voting aye: **Councilmembers Elliott, Minnis, Breckel, Cox**.

9. ISSUES FOR THE NEXT MEETING

None were noted

10. ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mary Repar spoke about Rock Creek's water level. Low snow pack, past landslides and dredging have affected flow. She suggested approaching Fish & Wildlife for grants for salmon habitat recovery.

She urged the city to hire a city planner due to work load.

She spoke in favor of undergrounding utilities.

11. ADJOURNMENT - Mayor Taylor adjourned the meeting at 7:41.