



CITY OF SWEET HOME CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES

January 27, 2026, 5:30 PM
Sweet Home City Hall, 3225 Main Street
Sweet Home, OR 97386

Mission Statement

The City of Sweet Home will work to build an economically strong community with an efficient and effective local government that will provide infrastructure and essential services to the citizens we serve. As efficient stewards of the valuable assets available, we will be responsive to the community while planning and preparing for the future.

Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM.

Roll Call

PRESENT

Mayor Susan Coleman
President Pro Tem Josh Thorstad
Councilor Chelsea Augsburger
Councilor Ken Bronson
Councilor Aaron Hegge
Councilor Dylan Richards
Councilor Angelita Sanchez

STAFF

Jason Ogden, City Manager / Police Chief
Cecily Hope Pretty, Deputy City Manager
Blair Larsen, City Attorney
Angela Clegg, Planning & Building Manager
Adam Leisinger, Special Projects Manager
Greg Springman, Public Works Advisor

MEDIA

Sarah Brown, The New Era

GUESTS

Gary Jarvis, Vice Chair, Charter Review Committee

Work Session

- a) Proposed Charter Amendments

City Manager Ogden stated that City Attorney Larsen prepared a memo in response to questions raised in the prior City Council Work Session.

City Attorney Larsen reviewed the proposal regarding absences and the potential disqualification from running for office after 10 unexcused absences. He noted that there was not a lot of case law to rely on for guidance but that the proposal did not appear to violate constitutional law. He added that the City Council may want to consider modifying the way absences would be defined as excused but that it was highly irregular for requested excusals not to be granted in recent City history.

Councilor Richards expressed support for the language as proposed.

Councilor Bronson asked of absence from the City from 30 days without excusal leading to a vacancy. City Attorney Larsen stated that the general consensus from other City Attorneys in Oregon was that the

30 days only applied to absences from City Council meetings and stated that Council could request clarification in the Charter language to that effect.

Mayor Coleman recognized Vice Chair Jarvis to speak.

Vice Chair Jarvis stated that he interpreted the section to refer to a seated Councilor no longer residing in the City.

City Attorney Larsen read the proposed language regarding removal from office in full.

Councilor Bronson stated that the definition of attendance should be defined more clearly. City Attorney Larsen stated that it was left intentionally vague to allow for potential future methods of attendance.

Councilor Sanchez expressed concern that the proposal would infringe on a potential candidate's First Amendment rights. Councilor Augsburger expressed same but expressed support for a process to remove a Councilor if they were not performing their duties as an elected official. Councilor Richards expressed support for same. Councilor Hegge also expressed concern with disqualification from office.

President Pro Tem Thorstad expressed support for accountability through attendance standards.

Councilor Hegge suggested modifying the proposal so that 10 unexcused absences resulted in removal from office under proposed Section 4.1 rather than disqualification from a future election under proposed Section 3.1.

There was consensus to remove the proposal regarding 10 absences leading to disqualification from a future election under proposed Section 3.1.

City Attorney Larsen noticed a redundancy in proposed Section 4.1 regarding 30 days versus 60 days and requested City Council input.

Councilor Richards expressed support for a longer period of time than 30 days.

Councilor Bronson requested clarifying language to state that the intent of the section was for those not residing in the City for more than 30 days. Councilor Hegge stated that residency was addressed by the section discussing qualifications necessary for office. Councilor Bronson expressed support for clearer language. There was consensus for same. Councilor Sanchez requested clarifying language regarding Council consent where such language appears.

There was consensus for language to clarify residency within the City.

Mayor Coleman requested feedback on proposed Section 4.1(a) regarding "upon the incumbent's absence from meetings of the Council for 60 days without the consent of the Council."

Councilor Sanche suggested referral to Council Rules to ensure a standard is defined.

There was consensus to define consent in the City Council Rules. There was additional consensus to add a clause referring to the Council Rules.

Mayor Coleman requested feedback regarding proposed Section 5.6 establishing Public Comment time.

Councilor Richards expressed support for leaving Public Comment subject to Council Rules.

Councilor Sanchez expressed support for guaranteeing Public Comment through the Charter.

Mayor Coleman expressed support for Public Comment periods but stated the Councilors should also engage the public in other ways outside of formal Public Comment. She expressed concern with codifying time limits through the Charter.

Councilor Augsburger expressed support for protecting Public Comment through the Charter but not for a specific time period.

There was consensus to enshrine the Public Comment in the Charter but to leave time limits to the City Council Rules.

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 6:32 PM.

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Manager – Ex Officio City Recorder

DRAFT