



CITY OF SWEET HOME CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

January 14, 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
Councilor Chelsea Augsburger
Councilor Ken Bronson
Councilor Aaron Hegge
Councilor Dylan Richards
Councilor Angelita Sanchez
Councilor Josh Thorstad

STAFF

Jason Ogden, City Manager Pro Tem / Police Chief
Cecily Hope Pretty, Assistant City Manager Pro Tem
Matt Brown, Finance Director
Angela Clegg, Planning & Building Manager
Megan Dazey, Library Services Director
Blair Larsen, City Attorney
Adam Leisinger, Special Projects Manager
Greg Springman, Public Works Director

MEDIA

Sarah Brown, The New Era
Shayla Escudero, Albany Democrat-Herald

GUESTS

Nancy Patton, 3041 Foothills Drive, Sweet Home, OR 97386
David Lowman, 2230 Main Street, Sweet Home, OR 97386
Dave Trask, 1276 2nd Avenue, Sweet Home, OR 97386
Dawn Miller, 331 8th Avenue, Sweet Home, OR 97386

- a) Swearing in of New Councilors – Oath of Office

City Manager Pro Tem Ogden thanked all in attendance at the swearing in of the new City Councilors. Councilors Sanchez, Bronson, Augsburger, and Hegge took the Oath of Office and were sworn in to City Council.

b) Nominations and Vote for City of Sweet Home Mayor

Councilor Sanchez nominated Councilor Richards for Sweet Home Mayor. Councilor Augsburger seconded the nomination.

Councilor Sanchez stated that she supported Councilor Richards as the youngest member of Council who spoke on behalf of his constituents.

The motion failed by the following vote:

AYE: Augsburger, Richards, Sanchez

NAY: Bronson, Coleman, Hegge, Thorstad

Councilor Thorstad nominated Councilor Coleman for Sweet Home Mayor. Councilor Bronson seconded the nomination.

The motion carried by the following vote:

AYE: Bronson, Coleman, Hegge, Thorstad

NAY: Augsburger, Richards, Sanchez

c) Nominations and Vote for City of Sweet Home President Pro Tem

Councilor Richards nominated Councilor Sanchez for Sweet Home President Pro Tem. Councilor Augsburger seconded the nomination.

Councilor Sanchez requested to decline the nomination.

Councilor Richards amended his nomination to Councilor Augsburger for President Pro Tem. Councilor Sanchez seconded the nomination.

The motion failed by the following vote:

AYE: Augsburger, Richards, Sanchez

NAY: Bronson, Coleman, Hegge, Thorstad

Councilor Bronson nominated Councilor Thorstad for Sweet Home President Pro Tem. Mayor Coleman seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

AYE: Bronson, Coleman, Hegge, Thorstad

NAY: Augsburger, Richards, Sanchez

Mayor Coleman stated she was supportive of Councilor Thorstad due to his experience on City Council and his attendance at meetings.

The meeting was recessed at 6:43 PM.

Mayor Coleman reconvened the meeting at 6:49 PM.

Assistant City Manager Pro Tem Pretty called roll following the reconvening:

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

ABSENT: None

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes:

a) 2024-12-10 City Council Executive Session Minutes

b) 2024-12-10 City Council Meeting Minutes

c) 2025-01-07 City Council Work Session Minutes

Councilor Augsburger asked if the newly elected Councilors should vote on the minutes since they were not seated on Council at the time of the meetings. Assistant City Manager Pro Tem Pretty replied that they should.

Councilor Sanchez moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Councilor Richards seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Recognition of Visitors & Hearing of Petitions

Nancy Patton offered congratulations to the entire City Council and reminded them that they were on the dais because they were chosen to represent the people of Sweet Home. She asked them to work together. She requested a State of the City address to be organized by the City to encourage public engagement.

David Lowman offered congratulations to the new Councilors. He requested that the Sweet Home Charter be modified to allow the Mayor to be elected by voters and stated that he heard support for this change while canvassing during the prior election.

Mayor Coleman stated that she intended to open the Charter Review Committee at the following City Council meeting and they would consider said modification.

Dave Trask expressed support for the number of candidates who ran for City Council and for the selection of Mayor Coleman and President Pro Tem Thorstad for their roles. He expressed concern regarding Councilor attendance.

Dawn Miller expressed support for modifying the City Charter to allow the Mayor to be elected by voters.

New Business

- a) Request for Council Action – Authorizing a Recycling Service Provider to Receive Funding

City Manager Pro Tem Ogden stated that the RCA was to allow Sweet Home Sanitation to access State funds directly to ensure compliance with the Recycling Modernization Act (RMA). He reviewed the history and intent of the RMA. He stated that staff recommended the authorization in order to streamline the process and noted that the City did not have staffing or expertise regarding recycling.

Councilor Richards moved to approve the authorization as requested. President Pro Tem Thorstad seconded the motion.

The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Ordinance Bills

Third Reading of Ordinance Bills (Roll Call Vote Required)

- a) Request for Council Action – Ordinance No. 6 for 2024 – Ordinance No. 1329 – Housing Production Strategy (Legislative Amendment LA24-02)

City Manager Pro Tem Ogden stated that the first and second readings of the Housing Production Strategy (HPS) had already been completed. He read Ordinance No. 6 for 2024 by title only.

Councilor Sanchez moved to approve Ordinance No. 6 for 2024. Councilor Richards seconded the motion.

Councilor Bronson reviewed historical population levels in Sweet Home and noted that the City was subject to additional rules once it exceeded 10,000 people. He reviewed current and future housing projections as per the HPS. He noted that the Water Treatment Plant and future Wastewater Treatment Plant had sufficient capacity for the population projections.

The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Reports of Committees

Ad Hoc Committee on Arts & Culture

Administration, Finance & Property Committee

Community Health Committee

- a) 2024-12-04 Community Health Committee Meeting Minutes

Library Advisory Board

- a) 2024-12-12 Library Board Meeting Minutes

Park & Tree Committee

Public & Traffic Safety Committee

- a) 2024-11-13 Public & Traffic Safety Committee Meeting Minutes

Mayor Coleman asked the Councilors to notify her of any Committees on which they would be interested in serving as liaison. She stated that assignments would be made at the following City Council meeting.

Department Reports

Library Services Director

- a) Library Report – December 2024
- b) Sweet Home Public Library Newsletter – January 2025

Public Works Director

- a) Public Works Report – December 2024

Finance Director

- a) Finance Report – Quarter 2

Police Chief

- a) Police Department Report – December 2024

City Manager Pro Tem Ogden stated that one of the priorities of City Council in the past was to create a Traffic Enforcement Officer and he highlighted increases in stops, warnings, and citations since the role was formalized. He highlighted decreases in vehicle crashes overall over the previous year.

Director Springman stated that there was currently a filter out of service at the Water Treatment Plant but staff anticipated receiving parts within the next two weeks to complete the repair. He noted the street sweeper had been down for multiple months but the equipment was due to arrive that week. He highlighted Plant Operator Jaegar Howatt for passing his Certification III for water treatment and his selection as the DRC for the plant.

Councilor Sanchez asked if staff was prepared if a filter was damaged again. Director Springman stated that staff was working with industry experts to ensure the plant operated more effectively in the future. He added that the equipment purchased covered portions of the filter and a complete replacement was not needed at this time.

Director Dazey highlighted increases in patronage and programs, particularly compared with other regional libraries that were experiencing decreases.

Director Brown stated that he joined the City of Sweet Home as a contractor in 2023. He reviewed each City Fund's status and revenue sources. He noted the importance of the Police Operating Levy and Library Operating Levy in allowing Sweet Home to utilize its General Fund for other things. He highlighted the availability of System Development Charges (SDC) funds that could be utilized in part to accomplish eligible capital projects.

Councilor Sanchez expressed her gratitude to Director Brown for his support of Sweet Home.

Director Brown added that the Fiscal Year 2023 audit was almost complete and the audit for Fiscal Year 2024 would begin immediately after. He anticipated that the overall audit schedule would be back on track by the audit for Fiscal Year 2025.

Reports of City Officials

City Manager's Report

City Manager Pro Tem Ogden stated that new signage was installed on First Avenue to discourage commercial truck traffic. He reviewed the history of the proposed Festival Street on 13th Avenue and the upcoming traffic change to convert 13th Avenue to one-way traffic. He stated that Councilors would have

the opportunity for new headshots on January 28th prior to the City Council meeting. He reminded City Councilors of their requirement to complete training on Public Meetings Law and League of Oregon Cities training for City Council on February 25th. He thanked City Council for their support and expressed staff's excitement to work together.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Coleman thanked those in attendance and the City Council. She expressed confidence that Councilors were committed to serving Sweet Home.

Council Business for Good of the Order

Councilor Richards congratulated Mayor Coleman and President Pro Tem Thorstad on their appointments.

Councilor Sanchez asked that the City Council support a proposed Charter amendment to elect the Mayor directly on the ballot.

Mayor Coleman asked of next steps regarding Councilor Sanchez's request. City Attorney Larsen stated that historically, a Charter Review Committee was appointed to consider Charter amendments and make recommendations to the City Council. He stated he would investigate more details about options for Charter amendments.

Councilor Sanchez requested a Work Session regarding Charter amendments.

Councilor Bronson expressed concern that City Council did not yet have enough information regarding the role of the Mayor and how a Charter amendment would affect the City.

There was consensus to schedule a future Work Session regarding Charter amendments. Staff confirmed that they would identify a date for same.

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Manager Pro Tem – Ex Officio City Recorder