



CITY OF SWEET HOME CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

July 08, 2025, 6:30 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 6:30 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
Angela Clegg, Planning & Building Manager
Megan Dazey, Library Services Director
Ray Grundy, Code Enforcement Officer
Blair Larsen, City Attorney
Adam Leisinger, Special Projects Manager
Greg Springman, Public Works Director

GUESTS

Kenneth Oberg, 780 9th Avenue, Sweet Home, OR 97386
Jerry Whaley, 875 2nd Avenue, Sweet Home, OR 97386
Joseph Sands, 835 Oak Terrace, Sweet Home, OR 97386
Aleaha Myers, 25643 Gap Road, Brownsville, OR 97327
John Origer, 630 S 7th Street, Lebanon, OR 97355
Larry Horton, 771 50th Avenue, Sweet Home, OR 97386
Dr. Ivan Wolthuis, 28996 Berlin Road, Sweet Home, OR 97386
Shirley Schumacher, 41100 Nichol Drive, Sweet Home, OR 97386
Gary Jarvis, 2941 Foothills Drive, Sweet Home, OR 97386
Frank McDonnell, Senior Client Advisor, Government Portfolio Advisors, Inc.
Dawn Mitchell, Senior Citizens of Sweet Home, Inc.

Consent Agenda

- a) Request for Council Action – Downtown Lounge Public Address System Application
- b) Request for Council Action – Agreement with the Sweet Home Senior Center for the Transportation Program

Approval of Minutes:

- a) 2025-06-24 City Council Meeting Minutes

Councilor Richards moved to approve the balance of the Consent Agenda. President Pro Tem Thorstad seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

AYE: Coleman, Thorstad, Augsburger, Bronson, Hegge, Richards, Sanchez

NAY: None

Recognition of Visitors & Hearing of Petitions

There were no visitors to be heard.

New Business

- a) Request for Council Action – Code Compliance Abatement Lien for 780 9th Avenue

City Manager Ogden described the history of code violations at 780 9th Avenue and noted several years of good faith efforts by staff to work with the property owner that were unsuccessful in resolving the violations voluntarily by the owner. He noted that an abatement was performed by a third-party contractor in the amount of \$47,779.21 in April 2025. He requested City Council's approval to place the amount on the City's lien docket in order to recoup the costs to the City.

Mayor Coleman recognized those registered to speak.

Kenneth Oberg, property owner of 780 9th Avenue, described his history of interactions with the Code Enforcement Officer. He stated that he made progress on the property and protested the abatement and the placement of the lien.

Jerry Whaley noted concerns with roaming cats in Sweet Home and asked City Council to take action to address them.

Joseph Sands noted that he had experienced issues with the property in question since 2016 and asked that City Council support the staff recommendation.

Aleaha Myers stated she was a former neighbor of the property owner and described her history of issues with the property. She noted that the condition of the property negatively impacted the market value of surrounding homes.

John Origer, owner of Apex Property Clearing and Recycling, stated that he was the contractor responsible for performing the abatement of the property. He noted that he had been unable to enter the property when providing his abatement estimate and that the cost to the City was lower than what he could have charged based on what was required on site and wanting to keep costs lower for the property owner. He stated that the crew attempted to help the property owner keep what he wanted.

Councilor Hegge recused himself from the vote due to a conflict of interest.

President Pro Tem Thorstad moved to approve the placement of a lien on 780 9th Avenue as proposed. Councilor Richards seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

AYE: Coleman, Thorstad, Augsburger, Bronson, Richards

NAY: Sanchez

RECUSED: Hegge

- b) Request for Council Action – Adopting the City's Investment Strategy

City Manager Ogden stated that the item proposed an update to the City's Investment Strategy as recommended by the City's investment firm, Government Portfolio Advisors, Inc. (GPA). He noted that the primary change proposed was to move the Weighted Average Maturity (WAM) from 2.0 years to 2.5 years. He invited GPA staff to speak.

Frank McDonnell stated that the increase in the WAM would allow for more flexibility.

President Pro Tem Thorstad asked if there was a positive or negative reason for the change. Mr. McDonnell stated that it was positive and did not increase risk, only introduced additional flexibility for the City's investment portfolio.

Councilor Bronson moved to adopt the City's Investment Strategy as proposed. Councilor Richards seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

AYE: Coleman, Thorstad, Augsburger, Bronson, Hegge, Richards, Sanchez

NAY: None

- c) Public Hearing & Request for Council Action – Special Procurement Process with the Timber Framers Guild

Mayor Coleman opened the Public Hearing at 6:53 PM.

City Manager Ogden stated that approval would allow staff to negotiate directly with the Timber Framers Guild for design and construction of the new bandstand in Sankey Park as part of the Sankey Park Phase III Project. He noted that the guild utilized a "community build" model to involve the community in constructing a timber project with traditional techniques.

There were no comments to be heard.

Mayor Coleman closed the Public Hearing at 6:55 PM.

Mayor Coleman stated she appreciated the opportunity for a community build to replace a previously beloved structure that had to be removed.

President Pro Tem Thorstad moved to approve the special procurement process as proposed. Councilor Richards seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

AYE: Coleman, Thorstad, Augsburger, Bronson, Hegge, Richards, Sanchez

NAY: None

- d) Request for Council Action – Resolution No. 16 for 2025 – Amending the City's Fee Schedule

City Manager Ogden stated that there were small adjustments proposed based on operational changes, including:

- Elimination of fees for meeting spaces due to reconfiguration of City Hall
- Introduction of Public Works event support fees to cover actual staff time and materials for permitted events
- Adjustment of the Transient Merchant Permit fees, particularly to cover costs of increased staff workload and additional inspections

He stated that the fees were conservative but more appropriately placed the fees on those utilizing services.

Councilor Sanchez asked for clarification on the increase of the Transient Merchant Permit fee related to food trucks. Planning & Building Manager Clegg replied that staff would now be performing site inspections, including after hours, so the fee would help offset those costs.

Mayor Coleman asked if the Transient Merchant Permit fee increase was also related to concerns from the previous year about food trucks during the Oregon Jamboree. Manager Clegg replied that it was.

Councilor Bronson asked if the plan for food trucks would resolve issues on Main Street that occurred during the previous year. Manager Clegg replied that it would and that a copy of the new permit application was included in the agenda packet. She added that Highway 20 and Highway 228 would now be considered exclusion zones for food trucks.

Councilor Augsburger asked how frequently the conference rooms were rented. Deputy City Manager

President Pro Tem Thorstad moved to approve Resolution No. 16 for 2025. Councilor Bronson seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

AYE: Coleman, Thorstad, Augsburg, Bronson, Hegge, Richards

NAY: Sanchez

Ordinance Bills

Third Reading of Ordinance Bills (Roll Call Vote Required)

- a) Request for Council Action – Ordinance No. 7 for 2025 – Ordinance No. 1336 – Repealing SHMC Chapter 13.04.170 Fluoridation

A third reading of Ordinance No. 7 for 2025 was conducted by title only.

Mayor Coleman recognized those registered to speak.

Larry Horton asked why the Community Health Committee was not contacted regarding the issue and asked if local medical partners were contacted. He stated that he contacted three providers and all three were in support of continuing fluoridation. He noted that the original Ordinance was enacted through a public vote and expressed concern that the issue was not being referred back to voters for consideration.

Dr. Ivan Wolthuis expressed support for continued fluoridation. He requested an opportunity for more in-depth discussion on the topic. He discussed the efficacy of fluoridation in enhancing public health and reducing dental costs. He noted that systemic fluoridation through the water supply was more effective than topical fluoridation through toothpaste.

Shirley Schumacher stated that she did not know what the previous level of fluoridation was so it was difficult to determine if there was a health concern. She expressed concern that two readings were conducted at a single City Council meeting. She noted that removing fluoridation led to increased dental costs, particularly in lower income populations. She asked that the voters be allowed to decide the issue.

Gary Jarvis described the history of a prior Public Hearing regarding the issue and expressed concern that the previous City Council was not prepared to make an informed decision. He noted that the majority of people from Sweet Home who appeared were in opposition to the fluoridation. He expressed support for ending fluoridation in Sweet Home.

Mayor Coleman stated that City Council requested that the item be placed on a future City Council agenda during a May meeting. She apologized to the Community Health Committee for not including them more in the conversation. She noted that she had spoken to many community members to learn their opinion and stated that those in favor of fluoridation who spoke at the current meeting were the first she had heard.

Councilor Bronson expressed concern that he had been unable to call in to the previous meeting where the first and second reading were conducted due to technical issues. Mayor Coleman asked City Attorney Larsen for clarification. City Attorney Larsen stated that the Charter allowed a second reading of the Ordinance if there was a unanimous vote by those present. Councilor Bronson expressed support for referring the item to the ballot for voters to decide.

President Pro Tem Thorstad moved to approve Ordinance No. 7 for 2025. Councilor Sanchez seconded the motion.

Mayor Coleman acknowledged the 1964 Special Election where the original Ordinance was enacted and considered referring the issue back to the ballot but decided to vote to approve the Ordinance based on the feedback she received from residents.

Councilor Sanchez stated that she had spoken with dentists outside of Sweet Home and noted conflicting information among industry experts. She added that there were many methods of fluoridation outside of the public water supply.

Councilor Bronson requested that the issue be put before the voters to allow for additional education.

President Pro Tem Thorstad stated that the City Council served as elected representatives and that there was science to support both sides.

The question was called. The motion carried by the following vote:

AYE: Coleman, Thorstad, Augsburg, Richards, Sanchez

NAY: Bronson, Hegge

Mayor Coleman invited Dawn Mitchell to speak regarding the Transportation Program.

Dawn Mitchell expressed her gratitude for community partners and their support of the Sweet Home Senior Center. She noted that the current biennium would be funded through two separate agreements due to changes at the Federal level. She described the availability of funds and how the required local match was provided, including \$30,000 annually from the City of Sweet Home.

Mayor Coleman thanked Ms. Mitchell for her service to the community.

Reports of Committees

Administration, Finance & Property Committee – President Pro Tem Thorstad

- a) Open Position – Park & Tree Committee

Charter Review Committee – President Pro Tem Thorstad

- a) 2025-06-17 Charter Review Committee Meeting Minutes

Community Health Committee – Councilor Bronson

- a) 2025-06-25 Community Health Committee Meeting Minutes
- b) Health Fair Application

Library Advisory Board – Councilor Augsburger

Park & Tree Committee – Councilor Hegge

- a) 2025-06-18 Park & Tree Committee Meeting Minutes

Planning Commission

Area Commission on Transportation – Councilor Sanchez, Councilor Bronson (alternate)

Chamber of Commerce – Councilor Hegge

Council of Governments – Councilor Bronson, Councilor Sanchez (alternate)

Solid Waste Advisory Council – Councilor Richards

Department Reports

Library

- a) Library Report – June 2025

Planning & Building Division

- a) Planning & Building Report – June 2025

Public Works Department

- a) Public Works Report – June 2025

Finance Department

- a) Finance Report – June 2025

Code Enforcement Division

- a) Code Enforcement Report – June 2025

Director Dazey invited everyone to Sankey Park on Friday for an event put on by the Oregon Coast Aquarium.

Director Springman stated that the annual Consumer Confidence Report was included and was available on the website.

Planning & Building Manager Clegg stated that it was the 40th anniversary of the movie *The Goonies* and it would be the free Movie in the Park on the following Friday.

Reports of City Officials

City Manager's Report

City Manager Ogden thanked Code Enforcement Officer Grundy for his work on the Sweet Home S.H.I.N.E.S. cleanup event and stated that he was able to close out several open storage cases after the event. He noted that the new City website was scheduled to launch on July 14th. He stated that speed humps would be installed on First Avenue on July 9th. He noted that the Sportsman's Holiday parade would take place on July 12th and would result in a street closure on Long Street and traffic conversion on Main Street. He stated that there would be two Charter update open houses to invite public comment on proposed Charter revisions on July 15th and July 26th. He noted that he recently presented at the 2025 National Conference on Ending Homelessness with the Executive Director of FAC in Washington, D.C. He added that they co-presented a 45-minute presentation outlining the shelter's impact on the community and the benefits of Community Court. He reminded City Council that the second City Council meeting in July was canceled.

Councilor Augsburger asked of the timeline for the First Avenue project. City Manager Ogden stated that construction would last one day.

Councilor Augsburger and President Pro Tem Thorstad thanked Code Enforcement Officer Grundy for his work to improve Sweet Home.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Coleman noted the difficulty in making a decision on liens and thanked staff for their thorough reporting to assist Council in their decision-making. She thanked Special Projects Manager Leisinger for helping to bring fireworks back to Sweet Home for the 4th of July. She highlighted that Sweet Home hosted the Wildland Fire School successfully again. She noted upcoming events as part of the Sportsman's Holiday. She stated that she hosts Coffee with the Mayor on Thursdays at 3 PM. She noted the recent announcement that the Oregon Jamboree would be holding its last year this year.

Council Business for Good of the Order

Councilor Sanchez asked if City staff could look into offering some form of fluoride to low-income residents. She also asked staff to investigate improvements to the call-in system.

Deputy City Manager Pretty stated that the City's IT consultant was working with Microsoft directly to troubleshoot the call-in system.

There was Council consensus to direct staff to investigate providing fluoride to low-income residents.

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 PM.

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Manager – Ex Officio City Recorder