

ROGUE RIVER CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2026

CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS

CITY OF ROGUE RIVER, JACKSON COUNTY, OREGON

CALL TO ORDER The Regular Council meeting which was called to order by Mayor Pam VanArsdale at 6:01 p.m.

INVOCATION Dennis Ruzzio, Lady of the River Catholic Church

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE Mayor Pam VanArsdale led the council and audience in the pledge of allegiance

QUORUM **COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mayor Pam VanArsdale
City Councilor Barb Gregory
City Councilor Barb Hilty
City Councilor Sherrie Moss
City Councilor Grace Howell
City Councilor Mark Minegar

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT:

Ryan Nolan, City Administrator
Paige Chick, Administrative Services Director (in audience)
Michael Bollweg, Public Works Director
Dave Rash, Police Chief
Annette Phillips, Administrative Finance Assistant (in audience)
Diane Oliver, City Recorder

MEDIA PRESENT:

Brian Mortensen, Rogue River Press

AUDIENCE: Jackson County Commissioner Colleen Roberts, and Howard Davis

A quorum was present, and due notice had been published.

SPECIAL ORDERS OF BUSINESS:

Proclamation The Mayor read the proclamation honoring Councilor Sharie Davis

Proclamation The Mayor read the proclamation declaring Arbor Day

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Move to accept the special council meeting minutes of February 19th, 2026, and the regular city council meeting minutes of February 26, 2026.

Motion by Councilor Moss, seconded by Councilor Gregory

Discussion on the motion, there was a correction to February 26, 2026, minutes that have been corrected prior to the meeting, so with that correction

Vote: All ayes, none opposed

Both sets of minutes are approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Community Relations; Chamber of Commerce Liaison: Barb Hilty reports at the meeting on March 19th they decided to officially change the name to Rogue River Chamber of Commerce. The walking digital map will be reviewed at the April meeting. The shed will be moved after Rooster Crow to the public workshop, and it will also be painted. Next mixer is April 2nd at the Grange and sponsored by small independent businesses. The May meeting will be at a Little League game. Installation and awards banquet is May 30th at 6:00 PM at the Grange, tickets are \$65.00.

Community Relations; Community Center Representative: Councilor Barb Gregory reports that they are still running in the red. The utility bill is high because of the electric van that charges. They are looking into charging the van at the Post Office. The thrift store is looking into a new way to price items. Sherrie Moss is the floor manager; she may help with this. They are working on job descriptions for volunteers. The old bus has been sold! The Community center is looking to hire a manager/bookkeeper. They are looking to make changes in the by-laws. Saint Patty's dinner was last Friday night, we had a choice between corned beef and cabbage, or shepherd's pie, both were delicious.

Rogue River School Board #35 Liaison: Councilor Mark Minegar reports that they hired a new volleyball coach, Mrs. Westlake. There is a teacher retiring as well. The funding for next year is stable, and the FFA funds will not be cut. The high school got 1st place in the Brain bowl. A coach received an award for the compass inspirational robotics coach! The sophomores won the air band contest, and the freshman class won it last year, so basically the same class keeps winning! There was a study done and teachers are second to air traffic controllers for making decisions on a daily basis. There are 22 students enrolled in an early college program. The school is updating their policy regarding films that are shown to the kids during class time, and parents will now be informed prior to showing the students films on campus.

Jackson County Fire District #1 Councilor Grace Howell reports the meeting was held on March 11th at 7:30AM. Gage Nichols joined the Jackson County Fire District. He is looking towards becoming a paramedic through the RCC Paramedic program. Austin Champion from Wimer started March 8th. They will be looking for three new people. \$10,000.00 was spent last month on overtime due to people out sick with flu/illnesses. They replaced the ridge cap on roof to prevent leaks. Solar grant was approved; there will be 180 panels. Received a \$139 donation from the public that can only be spent on the employees. The new ambulance will be fitted with table command system and will be on the road in the next few months. All the rigs will be fitted with the new system over time. They may change their meetings to evenings to accommodate the public. Next meeting is April 8th at 7:30AM.

Emergency Communication of Southern Oregon (ECZO): Ryan Nolan reports a staffing update for March is they have zero staff out on paid leave. They have had difficulty with staffing problems. Two dispatchers are in training. 31 of 37 dispatch positions filled which is high for them. They have 13 out of 15 administrative positions filled. They have clarified radio verbiage so that everyone is on the same page using the right call names etc. They have updated the Fire Priority Dispatch System like a triage system, telling them what fires are more dangerous. They have a new server system that they're switching over to for the entire communication system. They are researching a new CAD system, which will be required soon. They also added 70 new channels to the system which is part of the radio project.

Finance Committee: City Councilor Sherrie Moss reports that between February 25th, 2026, and March 20th, 2026, the finance committee met four times, issuing a total of 51 checks and 5 electronic payments totaling \$75,318.03.

Planning Commission Liaison: Councilor Barb Gregory reports that the Planning Commission is not ready to discuss potential tree policies. We reviewed and discussed use limitations of current commercial zoning properties related to residential use. Some tricky areas in current zoning regarding going from residential to commercial and switching back, which is prohibited in our code. There are small commercial lots that are too small for commercial use, but not too small for a home to be built. Ryan presented the idea of adding an extra column to the existing chart in the code, since our code is not working for us in this area. Onnie Heater is looking at better language for us to use. We will discuss it more next month.

Rogue Valley Area Commission on Transportation (RVACT): Mayor Pam VanArsdale reports that ODOT is trying to figure things out should they not get funding. We will vote on this in May which was decided by the courts. Currently, things are dire and paving will only be done on interstates and not highways. The OTC asked for priority assessment lists, and they went over that list for the region, and chose the top five if funding becomes available. The I-5 exit 27 Southbound in Medford is in dire need of repair because of the queuing that is causing a backup on the exit, it's very dangerous. OR-99 Wrap Road to Valley View needs an infill sidewalk project done because of the two deaths it has caused because of safety issues. OR-99 Table Rock to Beal need their roads widened and they need new sidewalks and bike lanes. OR-99 Matt Loop Street to Garfield needs sidewalks, bike lanes, and updated ADA crosswalks. On Parkdale in

the Parkway in Grants Pass, we'd like to see a dual left turning lane put in. In the evenings, it backs up and is dangerous. The mayor is pushing for funding for an interchange area maintenance program to study exit 48 which has a queuing problem during peak hours on the North and Southbound exit and entrance which is dangerous. This will require a traffic study first before being put on a list of potential projects in the second list of five hopefuls.

Rogue Valley Council of Governments: Mayor VanArsdale reports that she attended the meeting yesterday. There was a presentation from a group called "Operation Rambo" who train service dogs for disabled Veterans and first responders which was very interesting! There was a discussion regarding dues which are charged at .16 per capita. Rogue River's will be increased to \$45.00. The special districts will go back to the table and discuss the new fees they want to charge before voting on this increase again.

Middle Rogue Metropolitan Planning Organization (MRMPO): Mayor Pam VanArsdale reports that they have decided to rotate their meetings between Grants Pass, Rogue River and Goldhill. They also amended 2024-2027 transportation improvement program because the ODOT projects are going to go past the original project date due to the length of the road. These meetings are on the third Thursday of each month at 2:30PM.

PUBLIC INPUT: *John Joseph of Rogue River spoke two months ago in a city council meeting and is here tonight to express his deep sadness of the passing of Sharie Davis, who had encouraged him, and expressed how very kind she was to him. Councilor Sharie Davis encouraged him to keep up the good work, and to continue being more civically engaged in the community.*

ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS:

Ordinance Consider adopting **Ordinance 26-446-0**, an ordinance amending public safety fee and transient room tax applicability within the City of Rogue River.

Moved to postpone adopting **Ordinance 26-446-0** motion by Hilty

Discussion on the motion to move this item to our next city council workshop on April 2nd to work on this item more and discuss the definition of a "bachelor hotel".

Motion by Councilor Hilty, seconded by Councilor Gregory to move this **Ordinance 26-446-0** to the next workshop on April 2nd, 2026.

Vote: all ayes, none opposed

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

FEMA Continued public hearing on proposed code changes related to FEMA.
Move to continue the public hearing on the proposed code changes related to FEMA to June 25th, 2026, city council meeting at 6:00PM.

Motion by Hilty, seconded by Howell

Vote: Councilor Barb Gregory-yes
Councilor Sherrie Moss-yes
Councilor Barb Hilty-yes
Councilor Mark Minegar-yes
Councilor Grace Howell-yes

Motion passes.

UTILITY Request to connect 1524 East Evans Creek Road (a property outside of city limits) to City Sewer services.

The mayor opened the public hearing at 6:44PM
No councilors declared ex-parte

Ryan Nolan City Administrator confirmed with City Recorder Oliver, that indeed no testimony has come in regarding this proposal, and no one is attending virtually to this public hearing. The applicant was aware of this meeting and was invited to attend. She is not present here tonight. Ryan presented the written statements that the applicant turned in, which starts on page 22 for the record. Since their septic tank is failing, and not draining properly, which in their opinion is a health hazard since it has the potential to flow into the ditch along East Evans Creek Road. The staff report is on page 27 and compared that to our code. Ryan read the several conditions of approval and believes with the right conditions like paying for the full connection, paying double charge since it's outside city limits, and agree not to have any of the prohibited discharges outlined in our code that this could be approved by the City Council.

Agency's Testimony: None

Proponents Testimony: None

Opponents Testimony: None

Other Testimony: Michael Bollweg Public Works Director commented about his background in operating wastewater and collections, and that any system environmentally and public health wise is better off in the city's sewer system where it will receive a high-level treatment prior to discharge and

the saturation of high-density housing that once was allowed is kind of a hazard, the underground of aquifer streams pressures, certainly those close to a creek, overflows and all of that, have a potential to migrate to basically find their own way, which would present an environmental hazard. So, with that said, he would strongly urge the council to approve this so that this will go into the city's sewer system.

Applicant Rebuttal: None

Questions between councilors and staff regarding connection to only sewer and not water

Move to close the public hearing, motion by Councilor Gregory, seconded by Councilor Howell

Vote: All ayes, none opposed, the public hearing is closed at 6:56PM

I move that the city council approve the request to connect the existing home at 1524 East Evans Creek Road to the city sewer system, my motion incorporates the conditions found in the staff report as the application with conditions can be found to comply with the applicable criteria.

Motion by Councilor Gregory, seconded by Councilor Grace Howell

No further discussion

Vote: Barb Gregory-Yes
Sherrie Moss-Yes
Barb Hilty-Yes
Mark Minegar-Yes
Grace Howell-Yes

The request to connect 1524 East Evans Creek Road, a property outside of city limits to city sewer services is approved with two corrections in the staff report to state the correct date of the public hearing being March 26, 2026, instead of February 26, 2026, and 3.1 in the staff report, the applicant submitted additional information on February 7th, 2026, instead of 2025.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – ORS 192.660 (2)(a,b,c,d,e,f,g,h,i,j,k,l,m,n,o,p,q): {As/If required}

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION:

GRANT: Consider approving amendment to ODOT Grant (OR99: Depot Street)

Move to approve the amendment to ODOT Grant (OR99: Depot Street)

Motion by Councilor Moss, seconded by Councilor Hilty

Discussion on the motion

Vote: All ayes, none opposed, ODOT amendment passes unanimously

VACANCY: Consider a motion declaring a vacancy in Council Position # 1

Move to approve a motion declaring a vacancy in Council Position # 1

Motion by Councilor Hilty, seconded by Councilor Howell

Discussion on the motion

Vote: All ayes, none opposed, vacancy of position #1 is approved unanimously

REQUEST: Consider providing a general letter of support for the Enterprise Grange #489

Move to approve providing a general letter of support for the Enterprise Grange #489

Motion by Councilor Moss, seconded by Councilor Gregory

Vote: All ayes, none opposed, motion passes unanimously

REQUEST: Consider approving mural design plans proposed by the Rogue River Mural Society for the Palmerton Park restrooms.

Move to approve the request for mural design plans proposed by the Rogue River Mural Society for the Palmerton Park restrooms

Motion by Councilor Hilty, seconded by Councilor Howell

Vote: All ayes, none opposed, motion passes unanimously

COMMITTEE MINUTES:

Tree City Consider approving the March 12, 2026, Tree City minutes

Move to approve March 12, 2026, Tree city minutes

Motion by Councilor Gregory, seconded by Councilor Minegar

No discussion on the motion

Vote: All ayes, none opposed

March 12, 2026, Tree City minutes are approved.

OTHER BUSINESS: The Arbor Day celebration this year is on April 24th, so Barb Hilty will fill in for the mayor and read the Arbor Day proclamation as the mayor will be at the spring conference. Ryan Nolan reminded the councilors to sign the Grange letter before leaving here tonight. Counciler Barb Hilty, and the mayor are to sign the ODOT grant. A follow-up from our Jail tour, at our next workshop we will have a presentation from the staff at the Jackson County Jail about the deflection program.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENT: Councilor Moss said the newspaper had a great article about the huge win for the FFA funds, as they were saved. She thanked Brian Mortensen for writing such a great article and encouraged councilors to read it. Barb Hilty asked if the city had received a huge number of requests from non-profits in anticipation of our upcoming budget meeting. We have only received one request from Food and Friends. The budget packet will be available soon for you to review.

MAYOR COMMENTS: Since Sharie Davis was the representative for RVACT, and the mayor was the alternate, the mayor will step up to be the regular representative. We should have an alternate however, so if anyone is interested, please let her know. Aprils council meeting will be ran by Barb Hilty. We will be awarding the bid for the reservoir in May.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the City Council and upon a motion duly made (Gregory), seconded (Howell)

No discussion on the motion

Vote: All Ayes, none opposed

The meeting adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

Mayor Pam VanArsdale _____ Date _____

ATTEST:

Diane Oliver
City Recorder
