



CITY OF SWEET HOME CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES

September 23, 2025, 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

ABSENT

Councilor Angelita Sanchez (excused)

STAFF

Jason Ogden, City Manager / Police Chief
Cecily Hope Pretty, Deputy City Manager
W. Blair Larsen, City Attorney
Adam Leisinger, Special Projects Manager
Greg Springman, Public Works Director

MEDIA

Sarah Brown, The New Era

Work Session

a) Employee Evaluation Process

City Manager Ogden asked City Attorney Larsen to provide a summary of his findings regarding recommendations for an evaluation process for the positions of City Manager and City Attorney.

City Attorney Larsen stated that the City Council only directly appoints the City Manager, City Attorney, and Municipal Court Judge and that Council had directed him to research options for the City Manager and City Attorney. He noted that the City Council expressed interest in options to gather additional feedback from outside the Council regarding the performance of the employee, commonly known as a 360-degree evaluation. He provided examples from some nearby cities for consideration. He recommended that the City Council select categories to evaluate. He noted that the current City Manager and City Attorney had contracts that needed to be honored or modified based on the Council's wishes for the evaluation process.

Councilor Richards expressed support for adopting an evaluation similar to that of the City of Silverton. Councilor Hegge added that it explained the categories and expectations well.

Councilor Augsburger expressed support for a model that incorporated feedback from multiple stakeholders.

Councilor Hegge suggested incorporating goals into the evaluation process.

Councilor Augsburger requested that the employees perform a self-evaluation. Mayor Coleman suggested adding clarification to the section of goals and objectives in the Silverton example.

Mayor Coleman recommended that department executives provide feedback on the employees in addition to community members. Councilor Richards expressed support for same. Mayor Coleman asked how community members should be selected. Councilor Augsburger suggested an open invitation to the community to provide feedback. Discussion ensued regarding whether an open invitation would accurately reflect community sentiment. Councilor Bronson noted that it could be only one component of the evaluation process. President Pro Tem Thorstad expressed concern that a high volume of responses would slow down the evaluation process. Mayor Coleman suggested contacting community leaders that interacted frequently with the City Manager. Councilor Bronson added that community input should be based on a set rating system rather than fully open-ended.

President Pro Tem Thorstad requested that staff input be incorporated into both evaluations.

There was consensus to base Sweet Home's City Manager evaluation from Councilors and Department Heads on Silverton's model, from general staff on Lebanon's City Attorney model, and to utilize Silverton's numbering system and headings throughout.

There was consensus to base the City Attorney evaluation on feedback from the City Council and staff with which they interact frequently, to be based on the role's job description and utilizing a scale of 1-5.

Discussion ensued regarding a general community input survey versus direct feedback on the City Manager. President Pro Tem Thorstad suggested a community meeting to gather input. Discussion ensued as to whether there was enough public interaction with the City Manager to merit a survey dedicated to evaluating their performance. There was consensus to gather feedback on the overall direction of the City rather than specific to the City Manager.

There was further consensus that both the City Manager and City Attorney should also complete a self-evaluation to be turned in at the same Executive Session when City Council planned to present their evaluations.

Councilor Hegge asked if the final score could be modified after City Council discussion. There was consensus that the final evaluation could be adjusted following discussion.

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 6:25 PM.

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Manager – Ex Officio City Recorder