



City Council Meeting Minutes **(DRAFT)**

Monday, March 16, 2026 at 6:00 PM

33 Church Street, Sutter Creek, CA 95685

The Agenda can be found on the City's Website: www.cityofsuttercreek.org

1. Call to Order and Establish a Quorum for Regular Meeting

Present: Mayor Claire Gunselman, Vice Mayor Sierk, Council Members Susan Feist, Dan Riordan and James Swift.

Absent: none

City Treasurer: Victoria Runquist

Staff: Tom DuBois - City Manager, Derek Cole - City Attorney, Erin Ventura - Contract City Planner, Jim O'Connell - Police Chief, Mason Peters - Finance Supervisor, and Pam Caronongan - City Clerk

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Mayor Gunselman led the Pledge of Allegiance

3. Public Forum

1. A gentleman who resides in Pine Grove spoke against cannabis and for protecting the youth.
2. Lindsey Wood, co-proprietor of the Brinnwood Bed and Breakfast, shared that the sidewalk in front of their business needs repair.
3. Ellon Brittingham, the new Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) Representative for the San Joaquin, Calaveras, Amador Counties spoke to introduce herself. Ms. Brittingham can be contacted at 209-252-2215 or via email at ellon.brittingham@pge.com.
4. Josh Lewis from Embarc shared that there would be a Community Listening Session that Embarc would be hosting at the Kiota Inn & Event Center (271 Hanford Street, Sutter Creek) on Sunday, March 22, 2026 from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM.
5. Andrea Roberts, proprietor of Evergreen Emporium, expressed her question on why the City is prioritizing outside businesses such as Embarc rather than supporting local businesses in terms of the City opening its market on cannabis.

6. Pete Jensen complimented staff for clearing up the bushes on certain areas of the City. He also stated that there are still more areas in the City that need to be cleaned up - areas that are covered with tarps, the property on Sutter Hill (the lawyer).

4. City Manager's Report

City Manager DuBois provided his report to the City Council. Aside from responding to inquiries and requests for clarification from City Council, City Manager DuBois also provided a reply to public comments pertaining to:

- City staff are already looking into improving the sidewalk by Brinnwood Bed & Breakfast.
- The City only learned about the Embarc community listening session on Sunday during tonight's public forum.
- The Visitor's Center and the City are working together in ways on making The Palace site more aesthetically pleasing.
- City staff went to the Schell site last week.

City Manager DuBois' report (slide presentation) can be accessed through this link:

<https://www.cityofsuttercreek.org/media/10261>

5. Presentations

- A. Introduce New City Employee - Sutter Creek Police Department - Officer Kristina Stevens
Sutter Creek Police Department (SCPD) Chief Jim O'Connell to introduce and administer the Oath of Office for new City employee / SCPD Officer Kristina Stevens.

This item was moved before Agenda Item 3 - Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Police Chief Jim O'Connell introduced and led the Oath of Office for newly-hired Police Officer Kristina Stevens. Officer Stevens' two children were requested to assist in pinning her badge.

Officer Stevens thanked the City Council and the public for the opportunity to serve the community.

6. Approval of Minutes

- A. City Council Regular Meeting Minutes of March 2, 2026
Recommendation: By motion, approve minutes as presented.

Vice Mayor Sierk noted that towards the bottom of Page 9 of the meeting minutes, the number of votes needed to be corrected to 3 ayes and 2 absent.

Council Member Swift noted that close to the top of Page 9, on the outcome regarding the City Treasurer, the sentence originally stated that the motion did not pass. The sentence needs to be modified since there was no motion made.

Motion made by Vice Mayor Sierk, seconded by Council Member Swift to approve the City Council Meeting Minutes of March 2, 2026 with the modifications noted above.

AYES: Mayor Gunselman, Vice Mayor Sierk, and Council Member Swift

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: Council Member Feist and Council Member Riordan

NOES: None

MOTION CARRIED 3-0

7. Consent Agenda

None.

8. Ordinances and Public Hearing

- A. Discuss Moratorium on Review, Processing, or Approval of New Temporary Residential Uses**
*Recommendation: Consider, introduce, waive the reading by substitution of title, and adopt **Ordinance No. 25-26-XX - An Urgency Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Sutter Creek Imposing A Moratorium on the Permitting of Temporary Residential Uses within City Limits.***

City Attorney Cole presented the report before City Council and provided clarification that tonight was the introduction of a new Urgency Ordinance now presented for the City Council’s review and consideration rather than a re-introduction of the Temporary Short-Term Rental (STR) Moratorium Urgency Ordinance. City Attorney Cole also informed the City Council that a four-fifths vote would be required to introduce and adopt the Urgency Ordinance. City Attorney Cole also responded to inquiries and requests for clarification from the City Council.

Mayor Gunselman opened the floor for public comment. Zero (0) public comments were received.

Motion made by Council Member Riordan, seconded by Vice Mayor Sierk to waive the first and final reading by substitution of the tile, then introduce and adopt Ordinance No. 25-26-xx thereby imposing a moratorium on the permitting of temporary residential uses within City limits.

AYES: Mayor Gunselman, Vice Mayor Sierk, and Council Members Feist, Riordan, and Swift
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None
NOES: None
MOTION CARRIED 5-0

After the meeting, Ordinance No. 25-26-xx was assigned a permanent number: Ordinance No. 380.

9. Administrative Agenda

- A. Approve Updated Impact Fees based on New Nexus Study**
*Recommendation: Adopt **Resolution No. 25-26-xx** approving the Nexus Study and the updated development impacts fees to take effect on July 1, 2026.*

City Manager DuBois presented the report before the City Council. Contract City Planner Ventura and City Manager DuBois responded to inquiries and requests for clarification from City Council such as the fee comparison and why Fire was not represented (roman numeral IV of the Nexus Study Report), and the significant “drop” for the fees under Parks and Recreation per the nexus findings.

Zero (0) public comments were received.

Motion made by Vice Mayor Sierk, seconded by Council Member Feist to adopt Resolution No. 25-26-xx, thereby approving the Nexus Study and the updated development impact fees to take effect on July 1, 2026.

AYES: Mayor Gunselman, Vice Mayor Sierk, and Council Members Feist, Riordan, and Swift
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None
NOES: None
MOTION CARRIED 5-0

After the meeting, Resolution No. 25-26-xx was assigned a permanent number: Resolution No. 25-26-18.

B. City of Sutter Creek Master Fee Schedule

Recommendation: Adopt Resolution No. 25-26-xx, thereby approving the City of Sutter Creek Master Fee Schedule which would take effect on July 1, 2026.

City Manager DuBois presented the report and advised the City Council that staff made the changes per City Council feedback from the February 17, 2026 regular meeting.

The City Council did not have any inquiries or requests for clarification. Mayor Gunselman noted that the staff report addressed City Council's feedback from February 17, 2026, provided a helpful communication and clear breakdown on how the City determines whether a service would be "cost recovery" or a "community benefit," and documented the City's commitment in providing as many services as it could within its budget.

Zero (0) public comments were received.

Motion made by Council Member Riordan, seconded by Vice Mayor Sierk to adopt Resolution No. 25-26-xx, thereby approving the City of Sutter Creek Master Fee Schedule which would take effect on July 1, 2026.

AYES: Mayor Gunselman, Vice Mayor Sierk, and Council Members Feist, Riordan, and Swift
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None
NOES: None
MOTION CARRIED 5-0

After the meeting, Resolution No. 25-26-xx was assigned a permanent number: Resolution No. 25-26-19.

C. Review and Accept the Annual Progress Report on Housing to the California Housing and Community Development (HCD)

Recommendation: Review and Accept the Annual Progress Report to Housing and Community Development (HCD).

Contract City Planner Ventura presented the report before the City Council. Contract City Planner Ventura responded to inquiries and requests for clarification from City Council such as the design standards for the Danco Project, is the working group still meeting, and the City maintaining an inventory of vacant homes Citywide.

Zero (0) public comments were received.

Motion made by Vice Mayor Sierk, seconded by Council Member Swift to accept the Annual Progress Report on Housing to the California Housing and Community Development (HCD).

AYES: Mayor Gunselman, Vice Mayor Sierk, and Council Members Feist, Riordan, and Swift
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None
NOES: None
MOTION CARRIED 5-0

Mayor Gunselman called for a recess at 7:15 PM. The meeting resumed at 7:20 PM.

- D. Continue City Council Discussions from the February 2, 2026 and March 2, 2026 Regular Meetings Regarding Parameters of a Citywide Short Term Rental (STR) Ordinance**
Recommendation: Resume review, discussion, and consideration regarding the parameters of a Short-Term Rental (STR) Ordinance; and provide direction regarding said Ordinance. Materials from February 2, 2026 and March 2, 2026 regular meetings of the City Council are provided.

Mayor Gunselman announced the continuation of this agenda item from the discussion stemming from the regular meetings of February 2, 2026 and March 2, 2026.

City Manager DuBois presented the report before the City Council. City Manager DuBois, Contract City Planner Ventura, and Finance Supervisor Mason Peters responded to inquiries and addressed requests for clarification from City Council.

When the City Council paused the discussion, Mayor Gunselman opened the floor for public comment. Three (3) people gave their public comment:

1. Quentin Taylor - Complimented the City Council for engaging in conversation and discussing the topic in order to come up with an equitable ordinance. He said for the City Council to not lose sight that STRs can negatively affect property values for all homeowners - the STR property owner and the neighbors.
2. Laura Damiani - Shared her thoughts regarding noise ordinances pertaining to STRs, methodology of data collection, that perhaps STR matters should be a two-step process (administrative and Planning Commission consideration and approval).
3. Byron Damiani, Jr. - Spoke that maybe it would be easier to pick a number rather than to determine a percentage for the City's "cap" on STRs, and he believes that the "cap" has already been reached especially at the City's historical district.

The City Council continued the discussion regarding the topic. Staff noted areas of consensus for the City Council as well as open issues that need to be addressed at a later meeting date:

1. Does the City want to make considerations based on density?
2. Does the City want to make considerations based on historic / non historic districts?
3. Formation of an ad-hoc committee to assist in drafting the ordinance.

After the discussions, City Council reached consensus on the following actions:

1. The formation of an ad-hoc committee is on hold, pending the outcome of the draft ordinance to be presented by staff at a future City Council meeting date.
2. Staff had enough information to draft an ordinance for City Council review and consideration. If the draft ordinance is developed enough to move forward, there would be no need for an ad-hoc committee.
3. If the draft ordinance would require additional consideration, the City Council will assign two members of the City Council to serve as part of the ad-hoc committee to work on the draft ordinance.

The staff presentation can be accessed at this link: <https://www.cityofsuttercreek.org/media/10256>

No motion was made regarding this agenda item. The City Council's consensus was to direct staff to present a draft ordinance at a future City Council meeting, with the formation of an ad-hoc committee contingent upon Council feedback.

10. Mayor and Council Member Reports

The City Council clarified details with City Manager Dubois regarding the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Bryson Park Bathroom Project this week and requested an update on the fencing at The Palace.

Regarding future agenda items, the City Council reached consensus on the following:

1. Bringing back the City Treasurer agenda item for discussion since there was no motion and there were staff questions that remain unanswered.
2. Bringing back the Surveillance Policy agenda item for discussion.

Mayor Gunselman announced that the Annual Duck Race will be held on April 25, 2026.

11. City Attorney's Report

City Attorney Cole said that he had nothing to report.

12. Information and Correspondence

- A. Monthly Report - City Clerk (February 2026)
- B. Monthly Report - City Treasurer (February 2026)
- C. Monthly Report - Engineering (February 2026)
- D. Monthly Report - Finance (February 2026)
- E. Monthly Report - Planning (February 2026)
- F. Monthly Report - Marketing / Social Media (February 2026)
- G. Monthly Report - Police (February 2026)
- H. Monthly Report - Public Works (February 2026)
- I. Correspondence Received from the Public

City Treasurer Runquist verbally provided a correction to her February 2026 monthly report. December 31, 2025 should be February 28, 2026.

In response to City Council's request, City Manager DuBois will include in his next City Manager's Report an update on the City and the Visitor Center's efforts regarding The Palace.

13. Closed Session

None.

14. Report from Closed Session

None.

15. Adjournment

The next regularly scheduled meeting is April 6, 2026.

Mayor Gunselman adjourned the meeting at 9:01 PM.