



# SCAPPOOSE *Oregon*

**Monday, June 2, 2025  
City Council Meeting Minutes  
Regular Meeting 7:00PM  
Council Chambers  
33568 East Columbia Avenue  
Scappoose, Oregon 97056**

Disclaimer: These minutes are intended to summarize the conversations that took place in this meeting rather than provide a full transcript. Anyone wishing to view the full conversation can find a recording of this meeting on YouTube at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=rX\\_aJkJzz5w](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rX_aJkJzz5w).

## **Call to Order**

Mayor Backus called the June 2, 2025 City Council meeting to order at 7:00pm.

## **Pledge of Allegiance**

## **Roll Call**

Joseph A. Backus	Mayor	Benjamin Burgener	City Manager
Tyler Miller	Councilor President	Chris Fluellen	Police Chief
Jeannet Santiago	Councilor	Susan M. Reeves	City Recorder/HR
Andrew Lafrenz	Councilor	N.J. Johnson	Assistant to City Manager/City Planner
Marisa Jacobs	Councilor		
Joel Haugen	Councilor		

**Remote:** Councilor Kim Holmes

## **Approval of the Agenda**

Councilor Haugen moved, and Councilor Jacobs seconded the motion to approve the agenda. Motion passed (7-0). Mayor Backus, aye; Council President Miller, aye; Councilor Santiago, aye; Councilor Holmes, aye; Councilor Lafrenz, aye; Councilor Jacobs, aye; and Councilor Haugen, aye.

**Consent Agenda ~ May 19, 2025 City Council work session minutes; and May 19, 2025 City Council meeting minutes**

Councilor Santiago moved, and Councilor Lafrenz seconded the motion to approve the Consent Agenda ~ May 19, 2025 City Council work session minutes; and May 19, 2025 City Council meeting minutes. Motion passed (7-0). Mayor Backus, aye; Council President Miller, aye; Councilor Santiago, aye; Councilor Holmes, aye; Councilor Lafrenz, aye; Councilor Jacobs, aye; and Councilor Haugen, aye.

**Public Comment ~ Items not on the agenda**

John Degerness, Warren, came to express his concerns about the charging station by the Scappoose Library.

Em Degerness, Warren, also came to talk about the charging station by the Scappoose Library. She read a memo to Council and staff ~

“Good evening, members of the council, city officials, and fellow residents. Thank you for the opportunity to speak this evening. My name is Em Degerness, Miss City of Bridges' Teen, and a resident of this community. This evening I speak on behalf of my great-uncle Terry and the residents of 2nd street. I come before you today not only as a member of this town, but as someone who has a deep appreciation for the values of safety, respect, and shared responsibility that define a healthy community. Unfortunately, since the electric vehicle chargers were installed at the library, we have seen a significant shift in the behavior of individuals utilizing our local spaces, many of whom do not live here. These changes have impacted our daily lives, our peace, and in some cases, our safety. Let me begin with the issue of traffic and parking. Visitors often take up two or even three parking spaces at a time. This lack of consideration directly affects residents who rely on those spots. It is not only inefficient, it is inconsiderate. Many individuals also leave their headlights on, play excessively loud, explicit music, both all through the night and into early morning, and remain parked in their vehicles for long periods. Our community streets are not intended to serve as a service station or a place to loiter. Additionally, excessive noise has become a persistent problem. On many days, the noise from cars parked at the charging stations and individuals driving the vehicle\es can be heard from over a block away. For residents who work from home, this is more than just a nuisance, it disrupts productivity and peace of mind. The speed at which many electric vehicles travel through our streets is deeply concerning. This is especially dangerous near the playground, where children are often present. The posted speed limit is 25 miles per hour, yet many disregard it completely. I urge the council to consider implementing speed bumps or other traffic calming measures to protect our most vulnerable residents. We must also look at the broader issue of respect for our community. The majority of those creating these disruptions appear to be individuals from outside 2nd street or even this community-particularly from Portland-who have no investment in Scappoose. They do not support our local businesses, attend our schools, or pay taxes here. And yet, they take up space, disturb the peace, and leave

without accountability. It is imperative that we consider establishing clearer guidelines for the use of public spaces, including designated "hours of use." These guidelines would ensure that our shared areas remain accessible and safe for all residents, while discouraging misuse. What is perhaps most troubling is that law enforcement is stationed just down the street, and yet these violations persist. Increased enforcement of parking regulations, speed limits, and noise ordinances would go a long way in restoring order and peace in our community. This is not a call for exclusion. It is a call for mutual respect. We welcome all who wish to enjoy our community, library, and playground-but that must come with the expectation of respectful behavior, adherence to the law, and consideration for the people who live here. In closing, I urge the council to take these concerns seriously. Let us act before these issues escalate further. We deserve a neighborhood where residents feel safe, respected, and heard. Thank you".

**\*\*end of memo\*\***

Mayor Backus thanked John and Em and explained they will check into their concerns.

## **New Business**

### **Meissner Park Donation Agreement**

City Manager Burgener went over the staff report. On July 15, 2024, the Scappoose City Council discussed and approved the 1.9-acre Meissner property donation proposal to be used as a nature preserve and children's park. Staff proceeded to work with legal counsel to write up an official agreement with the terms discussed and are now requesting approval for the city manager to sign the agreement and all other documents associated with the land donation to transfer ownership to the City of Scappoose. The prior staff report and donation proposal are included for reference after the proposed land donation agreement document. The only major change from the original proposal is the condition in section 8 of the submitted agreement: "in the event the Property is not used for those purposes the Property will revert to the Grantor and if the Grantor has been dissolved the Property will revert to the Bird Alliance of Oregon". While the property will be donated for free, the City will be responsible for making all upgrades stipulated by the Meissner's, including a fence and sign; as well as adding a parking lot, restrooms, pathways and children's play area. In addition, there will be costs associated with upkeeping the property, such as mowing and weed eating. Not all improvements are required upfront, but there are a few that were part of discussions including the fence, signs, public access, and some trail maintenance. The FY 2026 budget includes \$75k for these initial improvements. Staff recommends the City Council approve the Meissner property donation agreement and approve the City Manager to sign the proposed land donation agreement and all other documents associated with the land donation to transfer ownership of the property from the Meissner's to the City of Scappoose.

Council and staff reviewed and discussed this agenda.

Councilor Jacobs moved, and Councilor Lafrenz seconded the motion that Council approves the Meissner property donation agreement and approve the City Manager to sign the proposed land donation agreement, and all other documents associated with the land donation to transfer ownership of the property from the Meissner's to the City of Scappoose. Motion passed (7-0). Mayor Backus, aye; Council President Miller, aye; Councilor Santiago, aye; Councilor Holmes, aye; Councilor Lafrenz, aye; Councilor Jacobs, aye; and Councilor Haugen, aye.

Mayor and Council thanked the Meissner family for this donation.

### **Additional Public Comment**

Ryan Sealy, Scappoose, explained the Tesla station is disruptive. She asked for a sign to be posted regarding having those charging their vehicles to turn off their lights and not have loud music while at the charging station.

### **2025 Community Enhancement Program Allocations**

Assistant to City Manager/City Planner Johnson went over the staff report. The Community Enhancement Program (CEP) has been serving Scappoose for more than 20 years. Through a competitive application process, the City Council awards grants to qualifying organizations working within the Scappoose Urban Growth Boundary for specific programs or projects that can be implemented within a 1-year time frame and that provide a public benefit to the Scappoose community. There were 16 applications submitted for the 2025 Community Enhancement Program. All applications qualify for consideration of award, including having submitted interim or final project reports if they received a grant in the 2024 cycle. Representatives of each organization had the opportunity to present their application and answer questions from Councilors at the May 19, 2025 Council work session/meeting. The City now needs to allocate up to \$42,016 to the organizations whereas a total of \$65,775 was requested. Members of Councilors had the opportunity to score each application 0-5 and the average score was calculated for each grant request. Based on those averages, staff prepared two initial allocation packages for Council consideration in Exhibit A (of the packet). Council may adjust either of these allocations during the meeting prior to approving a final package. As listed in Exhibit A (of the packet), Proposed Allocation #1, or the "tier system", distributes available funds by various percentages in each cluster or tier. The tiers are based on the average Councilor score of each grant request. The percent of requested funding each tier received can be seen in the table below. The outcomes of this method are that average score influences the award total to a greater extent than the proportional system, including that the lowest scoring applications would not receive funding and that middle scoring applications receive significantly less than high scoring applications. This funds the highest priority projects at or near 100% of their request.

Tier	Percent of requested funding received
Tier 1 (Scores 4.25-5.00)	100%
Tier 2 (Scores 4.01-4.24)	90%
Tier 3 (Score 4.00)	80%
Tier 4 (Scores 3.5-3.99)	50%
Tier 5 (3.25-3.49)	45%
Tier 6 (3.00-3.24)	35% <sup>1</sup>
Tier 7 (0.00-2.99)	0%

<sup>1</sup> \$45 and \$46 respectively were added to the two grant awards in this tier to round out the total available for the 2025 Community Enhancement Program.

Proposed Allocation #2, or the “proportional system”, was created from the premise that every applicant receives a grant award and the proportions are based on the weighted share of available funds. The initial formula is the average score of an application divided by 5, then multiplied by the grant request. If this is done for every request and added together, the total is \$49,047, which exceeds \$42,016, the amount allocated for the entire program. From the initial formula, each award is multiplied by 42,016 divided by 49,047 for their final proportional share. The outcomes of this method are that all organizations will be funded to some extent and that the average scores play a role in determining the award but not as impactful as the tier system. For example, a high scoring organization will receive less in this system and a relatively middle or low scoring organization will receive more. Council may modify either of these systems’ awards or create their own award allocation package to approve. \$42,016 has already been allocated for the 2025 Community Enhancement Program. Staff will execute the awards with each applicant based on the funding package Council approves. Staff recommends that Council discuss the proposed award distribution systems and approve one, modify one, or develop their own award distribution package. The final motion will depend on the award distribution package that Council wishes to approve.

Exhibit A

2025 Community Enhancement Program Initial Allocations						
Organization	Project	Requested Allocation	Average Score	Score Rank	Proposed Allocation #1 (Tier System)	Proposed Allocation #2 (Proportional System)
Amani Center	Amani Center Program	\$5,000	4.40	1	\$5,000	\$3,769
CASA for Children	Critical Advocacy for Scappoose's Children in Foster Care	\$5,000	3.20	13	\$1,796	\$1,461
Columbia County HUB	Youth Campers' Program	\$1,500	3.40	12	\$2,025	\$2,531
Community Action Team	Home Delivered Meals	\$5,000	4.20	4	\$4,500	\$3,558
Grace Lutheran Children's Center	Classroom Furnishings	\$5,000	4.00	8	\$4,000	\$3,227
Northwest Regional Education Service District	DREAM & STEAM	\$4,750	3.70	9	\$2,375	\$3,011
Seride School of Housewifery	Leone Assisted Mental Health Expansion	\$5,000	3.16	14	\$1,795	\$2,707
Scappoose Community Club	Farmers Market Music	\$1,525	4.40	1	\$1,525	\$1,150
Scappoose Community Connection	Holiday Displays	\$2,000	2.70	15	\$0	\$925
Scappoose Elementary Parent Organization	SEPO Community Events	\$4,000	3.60	11	\$2,000	\$2,467
Scappoose Historical Society	Holiday Light Competition	\$2,500	4.20	4	\$2,250	\$1,799
Scappoose Kiwanis Youth Rec Center	Scappoose Kiwanis Youth Rec Center	\$5,000	4.20	4	\$4,500	\$3,558
Scappoose Public Library	Movies by Moonlight	\$5,000	4.40	1	\$5,000	\$3,769
Scappoose Senior Center	Thrill Store Siding Rejuvenation	\$5,000	4.20	4	\$4,500	\$3,558
Springlake Community	Mobility Mats	\$5,000	2.20	16	\$0	\$1,885
United Way of Columbia County	Jolly Parton's Imagination Library	\$1,500	3.70	9	\$750	\$951
Total		\$69,775			\$42,016	\$42,016



Council and staff discussed the allocation and talked about how they will move ahead in the future.

Councilor Haugen moved, and Council President Miller seconded the motion to approve the Tier 1 scoring system with the completion of the other two more columns.

It was discussed that the funding allocation will be on the June 16, 2025 Council consent agenda.

Motion passed (5-1). Mayor Backus, aye; Council President Miller, aye; Councilor Holmes, aye; Councilor Jacobs, aye; and Councilor Haugen, aye. Councilor Santiago, nay. Councilor Lafrenz, abstained.

## Measuring City Success to help inform future City Manager Reviews

Mayor Backus explained Measuring City Success to help inform future City Manager Reviews is before Council. He explained Council has discussed this for a couple of years, but nothing was ever really formalized. He is wondering what direction are we going with in ways of future reviews. He explained Council discussed at the last meeting that maybe they would look at doing something in the next few months, but he wanted to talk about it and get a sense from the Council a direction that we need to go to figure this out. Not what are we going to do but how do we figure this out. He gave some ideas and would like to hear what Council thinks. He explained he looked at Stayton's evaluation which they have used for 11 years. He thinks it is

time we get something done. He explained this would help the city manager identify what Council is looking for and how they want them to achieve.

Councilor Holmes explained she will be going on the third time doing some sort of evaluation, whenever we do this formally, and each time it has not felt like we have had a meaningful tool for either Council to provide good feedback or to gather good information around performance. She doesn't want to be stuck in that position again when we wind up doing this evaluation and talking about compensation review or if we want to do that mid cycle so that we can offer information and feedback and would like time to integrate that information. She explained she would like this Council to consider what is it we want to be measuring and how do we want to measure it? She explained she did get a chance to meet with Ben last week and talk about there being a few different ways that we can go about this. We can kind of go about it in the more traditional way that we have by using a form. There's the 360 as an option. The other option we talked about, which she thinks we should also consider is maybe the city manager's review is directly tied to the overall success of city performance, but then how do we measure that. Then they started talking about the goals and then the goals have objectives, but she doesn't think this Council is even really clear yet on how we're defining success for each of those objectives. She asked how are we operationalizing the goals and objectives? She stated if we got Ben to put forward how the city is going about that, kind of like what does success look like for an objective, then we can say did we hit that mark, did we not hit that mark, why didn't we hit that mark? She thinks there are a few ways to go about this and she just doesn't want to get into a place that we're doing something that's not meaningful for us or the city manager in the future.

Councilor Santiago explained she agrees with Councilor Holmes that it feels like the last few city manager reviews it was like we really didn't have tools and sometimes she recalls filling out the forms and trying to answer questions that we don't know because we're not here on a daily basis. She stated wouldn't they review his duties that are in the city manager contract.

Council President Miller explained going back to years prior and this came up with City manager Raines too is the prior way of doing the performance evaluations was really difficult because it was asking a lot of questions that we didn't have a consistent observation over. That was unfair to the city manager. He thinks that all employees should be evaluated on the job duties that were in the job description when they applied, and if anything's been formally amended since then, then you know those duties as well. He feels rating them on anything other than the job duties that they signed up for when they applied for the job, is unfair.

Mayor Backus explained looking at the review from Stayton it looks a lot like ours, but it is broken down on various items that look like it comes from the job description and their job duties. He explained like Councilor Holmes mention; how do we measure the success of the city and how it relates to how our city manager's doing their job and find a way to rate that? He also has questions though on the policies because in the past they had brought up the 360 review with City Manager Raines. The Council had talked about asking the Fire District; Columbia River PUD and different groups that we all work with on behalf of the City and we settled on Staff

Department Heads because Council wanted some feedback. He also wants to see something maybe in the evaluation, an ability to gather feedback throughout the year. That way they are not waiting until the very end of the year and then all of a sudden, they are trying to do some ranking. Trying to avoid if something comes up at the end that he didn't have a chance to maybe address, or they don't have all the information on. He explained we had talked about a 360 coming up, but City Manager Burgener's review is until next spring. He asked are we looking at getting something in six months to where it's just a heat check of what's going on and feeling how it's going so that if there's anything that needs to be addressed, Ben would have plenty of time to address them before an evaluation comes up, so that 360 or heat check from staff or other departments, doesn't come into play right directly at evaluation time when it could be a little biased. He is looking for direction on how do we want to come up with something.

Council President Miller explained an evaluation is intended to give constructive feedback and get an employee regardless of who it is on the track that we want to see them on. It's not designed to be a reprimand. It's to give, hopefully positive, constructive feedback and allow growth and positiveness, not a negative.

Councilor Haugen asked if everyone read that article from Scott on employee evaluations? He explained if you didn't read that the context is really important and Scott is a very reputable city manager, and now professor at PSU and he knows what he's talking about. He stated if you haven't read that, I really suggest you do that before we take any other new steps. He stated personally his view is that a 360 is only needed if you look at a city manager and you see a punch list of what he's supposed to be doing and he's not performing. He explained it's our responsibility to know what the city manager is doing and so if he's not meeting his requirements, then a 360 is called for.

Councilor Jacobs explained she knows there are a lot of different opinions about 360 and when to use them and how organizations use them and don't and she thinks they have their place, but she doesn't think we are at that point yet personally. She explained one thing she would like to level set for all of us is a 360 really should not be the first time that an employee is hearing where they are doing well and where they need to improve. She explained how we build positive employee relationships is by providing feedback in the moment and having very kind, fact-based conversations with one another. She explained if there is some type of behavior or some lack of performance, as easy as it is to say great job doing x, y, and z, you really did a wonderful job, we need to be able to do the converse, which is to have a difficult conversation. She thinks it is important that when we hear or see of performance that is not inline with what our expectations are, which are out lined in the job description, that we need to have that difficult conversation and approach it with good intension and share what was the situation, what was the behavior we observed and what was the impact and allow that individual to respond. We need to do that as a first step. That will help build positive relationships and trust. She explained feedback should be ongoing and should be positive and constructive. She explained she would be happy to take Council through how to do that as she is trained in how to do this process. She explained as far as the annual review there should be



no surprises because you are having these touch points. Typically, how these touch points happen is through having standard meetings. She would assume that all the managers that are in City are having standing meetings with their direct report to create this environment. That is what needs to happen if not already because that will help create this environment of feedback. She would encourage the Council to start there before saying we need to develop a 360. She stated we will get there but we are going to need a little bit more time in just practicing sharing feedback to help one another.

Councilor Holmes stated she thinks what Councilor Jacobs pointed out is really kind of at the heart of the issue. We need that platform for offering the feedback and then we can figure out down the road what the appropriate tools are.

Councilor Lafrenz explained he has heard this brought up a couple of times and he feels there is a lot of value in more frequent check-ins. He thinks there's a lot of value in department heads giving more frequent feedback throughout the year.

Mayor Backus explained he just wants to make sure Council gives the support to City Manager Burgener to be successful.

City Manager Burgener explained along with a lot of things that were said it is super important to remember that the tone is set from the top. The words that you say, the way that we do things, the way that we going about doing things, does affect his ability to perform, and it does affect his staff's ability to perform. In the public field there's a lot of potential interference areas that can cause a lot of interference of that undermines people's ability to supervise or to do what they are supposed to, usually with good intent. He explained its not usually that Councilors are trying to do any malicious, but it is important that we continue as we have these conversations as we look at structure and remember that there is that structure because it can create inadvertently a toxic environment. He explained as we are going through all of this his biggest encouragement is just to remember the tone from the top of how we are looking at things. He explained one recommendation in the quarterly review he recommends it is a two-sided review not just for the city manager, but an opportunity for the Council to also be able to self-assess and we can have the conversations about what is going well, what is not and what things are getting in the way. He explained it just provides a little bit more of that we are here to work as a team, let's have difficult conversations as needed.

Mayor, Council and City Manager Burgener discussed this more and decided Council will do more research, which includes looking at the Charter and discuss this at a future meeting.

#### **Discussion on cancelling the July 7, 2025 City Council meeting**

Councilor Haugen moved, and Councilor Santiago seconded the motion to cancel the July 7, 2025 City Council meeting. Motion passed (7-0). Mayor Backus, aye; Council President Miller, aye; Councilor Santiago, aye; Councilor Holmes, aye; Councilor Lafrenz, aye; Councilor Jacobs, aye; and Councilor Haugen, aye.

## **Announcements – information only**

### **Calendar**

Mayor Backus went over the calendar.

### **Updates: City Manager; Police Chief; Councilors; and Mayor**

City Manager Burgener gave an update. He talked with Council about the LOC sending out a legislative action alert around SB 916-B. This bill will allow striking employees to receive unemployment insurance benefits. Not only will the bill likely destabilize Labor Relations by reducing the risk of a strike for employees, but it will also be costly to cities. Employers made a good faith offer to negotiations that would allow the bill to move forward with a three-week waiting period before striking workers became eligible for employment but that was rejected. He explained if you're wanting us to just act on that or do nothing, is that important for the Council he would be happy to put something together to send off to our State Representative or we can let the rest of the State keep handling that one. He thanked everyone who came to the Outdoor Festival and volunteering their time. He thanked Jeff and JJ for putting the event together. He thanked staff members who are pretty overloaded with some recent requests and explained they are working through those diligently and staying on top of those. He wanted to give some appreciation for what they are doing to get through the requests on top of the rest of everything else they are doing as it is a lot to take care of.

Chief Fluellen gave an update on the Police Department. He explained during the Outdoor Festival they weren't expecting the police car to be so successful. He explained the Scappoose Police Department will be helping out with the High School graduation and they will also be participating in career day at the Grant Watts School. He gave updates on the Police Department staffing.

Councilor Haugen thanked Councilor Holmes and Councilor Jacobs for stepping forward to work on the evaluation framework for us. He would like to do a debrief of the adventure fest sometime to go over some observations they made. He would like to give some form a recognition to the graduating valedictorian and salutatorian.

Councilor Jacobs thanked Chief Fluellen for the increased police presence. She thanked staff for all the good work, she really appreciates it.

Councilor Lafrenz thanked the Meissner family for the park donation and talked about the benefits of greenspaces. He thanked Chief Fluellen, Ben and N.J. all for being out at the Fun Festival. He stated to City Manager Burgener that he just wanted to say a few words quickly that he hopes this ongoing discussion about evaluating him isn't discouraging him from doing his job. If we look back the search firm cast a wide net, and he rose to the top, he was our first choice and he thinks what Ben said at the end was what he was thinking throughout all of it is that we have to have a level of trust. He stated to Ben you were the best candidate, and he has

a lot of trust and confidence in his ability. He explained none of us have a background as a city manager. We don't know the things Ben does day-to-day, so he just wanted to give Ben words of encouragement.

City Manager Burgener replied he appreciates that.

Councilor Holmes also thanked the Meissner family for the park donation. She explained it is really going to bring some green space to an area of the City that is underserved with parks.

Councilor Santiago also thanked the Meissner family for the park donation. She thinks of having a conversation between Council and City Manager is good and she always thinks of it as a positive. She stated to City Manager Burgener don't take it as negativity. She loves the idea of having that conversation and having that feedback back and forth and she welcomes Ben's feedback as well. She stated just as a reminder we have a Scappoose app out there and she doesn't think it has been updated, and she feels as a resource for the community we should be promoting that app.

Mayor Backus thanked the Meissner family for the donation. He thanked JJ and Jeff for the Outdoor Festival. He thanked Susan for all the swag for the event. He thanked Chief Fluellen and staff for being out in the community a lot.

Council President Miller stated the Adventure Fest was great.

### **Adjournment**

Mayor Backus adjourned the meeting at 8:45pm.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Joseph A. Backus

Attest:

  
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City Recorder/HR Susan M. Reeves, MMC

