MEETING MINUTES

TUMWATER CITY COUNCIL
October 20, 2026

CONVENE: 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Mayor Leatta Dahlhoff and Councilmembers Peter Agabi, Meghan Sullivan, Eileen Swarthout, Kelly Von Holtz and Brandon Weedon.

Excused: Councilmembers Angela Jefferson & Joan Cathey.

Staff: City Administrator Paul Simmons, Assistant City Administrator Kelly Adams, City Attorney Karen Kirkpatrick, Police Chief Carlos Quiles, Jr., Fire Chief Brian Hurley, Finance Director Troy Niemeyer, Information Technology Director Lance Inman, Transportation & Engineering Director Brandon Hicks, Communications Director Jason Wettstein, Water Resources & Sustainability Director Dan Smith, Records Supervisor Ashleigh Clark, Executive Assistant Jessica Lee, and City Clerk Melody Valiant.

Others: Tumwater School District Superintendent Kevin Bogatin, Intercity Transit Chief Marketing, Communications and Outreach officer Nick Demerice and Lacey Veterans Service Hub Coordinator Brian Waananen.

SPECIAL ITEMS:

PROCLAMATION: WALK TO SCHOOL MONTH, OCTOBER 2026

Councilmember Weedon read a proclamation declaring October 2026, Walk to School month. The proclamation promotes the safety and health of children in October and throughout the year by supporting pedestrian, bicycle, and active transportation improvements. It encourages modeling safe pedestrian and bicycle behaviors, participating in safe driving practices, and

following the speed limit to make roads safer for those walking and biking.

Mayor Dahlhoff presented the proclamation to Tumwater School District Superintendent Kevin Bogatin and Intercity Transit Chief Marketing, Communications and Outreach officer Nick Demerice

PROCLAMATION: NATIONAL VETERANS AND MILITARY FAMILIES MONTH, NOVEMBER 2026

Councilmember Swarthout read a proclamation declaring November 2026 as National Veteran's and Military Families month. The proclamation honors the strength and sacrifices of veterans, service members, and their families, while encouraging the community to support them for enriching and strengthening the Tumwater area.

Mayor Dahlhoff presented the proclamation to Lacey Veterans Service Hub Coordinator Brian Waananen.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Public comment was given by residents and community members Gale, Crawford, Baker, Fitz-Hugh, Chernut, Janis, Rolra, Hays, Simmons, Kitabayashi, Tompkins, Wulfsberg, Lake, Capra, Kramer, Huisman, Norton, Campbell, Ganster, Persons, Keyath and Gordham.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

a. Approval of Minutes: City Council Work Session, September 8, 2026
b. Approval of Minutes: City Council, September 15, 2026
c. Approval of Minutes: City Council Work Session, September 22, 2026
d. Payment of Vouchers
e. Resolution No. R2026-017 Deschutes Estuary Restoration Project
f. Resolution No. R2026-018, Surplus Property
g. Interlocal Agreement with Thurston County Public Defense for Indigent Defense Legal Services
h. Interlocal Agreement with Thurston County Prosecuting Attorney's Office for Prosecution Services
i. Advisory Board Appointment of Scott Bradley and Carol Campbell to the Tree Board
j. Reappointment of Gina Kotek and Matthew Rounsley to the Planning Commission; Kathy Peterson, Sharie McCafferty, Carissa Parvin and Matthew Brownell to the Barnes Lake Management District Steering Committee and Dave Shipley to the Historic Preservation Commission

MOTION: **Councilmember Swarthout moved, seconded by Councilmember Weedon, to approve the Consent Calendar as published. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.**

PUBLIC HEARING:

RESOLUTION NO. R2026-020, BODY WORN CAMERA (BWC) REDACTION FEES:

Chief Quiles and Supervisor Clark presented Resolution No. R2026-020, Body Worn Camera (BWC) Redaction fees. Since rolling out body-worn cameras in March, the department has faced a massive surge in public disclosure requests, with 92% of them being for BWC videos. This influx caused processing times to spike from under a day to 3.5 days per request.

Supervisor Clark explained that redaction requires a meticulous, frame-by-frame review to protect sensitive information, meaning artificial intelligence (AI) software cannot eliminate the need for human verification. The $0.89 fee covers the software license and the lowest-paid Police Services Specialist 1 salary. To initiate a request, the department will double the video length, multiply it by $0.89, and require a 10% down payment. Individuals directly involved in an incident, their attorneys, and criminal defense parties remain exempt from these fees. The resolution allows us to recover redaction costs for all non-exempt requestors.

Mayor Dahlhoff opened the public hearing at 8:15 p.m.

There was no public testimony.

Mayor Dahlhoff closed the public hearing at 8:16 p.m.

MOTION: **Councilmember Von Holtz moved, seconded by Councilmember Weedon, to adopt Resolution No. R2026-020, Body Worn Camera (BWC) Redaction Fees. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.**

COUNCIL CONSIDERATIONS:

ORDINANCE NO. O2026-004, RESIDENTIAL ENERGY

Assistant Administrator Adams presented Ordinance No. O2026-004, Residential Energy Performance Rating and Disclosure which includes the Equity Commission's review and recommendations regarding the proposed Home Energy Score

PERFORMANCE RATING AND DISCLOSURE, EQUITY COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

program. The commission recommended adjusting the low-income program subsidy threshold from 150% down to 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI) to preserve funding for vulnerable sellers, establishing an annual equity report to track physical improvements, and ensuring all program materials are translated and accessible.

Councilmembers discussed the reasoning behind the mandatory program versus a voluntary framework. Councilmembers highlighted the policy's alignment with the city's adopted greenhouse gas reduction targets and climate emergency declarations. Councilmembers also expressed concerns regarding escalating administrative setup costs, financial compliance burdens placed on low-income sellers, a lack of authority to restrict private equity purchases, and a lack of active funding allocated in the proposed budget.

MOTION:

Councilmember Swarthout moved, seconded by Councilmember Cathey, to adopt Ordinance No. O2026-004 establishing a Residential Energy Performance Rating and disclosure requirement as originally written.

Before voting on the motion the Council debated implementing a mandatory versus a voluntary program framework. Supporters emphasized the public health urgency of the climate emergency and the city's long-standing carbon reduction goals. Opponents raised concerns over escalating administrative setup costs during a restrictive budget cycle, the financial burden of $400 assessment fees on low-income sellers, a lack of active program funding, and legal limits on restricting private equity purchases.

Following the discussion, a motion to amend the main motion was made.

MOTION:

Councilmember Sullivan moved, seconded by Councilmember Cathey, to amend the pending motion to modify the ordinance language to lower the subsidy cap from 150% AMI to 80% AMI per the Equity Commission's recommendation.

Following Council discussion regarding active budget allocations for program enhancements the meeting was recessed for a temporary break.

RECESS: **Mayor Dahlhoff adjourned the meeting for a 5-minute recess at 8:51 p.m.**

RECONVENE: **Mayor Dahlhoff reconvened the meeting at 8:56 p.m.**

Upon reconvening, Mayor Dahlhoff called for a vote on the pending amendment on the floor.

MOTION: **A roll-call vote on the amendment failed with Councilmembers Sullivan, Swarthout, and Cathey voting aye, and Councilmembers Weedon, Agabi, and Von Holtz abstaining.**

MOTION: **A roll-call vote on the original motion to adopt Ordinance No. O2026-004 Residential Energy Performance Rating and Disclosure as written failed due to a 3-3 tie, with Councilmembers Sullivan, Swarthout, and Cathey voting aye, and Councilmembers Weedon, Agabi, and Von Holtz voting nay.**

MOTION: **Councilmember Agabi moved, seconded by Councilmember Weedon, to amend Ordinance No. O2026-004 to establish a voluntary program.**

Staff clarified that the structural language of the ordinance could not support a voluntary framework.

Councilmember Agabi withdrew the motion.

MOTION: **Councilmember Sullivan moved, seconded by Councilmember Cathey, to refer the Residential Energy Performance Rating and Disclosure topic to a future City Council work session to be scheduled by staff. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.**

PURCHASE AND SALE AGREEMENT WITH PUGET WESTERN FOR HABITAT CONSERVATION LAND:

Administrator Simmons presented a Purchase and Sale Agreement with Puget Western Inc. to acquire 67.5 acres of land known as the "Tumwater West" property. This acquisition supports the city's joint Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) to protect the Olympia subspecies of the Mazama pocket gopher. The transaction includes $2 million for the land, $10 million for 109 mitigation credits to support local development projects,

and a $930,000 endowment to fund ongoing restoration and maintenance of the site.

MOTION: **Councilmember Sullivan moved, seconded by Councilmember Von Holtz, to approve and authorize the Mayor to sign the Purchase and Sale Agreement with Puget Western for Habitat Conservation Land. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.**

PURCHASE AND SALE OPTION AGREEMENT WITH VINE STREET INVESTORS – CONDUIT TWO, LLC FOR 310 ISRAEL ROAD AMENDMENT NO. 1:

Administrator Simmons presented a purchase and sale agreement with Vine Street Investors – Conduit Two, LLC for 310 Israel Road Amendment No. 1 to acquire a vacant state building for a new City Hall. He reminded the Council that this is their fourth or fifth time talking through solutions for their cramped City Hall. The current building was built in 1987 when Tumwater had only 8,500 residents and a handful of staff, but now it is trying to serve over 30,000 people. It has gotten so crowded that multiple departments have acquired space off-site at a large expense, and the existing employees are dealing with cramped offices, limited parking, security issues, and workspaces that don't meet modern Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.

The proposed acquisition would consolidate displaced city services onto a centralized public facility campus along Israel Road, neighboring the library, police station, and fire department. If the purchase moves forward, the city plans to convert the old City Hall building into a dedicated public health and safety complex. This structural shift allows the constrained police department and fire administration to expand into the vacated space to fulfill the community's growth needs for the next 30 to 50 years.

MOTION: **Councilmember Swarthout moved, seconded by Councilmember Weedon, to approve and authorize the Mayor to sign the Purchase and Sale Option Agreement with Vine Street Investors—Conduit Two, LLC for 310 Israel Road Amendment No. 1. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.**

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION:

Councilmember Cathey questioned how funding the new City Hall would impact finances for the planned community center and Public Works Operations Center. Staff clarified that both

projects use separate, dedicated funding streams and will not be financially impacted. Furthermore, consolidating administrative staff into the Israel Road building down-sizes the future operations center from two stories to one, saving the city an estimated $8 million in construction costs.

MAYOR/CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Administrator Simmons and Mayor Dahlhoff had no reports.

COUNCILMEMBER REPORTS:

Due to time constraints Mayor Dahlhoff asked Councilmembers that had reports to email them to the Executive Assistant for distribution.

ADJOURNMENT:

With there being no further business, Mayor Dahlhoff adjourned the meeting at 9:31 p.m.

Prepared by Melody Valiant, City Clerk