



City Council Meeting Minutes

Monday, August 18, 2025 at 6:00 PM
33 Church Street, Sutter Creek, CA 95685

The City of Sutter Creek City Council Meeting is available on YouTube at

<https://www.youtube.com/@CityofSutterCreek>.

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

Present: Council members Riordan, Sierk, Gunselman, Swift, Feist

Absent: None

Staff: Tom DuBois - City Manager, Aaron Wolcott - City Clerk, Dan Lafontaine - Public Works Director, Jim O'Connell - Chief of Police, Will Watson - Project Manager, Derek Cole - City Attorney

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

The pledge of allegiance was led by Mayor Gunselman

3. Public Forum

There were no public comments on items not on the agenda.

4. City Manager's Report

City Manager Tom DuBois presented on several topics including roadway updates, wastewater plant and economic development. Three new projects (Spanish Street, Sutter Hill, and Church Street) were submitted to the Amador County Transportation Commission (ACTC), framed as necessary evacuation routes to improve scoring for funding for road repairs. The city is working with Schneider Electric as the preferred choice for the new wastewater treatment plant, with a contract expected in September. The Henderson and Preston reservoirs are at their lowest recorded levels, allowing for maintenance and sludge assessment. Staff attended a small business summit and is applying for a USC Sunstone program to get assistance with economic development strategy. A new fiber network will be installed on Main Street, providing 16 new connections for the city.

With regard to weed abatement DuBois and Project Manager, Will Watson, reported that the program is seeing positive movement, with good feedback and compliance from property owners.

Council member Swift asked if the control valve on the Henderson dam would also be replaced as part of the dam repairs. Public Works Director, Dan Lafontaine, said that they were checking the valve but did not expect to replace it.

5. Presentations

A. Presentation from Interfaith Food Bank

Beth Stanton of the Interfaith Food Bank reported that they currently serve 1,951 families, which is about 16% of the county's population. Their most significant need is for volunteers for various tasks, including driving their truck, bagging groceries, and helping at their thrift store, which funds 75% of the food bank's budget. They also need donations of bags and egg cartons. She said they have 10 sites for site distributions and could do more if they have volunteers for the sites.

Stanton thanked the Police Department for their support and response when needed.

Council members thanked the Food Bank for the great work they do supporting families in Sutter Creek and the wider County.

6. Approval of Minutes

A. City Council Minutes of July 21, 2025

Motion to approve the Minutes from July 21, 2025 with edits provided by Council member Sierk, second by Council member Swift.

AYES: Council members Sierk, Gunselman, Swift, Feist, Riordan

ABSENT:

NOES:

MOTION CARRIED 5-0

7. Consent Agenda

A. Information Report on Use of Highway 49 Relinquishment Funds

Council members discussed the historical use of the funds, noting that much of it was used for day-to-day operations. They emphasized the need to avoid using reserve funds for ongoing expenses and to find ways to balance the budget sustainably. Council member Swift emphasized the need to balance the budget going forward. Other members concurred with his assessment.

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda by Council member Swift, second by Council member Feist.

AYES: Council members Sierk, Gunselman, Swift, Feist,

ABSTAIN: Riordan

NOES:

MOTION CARRIED 4-0

8. Ordinances and Public Hearing

9. Administrative Agenda

A. Procurement of Solar Panels and Battery Storage for New Wastewater Plant

The council discussed the financial benefits of procuring solar panels and battery storage, including a PG&E grant program and federal tax credits. Due to supply chain issues and a September 9th deadline to place an initial order, City Manager, Tom DuBois, recommended moving forward to secure the incentives.

Mayor Gunselman asked if the solar equipment could actually be resold by the city if the project falls through.

DuBois said they are confident that they can either resell the equipment or use it for other purposes in the city.

Council member Sierk asked for clarification on how the new law was being interpreted by the Treasury Department and its impact on the purchase of the solar equipment. Moses Bchara from Schneider explained that September 9th is the deadline to put in an order due to supply chain issues. Any project started before July 4, 2026 will be entitled to the tax incentives currently in place.

Council member Riordan wanted confirmation from the City Attorney that this all made sense from a legal perspective. City Attorney Cole confirmed that he was in support of the effort.

Motion to approve procurement of solar panels and battery storage for new wastewater plant by Council member Riordan, second by Council member Swift.

AYES: Council members Sierk, Gunselman, Swift, Feist, Riordan

ABSENT:

NOES:

MOTION CARRIED 5-0

B. Direction on Budget Amendment for Broadway Street Project

City Manager, DuBois, gave a short explanation of the proposed budget amendment for the use of Measure P funds to do a road overlay project on Broadway. The Measure P Oversight Committee, represented by Ryan Martin, gave a unanimous recommendation to approve using funds for the Broadway Street project, which includes a necessary storm drain replacement. The committee recommended advertising that the project is funded by Measure P.

Motion to approve the budget amendment for Broadway Street Project by Council member Sierk, second by Council member Feist.

AYES: Council members Sierk, Gunselman, Swift, Feist, Riordan

ABSENT:

NOES:

MOTION CARRIED 5-0

C. Memorandum of Understanding with SEIU for three years, 2025-2027

The Council chose to discuss items C, D & E on the agenda as one item. The council discussed and approved three-year agreements with both the SEIU and the Police Officers Association (POA), along with the corresponding salary schedule. The new agreements include cost-of-living adjustments and increased employee contributions to their pension plans. The council expressed satisfaction with reaching fair, multi-year agreements. Mayor Gunselman noted the cost of paying for a lawyer to support the negotiations and said that having three-year agreements makes that worth it.

Council member Swift said that the negotiations are an arduous process for the City and union representatives and wanted to say thank you to those involved for sticking with it and coming to an agreement. He specifically thanked the Police and SEIU for their work. The other council members concurred.

Motion to approve the MOUs with SEIU and POA for three years, 2025-2027, and the Salary Schedule for FY25-26 by Council member Riordan, second by Council member Sierk.

AYES: Council members Sierk, Gunselman, Swift, Feist, Riordan

ABSENT:

NOES:

MOTION CARRIED 5-0

D. Approve Tentative Agreement with Police Officers Association for Three Years (2025-2028)

E. Resolution Approving Salary Schedule for FY25-26

F. Appointing Voting Delegate for Cal Cities General Assembly

Motion to appoint Julia Sierk as primary, Susan Feist as secondary and Tom DuBois as third voting delegate for the Cal Cities General Assembly by Council member Swift, second by Council member Riordan

AYES: Council members Sierk, Gunselman, Swift, Feist, Riordan

ABSENT:

NOES:

MOTION CARRIED 5-0

10. Mayor and Council Member Reports

Council member Swift said there would be a Fire District meeting the next day.

Council member Feist reported that the heritage wine district has been able to generate revenue for marketing.

11. City Attorney's Report

City Attorney Derek Cole noted that he would be at the Cal Cities conference and would like to connect with Council members who attend.

12. Future Agenda Items

Council member Sierk requested a future agenda item to discuss options for improving the appearance of the fenced-off construction site of the former Sutter Greek building.

13. Information and Correspondence

The council reviewed several reports. During the discussion of the finance report, a request was made for future reports to include more detailed breakdowns of expenses, similar to past formats, to better track costs for utilities by building and identify reimbursable expenses.

A. CSJVRMA Presentation

- B. July 2025 Treasurer Report
Report to be handed out at places
- C. July 2025 Finance Updates and Report
- D. July 2025 Police Department Report
- E. July 2025 Public Works Report
- F. July 2025 City Engineering Report
- G. July 2025 City Clerk Report
- H. July 2025 Marketing Report
- I. July 2025 Planning Department Report

14. Closed Session

The council moved into closed session at 7:30 PM.

A. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL - INITIATION OF LITIGATION

Initiation of litigation pursuant to paragraph (4) of subdivision (d) of Section 54956.9

15. Report from Closed Session

The council reconvened at 8:37 PM and reported that direction was given to staff.

16. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:37 PM

The next regularly scheduled meeting is September 2, 2025.