City of Grass Valley
Regular City Council Meeting Minutes
October 12, 2026, 7:00 PM
Grass Valley Market Annex

Present: Christian Ayles, Mayor; Samantha Allen, City Administrator; Rita Wilson, Council President; Ree Ella von Borstel, Councilmember; Everett Carson, Councilmember; Bonne Whitley, Councilmember; Tom Rolfe, Councilmember; Yancey Fall, Councilmember

Absent: Walter Grzeszczyk – Maintenance

Guests Present: Christopher Detton, Doris Hubbard, Jamey Orsborn, Leta Ann Reckmann, Audrey Keddis, City Attorney via Zoom.

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.
Approval of Agenda: Councilor Ree Ella von Borstel moved to approve the agenda as presented; Yancey Fall seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

2.0 CONSENT AGENDA

2.1 September 2026 Minutes:
Motion by Tom Rolfe to approve the regular meeting minutes; Rita Wilson seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

2.2 August and September 2026 Financial Reports: Council discussed improvements to the balance sheet following the auditor's visit, reconciliation, and the importance of identifying restricted grant and loan funds separately from unrestricted funds. The DEQ sewer planning grant was discussed as an example of funds designated for a specific purpose.
Motion by Ree Ella von Borstel to accept the financial reports as presented; Rita Wilson seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

2.3 Maintenance Report: Walter was absent. Christopher introduced himself as the maintenance assistant and reported ongoing hydrant work, planned painting near the restrooms, and a need to clarify the accessible parking location. He also reported 14 annual backflow inspections had been completed, with all passing inspection. Council discussed future water-system training for Christopher. Weed spraying is contracted through the county weed department.

2.4 City Hall Updates: The City is proceeding with the next steps for a longstanding vegetation abatement matter through legal counsel and the justice court. Only one water account remained past due. The new City website was scheduled to go live Friday, October 16, with improved online payment access, searchable ordinances, minutes, financial information, and public water-system forms. Sensitive personal contact information will be excluded from published materials.

3.0 PUBLIC COMMENT — AGENDA ITEMS

A resident expressed concerns about inconsistent post office hours and services. No comments on specific agenda items were received.

4.0 OLD BUSINESS

4.1 **Strategic Plan Grant:** The City was awarded a $5,000 Roundhouse grant and was awaiting a decision on an additional $5,000 request to the Ford Family Foundation. The Mayor emphasized that the proposed ten-year strategic plan is intended to reflect community priorities and guide future councils.

4.2 **Employee Evaluations:** The Mayor reported that employee evaluations had been discussed with staff. Communication was identified as an area for improvement. Walter requested specific examples regarding his customer service evaluation. Council reviewed the maintenance assistant's completion of his six-month probationary period and discussed an hourly wage increase.
Motion by Tom Rolfe to increase Christopher's hourly wage by $2.50, from $17.50 to $20.00; Rita Wilson seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**
No other raises were approved. Responsibility for certain staff duties and building security will be discussed at a future meeting.

4.3 **DEQ Planning Grant — Survey Points:** Survey crews were in town working on intersection reference points, with a report expected by the end of October. These points are intended to improve right-of-way mapping and provide survey reference points for future infrastructure projects; they do not constitute surveys of individual private parcels.

4.4 **November 2026 General Election:** The Mayor reviewed the open Mayor and Council Positions 1, 2, 3, and 5. Due to the earlier incumbent filing deadline, some incumbent councilors will need write-in votes. Council discussed providing neutral election information without using City resources to support candidates. City Attorney Audrey will advise what may be posted, and City Hall will prepare appropriate information following that guidance.

5.0 NEW BUSINESS

5.1 **Establish Pavilion Account in LGIP:** Based on the auditor's recommendation, Council discussed separately identifying pavilion fundraising investments and their interest earnings from general City investments in the Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP). The pavilion checking account at Bank of Eastern Oregon will remain separate.
Councilor Rita Wilson moved to establish a separate Pavilion account within the Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP), as recommended by the City Auditor. Councilor Ree Ella von Borstel **seconded the motion. Motion passed 5–1,** with Councilor Everett Carson voting against.

6.0 PUBLIC COMMENT — NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Resident Leta Ann Reckmann requested that seasonal water service remain available through November 1 before the winter shutoff. No Council opposition was expressed, and the request was accommodated.

Residents discussed organizing a candidate meet-and-greet to help voters identify write-in candidates. Any such event would be organized independently of the City to avoid using City resources to promote candidates.

A resident requested replacement of a damaged swing chain at the playground. The issue was brought to the attention of maintenance.

A park committee update indicated that the playground equipment grant application was favorably ranked and awaiting commission approval; no purchases may be made before final authorization. A decision on the park master plan grant was expected in the coming months, with final review anticipated by January.

7.0 ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Tom Rolfe to adjourn the meeting; Yancey Fall seconded. **Motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:58 PM.**

Attested:

Christian Ayles, Mayor

Samantha Allen, City Administrator

City of Grass Valley
Regular City Council Meeting Minutes
September 14, 2026, 7:00 PM
Grass Valley Market Annex

Present: Christian Ayles, Mayor; Samantha Allen, City Administrator; Rita Wilson, Council President; Ree Ella von Borstel, Councilmember; Everett Carson, Councilmember; Bonne Whitley, Councilmember; Tom Rolfe, Councilmember; Walter Grzeszczyk – Maintenance

Absent: Yancey Fall, Councilmember

Guests Present: Joan Bird

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Christian Ayles called the regular meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

1.2 Approval of Agenda

Ree Ella von Borstel moved to approve the agenda as presented. Tom Rolfe seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

2.0 CONSENT AGENDA

2.1 Approval of Minutes — August 2026

Tom Rolfe moved to approve the August 2026 regular meeting minutes as presented. Rita Wilson seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

2.2 Financial Reports — August 2026

Council reviewed the August financial reports and discussed several entries, including the annual $100,000 county community service/SIP payment, pavilion grant and event expenses, a water-related grant reimbursement, a prior water deposit refund, Visa account activity, and the QuickBooks undeposited funds account. Staff explained that some grant receipts and expenses will offset as transfers and project expenses are completed.

Questions remained regarding the Visa balance and the handling of undeposited funds. The financial reports were set aside for approval at the next meeting to allow staff to research the questions and discuss accounting items with the auditors.

2.3 Maintenance Report — Walter

Walter presented a draft Emergency Response Plan for the City water system. He reported that the Health Department had reviewed the draft favorably. Council requested that the plan be scanned and distributed electronically so members can review it before formal consideration. Approval was deferred to the next meeting.

Walter reported that the recent sanitary survey of the water system was completed and that the system was otherwise in compliance. He also reported two reporting issues: two coliform test results were not timely submitted to the State by the testing provider, resulting in one violation, and the annual Consumer Confidence Report filing needed to be verified. Staff will confirm the CCR filing status.

Walter discussed planned repairs at the pump house involving a flow meter, gate valve, and related water-system components. One well will be temporarily out of service during the work while the second well remains operating. After the repair, special coliform sampling will be completed before the repaired well is returned to service. Council agreed that residents should receive advance notice of the project and be asked to conserve water during the work period. A general boil advisory was not directed at this time; additional notice would be provided if conditions required it.

Walter also reviewed a proposal to retire an older water line and reconnect four existing services from current mains rather than construct the larger replacement line shown in the Water Master Plan. The affected locations include City Hall, the Grass Valley Market and Annex, Walter's property, and the Boswell property. Council supported moving forward with the service work, provided affected property owners receive written notice and the City maintains a clear paper trail. Legal counsel had advised that when the City relocates a service, the customer connection should be reconnected.

Walter reported that at least two City water-main valves are obstructed by items placed by nearby property owners. Council directed staff to send notices requiring access to the City valves and providing a deadline for removal of the obstructions.

Council also discussed how to handle water service to properties that historically had City water service but have been disconnected or vacant for many years. Because responsibility for restoring service may depend on the circumstances and prior connection history, Council agreed the question should be referred to legal counsel.

Walter relayed a Health Department recommendation that the City consider limits on unusually high individual water use. Council noted that water-use limits, metering, rates, and related administrative procedures are broader policy matters that can be considered as part of the strategic planning process.

2.4 City Hall Updates

City Administrator Allen reported that both strategic planning grant applications were submitted that day with assistance from MCEDD. No red notices were issued during the period. Past-due water account letters were sent, and most or all affected accounts appeared to have been paid.

Allen also reported on the outstanding vegetation abatement matter. Notices sent to the property owner had been returned/unclaimed and no response had been received. The next step is to pursue an abatement warrant through the County.

3.0 PUBLIC COMMENT — AGENDA ITEMS

No public comments were received on agenda items.

4.0 OLD BUSINESS

4.1 Strategic Plan Grant Update

Council noted that the two strategic planning grant applications had been completed and submitted. No further action was taken.

4.2 Committee Updates

A Park Committee update was provided regarding two park grant applications. The park master plan materials and the development grant information had been completed and submitted, with additional photographs and requested information supplied during the review process. Grant determinations are anticipated around the beginning of the year (2027).

The committee also discussed ADA access near the park restroom and future playground area. An ADA parking space and accessible route need to be identified and in place as represented in the grant materials. Council and committee members discussed possible surfacing options, including asphalt and solid rubberized surfacing, and potential outside funding or donations to improve accessibility. Members also discussed contacting nearby communities and organizations regarding similar projects and possible funding sources.

No Safety Committee or Pavilion update was provided.

5.0 NEW BUSINESS

5.1 Resolution Establishing New Regular Council Meeting Day

Council reviewed Resolution No. 2026-06, changing the regular City Council meeting day from the first Monday to the second Monday of each month. Rita Wilson moved to approve Resolution No. 2026-06 as written. Tom Rolfe seconded. Motion passed unanimously. The next regular meeting was noted as October 12, 2026, at 7:00 PM.

5.2 Schedule City Clean-Up Day

Council discussed holding a fall community clean-up and providing additional assistance to residents who are unable to haul larger items themselves. Staff was asked to contact the waste hauler for a current list of acceptable materials and to ask whether separate dumpsters or other arrangements could be made for materials that cannot be mixed.

Council selected Saturday, November 7, 2026, for the clean-up, with activities planned generally from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Members discussed using trailers to collect items from residents, recruiting volunteers, advertising the event in advance, and providing food for volunteers. Staff will coordinate with the waste hauler and publicize the accepted materials and event details.

5.3 Ed Staub Property — Information Update

Council received an informational update regarding proposed improvements at the Ed Staub fuel station property. The site is planned to be updated as a Sinclair station, including new branding and signage. Staff reported that the applicant had been working with the City planner and had submitted the required planning materials. A construction start date was not yet known. Plans are available at City Hall for review, and staff will provide additional timing information when available.

6.0 PUBLIC COMMENT — NON-AGENDA ITEMS

No formal public comments were received on non-agenda items. Before adjournment, Council briefly asked whether any additional complaints or written reports had been received regarding an RV matter or barking dogs. Staff reported no new RV correspondence and noted that a barking-dog ordinance violation had previously been issued on a separate matter.

7.0 ADJOURNMENT

Tom Rolfe moved to adjourn the meeting. Rita Wilson seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Ayles adjourned the Regular Meeting at 8:23 PM.

Attested:

Christian Ayles, Mayor

Samantha Allen, City Administrator

City of Grass Valley
Regular City Council Meeting Minutes
August 3, 2026, 7:00 PM
Grass Valley Market Annex

Present: Christian Ayles, Mayor; Samantha Allen, City Administrator; Rita Wilson, Council President; Ree Ella von Borstel, Councilmember; Everett Carson, Councilmember, Yancey Fall, Councilmember; Bonne Whitley, Councilmember; Tom Rolfe, Councilmember

Absent: None

Guests Present: Audrey Keddis, City Attorney, Sean Orsborn

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

1.1 The regular meeting of the Grass Valley City Council was called to order at 7:00 PM by Mayor Ayles, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.2 Approval of Agenda

A Motion by Rita to approve the agenda, seconded by Ree Ella. **Passed unanimously.**

2.0 CONSENT AGENDA

2.1 **July Regular Meeting Minutes:** Approve as written. Motion by Tom, seconded by Rita. Passed unanimously.

2.2 **July 2026 Financial Reports:** Council reviewed the July financial reports and briefly discussed expenditures.

A motion was made by Ree Ella to accept the financial report as presented. Tom seconded the motion. **Motion passed.**

2.3 **Maintenance Report – Walter**

East Side Water Service Relocation:

Walter reported on the deteriorating water line serving the east side area. A recent leak required repairs and highlighted the poor condition of the existing line. The long-term Water Master Plan calls for installation of a new six-inch line and abandonment of portions of the existing system.

Walter recommended beginning relocation of individual water services now, starting with the Grass Valley Market and then City Hall, to reduce the number of customers affected when failures occur and to prepare for the future water-line project. The work is considered part of regular water-system maintenance already included in the budget.

Council also discussed the usefulness of having a detailed digital map of the water system. Staff will contact Ed Hodges to request a high-resolution digital copy of the water-system map.

State Sanitary Site Inspection / Emergency Response Plan:

Walter reported that the State sanitary site inspection is scheduled for August 20. In preparation, he is completing the City's water-system Emergency Response Plan, which has been identified as deficient during previous inspections.

A significant portion of the discussion concerned procedures for notifying water customers during emergencies such as a boil-water notice. The State recommends door-to-door notification to ensure residents receive urgent information. Council members, acting as the City's water board, agreed their contact information could be included in the emergency response plan and that they would assist with emergency notifications. Customer lists can be divided among members to facilitate notification.

Walter will continue working to complete the Emergency Response Plan prior to the inspection.

2.4 City Hall Updates

Staff reported that violation letters continue to be processed. One property has moved into the abatement process after failing to respond to notices regarding tall weeds. The next step may require obtaining an abatement warrant before the City can enter the property and complete cleanup.

Four water accounts were currently past due.

Staff also provided an update on development of the City's new website. The anticipated transition to the new website is approximately October 5.

Monthly Financial Report Timing:
Staff discussed the difficulty of completing and balancing monthly financial reports in time for a council meeting held on the first Monday immediately following month-end. Council agreed that financial reports should continue to be presented monthly without a one-month delay.

Council discussed moving regular meetings later in the month to allow adequate time to close the books and prepare financial reports. No formal motion was made. Staff will research changing regular council meetings to the **second Monday of the month**, with the matter to be brought back to Council.

3.0 Public Comment – Agenda Items

3.1 Comments on Agenda Items

No public comment on agenda items was received.

4.0 Old Business

4.1 Strategic Plan Grant Update

Council reviewed the proposal for development of a five- to ten-year strategic plan at an estimated cost of $15,000. Two potential grants of approximately $5,000 each had been identified, and additional funding opportunities were being explored through the Ford Family Foundation.

Discussion included the value of establishing long-term goals, increasing community involvement, identifying priorities, and creating measurable objectives that future councils could continue to follow. The proposed process would include community visioning meetings and opportunities for public input.

Yancey moved to approve the proposed strategic planning proposal as written and move forward with seeking funding. Ree Ella seconded the motion. **Motion passed.**

4.2 Land Donation Update

Staff reported that the property owner had signed the letter regarding the proposed land donation to the City. Council discussed the next steps, including surveying the property to establish the exact boundaries and completing the necessary documents to transfer the property to the City. The survey may qualify as a reimbursable expense through grant funding associated with park planning.

The donation will assist with future planning and expansion of the park.

4.3 Fire Safety Sweeps-

The Mayor reported:

- Fire safety inspections continue.
- Reminder letters are being mailed where vegetation has regrown.
- One abatement case is progressing.

Council briefly discussed the affected properties.
No action taken.

4.4 Pavilion Refrigerator

Rita reported that a new refrigerator for the pavilion had been purchased from a company in Redmond for approximately $6,000. The price includes delivery, setup, and removal of the old refrigerator. Delivery was anticipated during the week.

5.0 New Business

5.1 Resolution Referring Proposed Charter Amendment to the Electors

City Attorney Audrey Keddis presented the proposed resolution referring amendments to the City Charter to the voters. The amendments address the previously discussed reduction in the number of council members and establish the transition of council terms necessary to implement the change.

Audrey explained that the transition would occur gradually so the proposed amendment would not disrupt the current election cycle. She also explained a related amendment concerning the number of council votes required to appoint or remove City officers, adjusting the requirement to reflect the proposed smaller council.

Ree Ella moved to accept the resolution as written. Rita seconded the motion. **Motion passed unanimously.**

5.2 League of Oregon Cities Ballot of Priorities

Council reviewed the League of Oregon Cities legislative priorities and discussed which issues would be most beneficial to Grass Valley and other small communities.

Council selected the following priorities to submit on behalf of the City:

- **Infrastructure funding for water and wastewater**
- **Transportation funding, including funding for bridges**

5.3 Upcoming Election Update

Council reviewed positions coming up for election and the filing requirements and deadlines for candidates. Four council positions and the mayor position were discussed as part of the upcoming election cycle.

Candidate paperwork and petition requirements were reviewed, including the requirement that petition signers be registered voters residing within the City.

The Mayor announced he would **not** be seeking election and thanked the Council for the opportunity to serve as Interim Mayor.

5.4 Cub Scout Troup 363 Pavilion Rental

Council discussed a request from Cub Scout Troop 363 to use the pavilion on August 16 for end-of-year advancement awards and planning for the coming year.

Council discussed whether rental fees had historically been waived for local nonprofit organizations and expressed concern about establishing an inconsistent precedent. Members offered to personally assist with the rental cost rather than waive the City's established fee.

Staff will provide the pavilion rental form and process the reservation through the regular procedure.

6.0 Public Comment

6.1 Comments on Non-Agenda Items (3-Minute Limit per speaker)

Bicycle/E-Bike Safety:

Concerns were raised regarding children riding bicycles, scooters, and electric bicycles without helmets and failing to follow traffic rules, including stop signs and proper roadway travel. Several recent near-miss incidents were discussed.

Staff reported that a bicycle and helmet safety reminder had already been prepared for the upcoming City newsletter, including information regarding helmet availability through Sherman County Emergency Services. Staff will also check on obtaining a safety poster that could be displayed at the post office.

Employee Evaluations:

The Mayor reported locating the employee evaluation forms and recommended completing evaluations for City employees. The forms will be emailed to council members for review and feedback. Employee evaluations will be discussed during an executive session at the September council meeting.

Zoning Ordinance Review Committee:

Council asked when meetings associated with the zoning ordinance review would begin. Staff reported that Jaime Crawford was expected to send scheduling information to committee members, with meetings anticipated to begin later in August.

7.0 ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn regular meeting by Yancey. **Seconded** by Rita. All in favor.

Mayor Ayles Adjourned the Regular Meeting at 8:18 PM.

Attested:

Christian Ayles, Mayor

Samantha Allen, City Administrator

City of Grass Valley
Regular City Council Meeting Minutes
July 6, 2026, 7:00 PM
Grass Valley Market Annex

Present: Christian Ayles, Mayor; Samantha Allen, City Administrator; Rita Wilson, Council President; Ree Ella von Borstel, Councilmember; Everett Carson, Councilmember, Yancey Fall, Councilmember; Bonne Whitley, Councilmember; Tom Rolfe, Councilmember

Absent: None

Guests Present: Audrey Keddis, City Attorney, Wendy Luisi, MCEDD; Jill Catherine, MCEDD

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

1.1 Mayor Ayles noted two agenda changes: Item 4.2, Park Grant and Land Donation Update, would be moved to the end of the meeting for executive session, and Item 5.2, Wendy Luisi, MCEDD Introduction, would be moved up so the presenter could speak earlier in the meeting.

1.2 Approval of Agenda

Motion: Approve the agenda as amended. Motion by Rita, seconded by Yancy. Passed unanimously.

2.0 CONSENT AGENDA

2.1 **May Budget Committee Minutes:**
Approve as presented. Motion by Yancey, seconded by Ree Ella. Passed unanimously.

June Budget Committee/Budget Hearing Minutes:
Approve as presented. Motion by Yancy, seconded by Rita. Passed unanimously.

June Regular Meeting Minutes: Approve as written. Motion by Ree Ella, seconded by Tom. Passed unanimously.

2.2 **June 2026 Financial Reports:** Approve the Profit and Loss Statement and financial reports as presented. Motion by Yancy, seconded by Tom. Passed unanimously.

Council reviewed postage expenses, including certified mail costs related to ordinance violation notices. Samantha explained that certified mail is used as part of the ordinance process and is not generally used for routine late water bills unless escalation is required.

2.3 **Maintenance Report – Walter**

Walter reported briefly on maintenance. Council noted that the city sign had been reinstalled and looked good.

2.4 **City Hall Updates**

Sam reported that nine weed violation letters had been sent and that only three water accounts were past due. She also reported that resident communication surveys had been mailed with the water bills and two responses had been received so far.

There was discussion regarding fire-season mowing and tall vegetation, including an RV park property where the owner is making efforts but may need different equipment due to the height of the grass.

Sam also noted that two requests had been received for the recorded meeting minutes/audio. Requests would be handled as public records requests.

3.0 Public Comment – Agenda Items

3.1 Comments on Agenda Items

No public comment on agenda items was received.

(5.2 moved to Beginning of Agenda)

5.2 Wendy Luisi from MCEDD Introduction

Wendy with Mid-Columbia Economic Development District introduced herself and provided an update on two Oregon Parks and Recreation Department Local Government Grant Program applications for the City Park.

Wendy explained that the park grant advisory committee is expected to meet in September or October, with OPRD Commission review around November and notice to proceed anticipated in December 2026 or January 2027 if awarded.

Jill Catherine introduced herself as MCEDD's new grants manager and stated that MCEDD remains available to support Grass Valley, Sherman County, and local infrastructure and community development projects. She is our new representative replacing, Michelle Colby. She also mentioned upcoming work related to the Biglow Ag Mitigation Fund, Sherman County housing applications. She would like to continue quarterly meetings with city administrators.

4.0 Old Business

4.1 Strategic Plan

Mayor Ayles reported that he and Samantha had spoken with Cayla Catino regarding a strategic planning proposal through RDI. The proposed process includes a ripple effect mapping workshop, a community survey, and a facilitated strategic planning session with the City Council to develop a 5- to 10-year plan.
The rough proposal cost is approximately $15,000. The proposal will be sent to Council by email for review, with possible action at the next meeting. Funding assistance will be explored by RDI.

4.3 Fire Safety Sweeps- Monthly (Summer)

Council discussed ongoing fire safety sweeps and violation letters. Mayor Ayles reported that he, Meinrad, and Samantha are entering and tracking items in the system. Council discussed whether to continue enforcement where most vegetation has been mowed but small areas remain around trailers, vehicles, or similar items.
The general discussion indicated that if defensible space has been achieved around most of the property, small remaining areas may be evaluated with discretion, while continuing to encourage cleanup.

4.4 DLCD Grant Updates- Planning Committee First Meeting Date

Sam reported that Jaime was unable to attend but plans to coordinate a meeting date by email for those participating in the zoning work. Potential participants discussed included Yancey, Mayor Ayles, Samantha, Israel, Margaret, and Walter.

4.5 Drought Grant Discussion with more information Provided

Edward Hodges with McKay, formerly Curran-McLeod Engineering, provided information on a Bureau of Reclamation drought-related grant opportunity. He explained that the program may support projects such as additional storage, source enhancement including new wells, or certain distribution main improvements if they increase capacity or drought resilience.

Ed noted that the program requires a 50% match and that likely projects would be expensive. He also noted that land acquisition and easements are not funded under the grant.
After discussion, Council indicated that the 50% match and project scale made this grant a poor fit at this time. The City will look for other opportunities.

4.6 Moore Property Update

Samantha reported on the manufactured home on Lincoln Street. Discussion focused on the status of electrical service, whether service would be underground or overhead, required permits, internal wiring, and state or county building requirements.

Council discussed the need to follow up with the state building code office in Pendleton, Jaime, and applicable permitting contacts to determine what permits are required, whether the concrete pads were permitted or inspected, and what steps are available to the City.

Council also discussed other issues related to abandoned or unsafe structures and noted that such processes can be lengthy and expensive. The DLCD zoning and ordinance review may be a place to review whether City ordinances should be updated or clarified.

5.0 New Business

5.1 Charter update and Election Ballot Discussion- Audrey Keddis

Attorney Audrey Keddis discussed the process for amending the City Charter to reduce the number of council members. She explained that a charter amendment requires a resolution and ballot measure language, and that the City must submit materials to the County by August 14 to place the measure on the November ballot.

Discussion focused on Sections 7 and 8 of the Charter, including reducing the number of council members and maintaining staggered terms. Council did not identify other charter sections to amend at this time. A resolution is expected to be prepared for consideration at the next meeting.

5.3 XEO- Web Designer Bid and Discussion (see hand out)

Council reviewed a proposal from Smart XEO for a government website. Samantha and Mayor Ayles discussed limitations with the current website, including difficulty searching documents and updating forms, and noted that the proposed website would be more searchable and user friendly.

Council discussed the proposed pricing, five-year term, annual support hours, setup process, and the value of having municipal website support available.

Motion to accept bid for new website design and support by Ree Ella and seconded by Yancey. Vote 5-1 passes.

5.4 New Pavilion Refrigerator Discussion

Rita reported that the pavilion refrigerator is no longer working and that she had researched replacement options. Council discussed commercial refrigerator options, energy efficiency, compressor quality, used or reconditioned restaurant equipment, and the need to replace the unit without waiting another month.

Motion by Ree Ella to approve $5000 budget for a new refrigerator for the Pavilion. Seconded by Tom. Passed unanimously.

6.0 Public Comment

6.1 Comments on Non-Agenda Items (3-Minute Limit per speaker)

A community member asked whether a reconfigured concession trailer could be parked on private property and used occasionally for local sales or fundraisers, such as snow cones. Council discussed that the trailer should not be parked in the street and that food vending or fundraising must comply with applicable health permit and other requirements.

Item 4.2 (Park Grant and Land Donation Update) was moved to the end of the meeting. Council entered executive session under ORS 192.660(2)(e), real property transactions. Members of the public who were not part of Council or media were asked to leave the room.

Time entered executive session: 8:22 PM Return to regular session at 8:38 PM

7.0 Adjournment

Motion to adjourn regular meeting by Yancey. **Seconded** by Tom. All in favor.

Mayor Ayles Adjourned the Regular Meeting at 8:39 PM.

Attested:

Christian Ayles, Mayor

Samantha Allen, City Administrator

City of Grass Valley
Regular City Council Meeting Minutes
June 1, 2026, 7:00 PM
Grass Valley Market Annex

Present: Christian Ayles, Mayor; Samantha Allen, City Administrator; Rita Wilson, Council President; Ree Ella von Borstel, Councilmember; Everett Carson, Councilmember, Yancey Fall, Councilmember; Bonne Whitley, Councilmember; Tom Rolfe, Councilmember

Absent: None

Guests Present: Planner Jamie Crawford, City Attorney, Audrey Keddis via Zoom, Sean Orsborn, Leta Ann Reckmann

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1.0 Call to Order

1.1 Mayor Christian Ayles called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the **Pledge of Allegiance**. A quorum was present.

1.2 Approval of Agenda

Motion: Tom Rolfe moved to approve the agenda as presented. **Second:** Ree Ella von Borstel.
Vote: Motion passed unanimously.

2.0 Consent Agenda

2.1 Approval of Minutes – January and May 2026

Council reviewed the January and May 2026 regular meeting minutes.
January Minutes: Motion: Tom Rolfe moved to approve the January 2026 regular meeting minutes as presented. **Second:** Ree Ella von Borstel. **Vote:** Motion passed unanimously.
May Minutes: Motion: Ree Ella von Borstel moved to approve the May 2026 regular meeting minutes as presented. **Second:** Yancey Fall. **Vote:** Motion passed unanimously.

2.2 Financial Reports – May 2026

Council reviewed the May 2026 financial reports. Discussion included:

- Differences between April and May revenues due primarily to proceeds received from the wastewater planning loan.
- Expenditures associated with the recent well pump repair.
- Telephone and internet expenses, which appeared higher in May due to multiple monthly bills being paid during the same reporting period.
- Payroll allocations between the General Fund and Water Fund and whether an alternative accounting method should be considered in future budget years.
- The possibility that payroll allocation practices may be related to insurance or audit requirements.

Staff will consult with auditors regarding payroll allocation procedures and potential reporting improvements.

Motion: Rita Wilson moved to approve the May 2026 Financial Reports. **Second:** Tom Rolfe. **Vote:** Motion passed unanimously.

2.3 Maintenance Report – Walter

Walter reported that maintenance activities were proceeding normally.
Council members complimented the appearance of the cemetery and noted positive feedback received from residents regarding its upkeep. Walter also provided an update regarding troubleshooting and reprogramming issues with the recently installed garage doors.

2.4 City Hall Updates

The City Administrator reported:

- Approximately 20 courtesy weed and fire hazard reminder letters were mailed to property owners. These were informational notices and not violation letters.
- Follow-up inspections will occur to verify compliance.
- Seven water accounts remain chronically late.
- Staff is working to resolve a situation involving a customer account for which contact and property identification have been difficult.

Council discussed methods of delivering notices and locating the affected property.

Public Comment – Agenda Items

3.1 Comments on Agenda Items

No public comments were presented.

4.0 Old Business

4.1 Strategic Plan – Ongoing Discussion

Mayor Ayles reported that the City has met with consultant Cayla Catino regarding development of the Community Visioning and Strategic Planning process.
The consultant is preparing materials based on the four priority pillars previously identified by Council. A community presentation is anticipated in October to gather public feedback and confirm community priorities.
Council discussed public outreach and agreed that future major public meetings should be advertised as broadly as possible, including mailed notices when practical.

4.2 Sewer Planning Community Meeting Update

Mayor Ayles provided a summary of the May 28 community sewer planning meeting with City Engineer Ed Hodges.
Key discussion points included:

- Estimated future sewer rates remain significantly impacted by the loss of approximately $2.5 million in grant funding.

- The project may be placed on hold until additional funding opportunities become available.
- Approximately $30,000–$40,000 in remaining planning grant funds are still available.
- The Mayor proposed using remaining grant funds to obtain more accurate right-of-way and survey information throughout the city, including physical survey control points rather than relying solely on LiDAR data.
- Updated city maps were provided by the engineer.

Council expressed support for utilizing remaining planning funds for survey and mapping improvements.

4.3 Park Grant Application Progress / Land Procurement Discussion

Park Committee Chair Ree Ella von Borstel reported on progress toward the Oregon Parks Development Grant application.

Discussion included:

- Updated playground equipment bids and project costs.
- Potential adjustments to playground equipment sizing to remain within budget.
- Grant match calculations currently being clarified with grant administrators.
- Requests for additional letters of support needed for the development grant application.
- Planned improvements including expanded playground equipment, climbing structures, tetherball, and future phases involving additional recreation amenities and pedestrian bridges.
- Status of the proposed land donation from Grass Valley Properties and correspondence sent regarding the donation.
- Questions regarding ownership of adjacent property areas and drainage features.

Additional discussion occurred regarding possible ADA parking accommodations near the pavilion. Council noted that any changes within the state highway right-of-way would likely require consultation with ODOT. Concerns were also raised regarding deteriorated swing seats at the park. Staff will review replacement options.

4.4 Fire Safety Sweeps / Safety Committee Update

Mayor Ayles presented a revised Safety Committee structure developed in coordination with Mine Rod. **Proposed changes included**: Consolidating multiple safety-related committees into a single Safety Committee; establishing a chairperson and having only three committee members. Conducting citywide safety sweeps and maintaining an administrative tracking system for identified safety concerns. **Council discussed:** Appropriate reporting frequency; prioritization of urgent safety concerns and public transparency versus privacy concerns regarding potential publication of violation information. **Following discussion**, Council agreed to amend the proposal so that: Fire season safety updates will occur monthly. Other committee updates will occur quarterly. The tracking system will remain an internal management tool rather than a public dashboard. **Council approved the Safety Committee structure as amended.**

4.5 DLCD Grant Updates – Ongoing

Mayor Ayles provided an update on the DLCD Planning Grant and formation of the advisory committee. Discussion focused on committee composition and avoiding potential quorum issues if the Council moves to a four-member governing body in the future. It was determined that only one council member should serve on the committee.
Rita Wilson voluntarily withdrew her interest in serving on the committee, allowing Yancey Fall to serve as the council representative. Additional committee members identified included Israel Sarabia, owner of the Grass Valley RV Park, and staff representatives. Efforts will continue to recruit additional community members.

Planner Jamie Crawford joined remotely and provided an update on grant-related activities, including ongoing permit and land-use compatibility reviews. She noted that additional research is being conducted regarding development near the City's water source.

5.0 New Business

5.1 Election 2026 Discussion

Mayor Ayles reviewed upcoming election requirements and explained that the City's charter currently requires a six-member council. City Attorney Audrey advised that reducing the council size would require voter approval through a charter amendment. Council discussed challenges associated with maintaining a six-member council, including difficulties obtaining quorums and recruiting candidates. **Motion:** Ree Ella von Borstel moved to place a charter amendment on the November 2026 ballot to reduce the City Council from six councilors to four councilors. **Second:** Rita Wilson. **Vote:** Motion passed unanimously. Council discussed the implementation timeline and acknowledged that the six-member structure would remain in place until the charter amendment is approved and implemented.

5.2 City of Grass Valley Sign Update

Walter provided an update regarding reconstruction of the damaged City entry sign. Discussion included redesigning the support structure using wood posts and cross members to improve durability and simplify maintenance. Walter explained that differences in the original construction materials have complicated repairs, but a workable solution has been identified. Council expressed support for the proposed approach and looked forward to installation of the restored sign.

5.3 Hire IT Service for City Office

The City Administrator presented a proposal from Seckora Consulting LLC for information technology services and replacement of the office computer system. Bid presented to council.
Discussion included: Ongoing computer and monitor reliability issues; integration support for QuickBooks and office software which included technical support and setup assistance and the overall project cost and value of the proposed service agreement. Council agreed that the proposal represented

a reasonable investment in office operations. **Motion:** Rita Wilson moved to approve the Seckora Consulting LLC proposal as presented. **Second:** Bonne Whitley. **Vote:** Motion passed unanimously.

5.4 Drought Grant Opportunity Discussion

Mayor Ayles presented information regarding Emergency Community Water Assistance Grant opportunities available to rural communities.

Discussion included potential eligibility for:

- Water transmission line improvements.
- Water source development projects.
- Well and water system upgrades.
- Replacement of aging water infrastructure.

Council discussed potential use of funding for the East Side water main project, well improvements, and additional water system capacity. Staff noted that documented decreases in well production and water levels may support eligibility. Staff were directed to obtain additional information regarding project eligibility, application requirements, and estimated project costs.

6.0 Public Comment – Non-Agenda Items

6.1 Comments on Non-Agenda Items

Council discussed future community cleanup events and methods for improving participation. Ideas included coordinating volunteers with trailers to assist residents in transporting debris and providing additional advance notice. Council also discussed coordinating future public meetings and events with the Sherman County School District calendar when practical to avoid scheduling conflicts. No formal action was taken.

7.0 ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Tom Rolfe moved to adjourn the meeting. **Second:** Ree Ella von Borstel. **Vote:** Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Ayles adjourned the meeting at 8:15 PM.

Attested:

Christian Ayles, Mayor

Samantha Allen, City Administrator

City of Grass Valley
Budget Hearing Meeting Minutes
June 1, 2026, 6:30 PM
Grass Valley Market Annex

Present: Christian Ayles, Mayor; Rita Wilson, Council President; Bonne Whitley, Councilmember; Ree Ella von Borstel, Councilmember; Everett Carson, Councilmember; Yancey Fall, Councilmember; Jessica Johnston, Budget Committee Member; Kayci Sharp, Budget Committee Member; Sean Orsborn, Budget Committee Member; Megan Fritts, Budget Committee Member; Samantha Allen, City Administrator.

Absent: Tom Rolfe, Councilmember; Leta Ann Reckman, Budget Committee Member; Sheri Sharp, Budget Committee Member

Guests Present: None

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

The Budget Hearing was called to order by Mayor Ayles at 6:45 p.m.

2.0 PUBLIC HEARING ON THE FISCAL YEAR 2026–27 BUDGET

Presentation of Proposed Budget

The proposed Fiscal Year 2026–27 Budget was presented for consideration. Budget adjustments made since Budget Committee approval were reviewed.

Public Comment

No public comments were received.

Council Questions and Discussion

Councilor Everett Carson reiterated concerns regarding the City's reserve balances and the budget development process.

Resolution No. 2026-03

Councilor Ree Ella von Borstel moved to adopt Resolution No. 2026-03 adopting the Fiscal Year 2026–27 Budget, making appropriations, and imposing taxes. The motion was seconded by Councilor Yancey Fall.

Vote: **Ayes:** Rita Wilson, Bonne Whitley, Ree Ella von Borstel, Yancey Fall, Jessica Johnston, Sean Orsborn, Kayci Sharp, Megan Fritts **Nays:** Everett Carson. **Motion carried.**

3.0 ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Rita and seconded by Ree Ella to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Budget Hearing adjourned at 6:57 p.m.

Attested:

Christian Ayles, Mayor

Samantha Allen, City Administrator

City of Grass Valley
Regular City Council Meeting Minutes
May 4, 2026, 7:00 PM
Grass Valley Market Annex

Present: Christian Ayles, Mayor; Samantha Allen, City Administrator; Rita Wilson, Council President; Ree Ella von Borstel, Councilmember; Everett Carson, Councilmember, Yancey Fall, Councilmember.

Absent: Bonne Whitley, Councilmember; Tom Rolfe, Councilmember

Guests Present: Planner Jamie Crawford, Engineer Ed Hodges, City Attorney, Audrey Keddis via Zoom, Sean Orsborn, Leta Ann Reckmann, Joe Sharp

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1.0 Call to Order

Mayor Christian Ayles called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

1.1 Pledge of Allegiance

The Council and attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.2 Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Ree Ella to approve the agenda as presented.
Motion seconded by Rita and **passed unanimously.**

2.0 Consent Agenda

2.1 Approval of Minutes

Council reviewed prior meeting minutes.

- **January Minutes:** Approval postponed due to lack of quorum for that meeting.
- **April Minutes: Motion** made by Yancey to approve the **April minutes. Seconded** by Ree Ella and **passed unanimously.**

2.2 Financial Reports – April 2026

City Administrator Samantha Allen presented the April 2026 financial reports and balance sheet. She explained that some balance sheet entries currently appear incorrectly due to QuickBooks adjustments that are completed annually by the city auditor. Allen stated that future monthly closing procedures should improve the accuracy and presentation of reports moving forward.
Discussion occurred regarding:

- LGIP account balances and interest earnings
- Grant reimbursements deposited directly into LGIP accounts
- Auditor adjustments to be made for this last fiscal year on July 1, 2025.
- Improving transparency and tracking of grant funding in QuickBooks Reports.
- Providing Council with ongoing balance sheet information and grant status updates

Sam explained the DEQ sewer planning reimbursement process and how grant reimbursements are submitted and received but not currently tracked in QB.
Motion: Ree Ella moved to approve the financial reports as presented. **Seconded** by Rita. **Motion passed unanimously.**

2.3 Maintenance Report – Walter

Walter reported that the North Well pump failed approximately three weeks prior and was replaced as an emergency repair. The replacement pump significantly improved pumping capacity.

Walter explained that additional components within the vault system will likely need replacement in the near future, including:

- Transducer
- Butterfly valve
- Flow meter
- Pressure components

Estimated future replacement costs could approach approximately $20,000 depending on parts availability.

Walter stated that the South Well pump remains operational and appears stable, though he anticipates eventual replacement due to age. He will continue monitoring performance and amperage draw.

Discussion occurred regarding:

- Emergency procurement procedures
- Pump lifespan
- Future infrastructure planning
- System reliability

Walter also provided updates regarding:

- Positive performance of the new commercial mower
- Pending installation of maintenance building garage doors
- Recycling center metal dumpster usage concerns
- Replacement of deteriorated recycling center decking
- Ongoing maintenance projects

New Hire Hours Discussion

Walter recommended increasing newly hired maintenance employee Christopher from 10 hours per week to 15 hours per week due to workload demands and summer maintenance needs.

Council discussed:

- Seasonal workload
- Deferred past projects
- Two-person maintenance tasks
- Budget availability
- Flexibility for emergency situations

Motion: Rita moved to increase the maintenance employee position to 15 hours per week, not to exceed 65 hours per month, managed by Walter. **Second:** Ree Ella. **Motion passed unanimously**.

2.4 City Hall Updates

City Administrator reported:

- Ongoing processing of past-due water account notices
- Continued violation letters and code enforcement tracking
- Upcoming fire hazard letters after tall grass/weed sweeps

Discussion occurred regarding:

- Repeat nuisance violators
- Fire safety enforcement procedures
- Prior unresolved violations
- Liability concerns
- Enforcement timelines

3.0 Public Comment – Agenda Items

No public comments were presented.

4.0 Old Business

4.1 Strategic Plan — Ongoing Discussion

Mayor Ayles reported that he has a meeting scheduled with Cayla Catino on May 8 regarding strategic planning and community visioning efforts. Catino was recommended through previous strategic planning discussions and may assist with identifying future opportunities and grant direction.

4.2 Sewer Planning Project Update — Ed Hodges

Engineer Ed Hodges provided an update regarding the City wastewater planning project.
Hodges reviewed:

- Original sewer system concepts
- Proposed lagoon treatment system
- Irrigation reuse concepts
- Environmental and permitting progress
- Sewer ordinance preparation
- Cost estimates and funding challenges

He explained that project estimates have increased from approximately $5 million to approximately $6–6.5 million.
Discussion included:

- Loss of anticipated CDBG funding due to income survey changes
- Available DEQ and Congressional funding
- Remaining financing gaps
- Potential monthly customer impacts estimated between $80–$100 per household
- Future grant opportunities
- Long-term planning considerations

Hodges stated that despite funding difficulties, the planning work completed remains valuable and positions the City for future opportunities. Council discussed whether to continue pursuing the project long term while recognizing current financial concerns.

Wastewater Public Information Meeting Council agreed to hold a public informational meeting regarding the wastewater project. **Date:** May 28, 2026, **Time:** 7:00 PM, **Location:** Grass Valley Pavilion

4.3 Swindell / Grass Valley Property Update — Easement and Land Donation

Mayor Ayles reported that the City had reached out to legal counsel regarding the proposed easement and land donation associated with the park grant project. City Attorney, Audrey Keddis, participated via Zoom and stated she was still gathering and reviewing information regarding the matter and did not yet have a formal legal opinion to present. She stated she had been discussing the issue with Sam and anticipated progress soon. Discussion followed regarding timing requirements connected to the planning grant application process. Council discussed obtaining a letter of intent written to the property owner indicating willingness to consider the land donation. Council discussed that the planning portion of the park project would not obligate the City to proceed with future phases if the property matter is ultimately not resolved. Audrey stated she anticipated being able to

provide the letter for the property owner prior to the June 1st council meeting. Easement issue was not addressed by attorney yet.

4.4 Updated Quote from All Traffic Solutions — Highway 97 Lighted Traffic Sign Discussion
Council reviewed the updated quote for the Highway 97 lighted traffic sign.
After discussion, Council consensus was that the project cost was not justified at this time.

5.0 New Business

5.1 Zoning Grant — Scope of Work for DLCD Grant Award (hand out given)
Planner Jamie Crawford presented information regarding the recently awarded DLCD Housing Planning Assistance Grant. The grant will fund updates to the City's zoning ordinance and related housing compliance work. Crawford explained that the project will include reviewing the City's zoning code for compliance with current state housing requirements, including regulations involving manufactured housing and future housing-related development standards. She discussed how state housing requirements continue to evolve and may eventually apply to smaller communities such as Grass Valley. Discussion occurred regarding: manufactured housing standards, accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and duplex allowances, tiny homes, shipping container regulations, and future state housing requirements that may eventually impact the City.
Crawford explained that formation of an **advisory committee** is part of the grant scope of work and recommended that the committee include **community members, business owners**, and **Council representation**. Council discussed advertising for interested committee members through a public flyer and on the website. Rita and Yancey expressed interest in serving on the advisory committee as council members.

5.2 Park Grant Application Resolutions — Planning and Upgrades
Ree Ella provided an update regarding the park grant application process and proposed playground improvements. She explained that the City is pursuing two separate grant opportunities related to park improvements:

- a planning grant for engineering, design, and project preparation work, and
- a development grant for playground equipment and installation.

Discussion occurred regarding the proposed playground equipment layout, installation requirements, and safety surfacing options. Ree Ella reported that a representative from Wildland Playgrounds would be visiting the site to assist with updated project estimates and planning details. Equipment installation would likely occur in in spring of 2027. Additional discussion occurred regarding: future phases of park improvements, possible bridge and engineering requirements, in-kind match contributions, volunteer labor, and long-term park development planning. Council reviewed Resolution 2026-01 and Resolution 2026-02 authorizing grant applications related to the park project.
Resolution 2026-01 (required in grant process) Motion: Ree Ella moved to approve Resolution 2026-01 authorizing application for park grant funding. **Second:** Rita Wilson **Motion** passed unanimously.
Resolution 2026-02 Motion: Riella von Borstel moved to approve Resolution 2026-02 authorizing application for additional park planning grant funding. **Second:** Rita Wilson **Motion** passed unanimously.

5.3 Fire Safety Sweeps — Committee Leadership Discussion

Staff discussed restructuring the City Safety Committee due to limited participation and lack of activity from the current fire safety chair position. Mayor Ayles stated he would continue conducting fire safety sweeps temporarily while the city seeks additional volunteers. At least 2 volunteers needed. Mayor Ayles stated he would revise the committee description and bring the updated structure back to Council for future discussion.

5.4 Hire IT Service for City Office

Item tabled from previous meeting and tabled again for next meeting.

5.5 Refinishing Pavilion Floors — June 9–14

Rita reported that pavilion floor refinishing is scheduled for June 9–14, 2026. Discussion included:

- Roller skate use and floor protection
- Potential future storage improvements
- Possible Cultural Coalition grant opportunities

5.6 Pavilion Rental Donation

Council discussed donating a one-day pavilion rental certificate for Sherman County Fair fundraising basket. Council agreed this was a good idea and consensus supported the donation.

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6. 0 Public Comment – Non-Agenda Items

6.1 Comments on Non-Agenda Items

Council coordinated volunteer scheduling for the upcoming City cleanup event.
Updated cleanup schedule discussed since this day also is the first day of the Farmers Market in the Park:
Additional informal discussion occurred regarding mowing, equipment use, and maintenance activities.

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7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made Ree Ella to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded by Rita and passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:36 pm.

Attested:

Christian Ayles, Mayor

Samantha Allen, City Administrator

City of Grass Valley
Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
May 4, 2026, 6:30 PM
Grass Valley Market Annex

Present: Christian Ayles, Mayor; Samantha Allen, City Administrator; Rita Wilson, Council President; Ree Ella von Borstel, Councilmember; Everett Carson, Councilmember, Yancey Fall, Councilmember; Jessica Johnston, Budget Committee Member. Sean Orsborn, Budget Committee Member, Sheri Sharp, Budget Committee Member, Megan Fritts, Budget Committee Member, Kayci Sharp, Budget Committee Member, Leta Ann Reckmann, Budget Committee Member.

Absent: Bonne Whitley, Councilmember; Tom Rolfe, Councilmember

Guests Present: Joe Sharp

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

The Budget Committee Meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m.

1.1 Approval of Agenda

A **motion** was made by Ree Ella von Borstel and **seconded** by Rita Wilson to approve the agenda as presented. **Motion passed unanimously.**

2.0 ELECTION OF BUDGET COMMITTEE OFFICERS

2.1 Election of Budget Committee Chair

Discussion was held regarding the election of Budget Committee Chair. Jessica Johnston was nominated to serve as Chair for the Budget Committee. A **motion** was made by Ree Ella von Borstel and **seconded** by Rita Wilson to appoint Jessica Johnston as Budget Committee Chair. **Motion passed unanimously.**

2.2 Election of Budget Committee Secretary

Discussion was held regarding the appointment of a Budget Committee Secretary.
A **motion** by Rita was made to appoint Samantha Allen as Budget Committee Secretary. The motion was **seconded** by Yancey. **Motion passed unanimously.**

3.0 BUDGET MESSAGE

Mayor Ayles presented the Fiscal Year 2026–2027 Budget Message.
The proposed budget covers the period from July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027, and reflects the City's continued commitment to responsible financial management, maintaining essential services, and preparing for future infrastructure needs.
Key points of the budget message included:

- Continued sewer system planning efforts while evaluating long-term feasibility and funding opportunities.
- Anticipated zoning and development code updates associated with grant received from DLCD.
- Potential park improvements, including playground equipment, contingent upon future grant awards.

- Updated beginning balances reflecting Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP) funds not fully captured in prior years.
- Clarification that certain grant revenues and expenditures were budgeted within appropriate funds for improved transparency.
- Acknowledgement that the City applied for an SCA Grant during the prior fiscal year; however, the grant was not awarded and no related expenditures occurred.
- Modest increases in insurance and utility costs across all funds.
- Establishment of a small capital reserve within the Water Fund for future infrastructure needs.
- Minor reclassification of administrative expenses for improved budget alignment.

4.0 Review of Budget Sheets-- Resources, and Expenditures

The Budget Committee reviewed the General Fund, Water Fund, and Street Fund budget worksheets. City Administrator Samantha Allen explained that updated budget figures reflected the inclusion of previously unaccounted LGIP funds, resulting in significantly higher beginning balances than originally anticipated. Discussion noted that accumulated wind farm revenues over multiple years contributed substantially to the City's cash reserves.

Committee discussion included:

- Clarification regarding available cash on hand and fund balances.
- The City's practice of maintaining reserves and conservative spending habits.
- Questions regarding cemetery revenues and expenditures, including whether maintenance and related costs should be tracked separately for informational purposes.
- Discussion regarding land use permit revenues associated with water connection applications and planner review costs.
- Clarification regarding bulk fill revenues and limitations on outside bulk water usage due to pump capacity concerns.
- Discussion regarding Water Fund expenditures, including the recent well pump replacement project and associated costs.
- Explanation that portions of the recent truck and mower purchases were allocated proportionally among the capital outlay funds in General Fund, Water Fund, and Street Fund.
- Discussion regarding Street Fund grant opportunities and the City's prior SCA grant application.
- Questions regarding supporting documentation for cash balances and budget calculations. Staff noted continued improvements in budget preparation processes and reporting clarity.

The Committee also discussed the distinction between capital outlay items and City assets, noting that capital purchases would be reflected within the City's asset records separately from the budget worksheets.

No further questions or requested changes were made to the proposed budget documents.

City of Grass Valley
Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
May 4, 2026, 6:30 PM
Grass Valley Market Annex

4.1 Approval of Proposed Budget

A **motion** was made by Yancey and **seconded** by Kayci to approve the proposed Fiscal Year 2026–2027 Budget as presented. **Motion passed unanimously.**

5.0 Approve Total Taxes by Permanent Rate

Discussion was held regarding the City's permanent tax rate of $3.183 per $1,000 assessed value. No changes to the permanent tax rate were proposed. A **motion** was made by Rita and **seconded** by Ree Ella to approve the permanent tax rate of $3.183 per $1,000 assessed valuation. **Motion passed unanimously.**

6.0 Public Comment

No public comment was received.

7.0 Upcoming Budget Hearing

The Budget Hearing and Regular Council Meeting was scheduled for June 1, 2026, at 6:45 p.m. Staff noted the meeting was expected to be brief and primarily for final budget approval.

8.0 Adjournment

A **motion** was made by Rita and **seconded** by Ree Ella to adjourn the meeting. **Motion passed unanimously.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

Attested:

Christian Ayles, Mayor

Samantha Allen, City Administrator

City of Grass Valley
Regular City Council Meeting Minutes
April 6, 2026, 7:00 PM
Grass Valley Market Annex

Present: Christian Ayles, Mayor; Samantha Allen, City Administrator; Rita Wilson, Council President; Ree Ella von Borstel, Councilmember; Tom Rolfe, Councilmember; Everett Carson, Councilmember.

Absent: Bonne Whitley, Councilmember

Guests Present: Brittany Dark, Frontier Chamber of Commerce, Audrey Keddis, Audrey Keddis Law LLC, Sean Orsborn, Jessica Johnston, Meinrad Kuettel, Leta Ann Reckmann, Yancey Fall.

1.0 Call to Order

Mayor Christian Ayles called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

1.1 Pledge of Allegiance

The Council and attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.2 Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Ree Ella to approve the agenda as presented.
Motion seconded by Rita and **passed unanimously.**

2.0 Consent Agenda

2.1 Approval of Minutes

Council reviewed prior meeting minutes.

- **January Minutes:** Approval postponed due to lack of quorum for that meeting.
- **March Minutes:** Motion made by Tom to approve the **March minutes.**
  Seconded by Ree Ella and **passed unanimously.**

2.2 Financial Reports – February and March 2026

Council discussed concerns regarding clarity and readability of the financial reports, specifically the presentation of grant transfers, capital expenditures, and the absence of a balance sheet.
Staff explained that the reported negative net income reflected grant money received and transferred through accounts for payment to Curran-McLeod, and that the accounting software being adjusted by auditor to reflect city fund structure better and balance sheet readability.
Council requested future inclusion of:

- A balance sheet for review;
- Additional notes/memo pages when adjustments are made by auditor;
- Improved visibility of fund transfers and grant tracking, which should be easier to see with correct categories in chart of accounts..

Everett Carson offered assistance with balance sheet review and organization.
Motion: Tom moved to approve the financial reports as presented.
Seconded by Ree Ella.
Motion passed unanimously.

2.3 Maintenance Report – Walter

Garage Doors / Pump House Internet Update

Walter reported garage doors are expected to arrive near the end of April.

Blue Mountain/Internet providers are working to install internet service at the pump house to support security cameras and monitoring systems. Fiber/hardline installation is expected in the coming weeks.

Surplus Equipment / Auction Discussion

Walter requested direction regarding auctioning surplus city equipment, including:

- Old F-250 truck
- Broken/unused riding mowers
- Older tractor/backhoe attachments and miscellaneous maintenance equipment

Council directed Walter to prepare a full inventory list of proposed surplus items for review at the next meeting before any motion to surplus is made.

Council also discussed the future need for:

- Better city asset tracking and inventory procedures;
- A surplus/disposal protocol for obsolete or unusable equipment.

Commercial Lawn Mower Purchase

Walter presented the need for a new commercial mower due to deterioration of current equipment and maintenance demands, particularly at the cemetery.

Council discussed staff research versus requiring multiple quotes/options for future purchases.

Motion: Ree Ella moved to approve a **$15,000 budget** for purchase of a commercial mower using House Bill 5202 GF Grant funds left over from 2022.

Seconded by Rita.

Vote: 3 Ayes — 1 Nay

Motion passed.

Bulk Fill Water Usage / Policy Discussion

Walter requested Council direction on implementing formal policies regarding bulk water sales.

Discussion included:

- High-volume agricultural use, including one customer reportedly drawing **180,000 gallons within approximately six weeks**;
- Concern over possible resale of city water to outside projects;
- Wear on aging city pumps and infrastructure;
- Council discussed multiple possible policy structures, including:
- **500 gallon annual cap** for non-agricultural commercial use;
- **200,000 gallon annual cap per entity** for agricultural use;
- Requiring Council approval to exceed usage caps;

Staff was directed to prepare policy options for Council review at the next meeting.

2.4 City Hall Updates

Staff reported:

- Multiple late/past due water accounts; red notices and late notices will be issued;

- Parking/intersection complaint has largely been resolved with Sheriff assistance;
- Sheriff advised that citizen citations are available for qualifying ordinance/statute violations;
- Ongoing work with auditors to improve financial systems and balance sheet clarity;
- Continued work with auditors to improve financial reporting transparency, including:
    - Balance sheet clarity
    - Tracking of grants and assets
    - Noted that while enhanced reporting may not be required for a city of this size, it aligns with council expectations.
- Budget preparation has begun with assistance from Budget Committee Chair Yancey Fall;
- Computer/IT restructuring completed after prior account/user conflicts tied to South Sherman Fire District;
- Curran-McLeod sewer planning update will occur at next meeting.

3.0 Public Comment – Agenda Items

No public comments were presented.

4.0 Old Business

4.1 Strategic Plan — Ongoing Discussion

Presentation by Brittany Dark

Brittany Dark, Executive Director of Oregon Frontier Chamber of Commerce, presented information regarding strategic planning, community visioning, and grant opportunities.

Topics discussed included:

- Strategic planning/facilitator costs ranging from **$2,000–$7,500**;
- Importance of having city strategic plans to qualify for grants;
- Oregon Main Street Revitalization Grants up to **$400,000**;
- Community visioning alternatives to full strategic plans;
- Dashboard/metric tracking models for city goals.

Council identified strategic priorities including:

- Water infrastructure;
- Administrative/asset management improvements;
- Park development;
- Business/community development.

Consensus favored beginning with **community visioning/town hall input** prior to formal strategic planning.

Brittany will follow up with facilitator information for possible fall kickoff.

4.2 New Maintenance Assistant Hire — Job Description Discussion

Council reviewed proposed job descriptions for part-time maintenance assistance.

Discussion centered around:

- Whether restroom cleaning should be included;
- Whether position should be seasonal or year-round;

- Staffing flexibility and retention concerns.

Council directed staff to revise language to state that duties **may include restroom cleaning**, rather than expressly requiring or excluding restroom duties.
Staff will post revised position.

4.3 Park Committee Update

Councilmember von Borstel presented park committee updates including:

- Discussion with Ted Swindell regarding potential easement/property transfer near the old basketball court;
- Conceptual plans for expanding park area by approximately **1.14 acres**;
- Proposed parking expansion near pavilion;
- Potential future additions including:
  - Updated basketball court/pickleball area;
  - New ADA-accessible playground equipment;
  - Walking paths and expanded recreational spaces.

Council discussed need to finalize land agreements and planning before pursuing park grants.

4.4 406 Lincoln Street Property — Update

Staff reported:

- Owner continues making progress toward compliance;
- Electrical bid has been obtained;
- Electrical pole installation quote approximately **$3,130**;
- City Planner advised owner is showing due diligence, limiting city enforcement options at this time.

5.0 New Business

5.1 City Attorney — Resume Review / Interview

Council interviewed Audrey Keddis for City Attorney services.
Discussion included:

- Prior municipal/legal experience;
- Code enforcement and land use background;
- Trial/court experience;
- Availability and responsiveness expectations.

Motion: Ree Ella moved to hire Audrey Keddis as City Attorney under existing contract terms.
Seconded by Tom.
Motion passed unanimously.

5.2 Grass Valley Clean-Up Day

Council scheduled **Grass Valley Clean-Up Day for May 9, 2026 from 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM**.
Council assigned volunteer shifts for staffing.
Staff directed to:

- Explore recycling/metal disposal options.

5.3 Approval of Budget Calendar

Budget calendar presented.

Motion: Rita moved to approve the budget calendar.

Seconded by Ree Ella.

Motion passed unanimously.

Council acknowledged Samantha Allen as acting Budget Officer.

5.4 Council Seat Appointment

Council reviewed letters of interest from:

- Sean Orsborn
- Jessica Johnston
- Yancey Fall

Mayor recommended Jessica Johnston.

Council discussion followed regarding qualifications and committee involvement.

Council voted and selected **Yancey Fall** for appointment.

Yancey Fall was sworn in and officially appointed to the vacant Council seat.

5.5 Upcoming Fire Safety Sweeps

Tabled until next meeting.

5.6 IT Support for Office Computers

Tabled until next meeting.

6. 0 PUBLIC COMMENT – NON-AGENDA ITEMS

6.1 Comments on Non-Agenda Items

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made Rita to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded by Tom and **passed unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at **9:03 pm**.

Attested:

Christian Ayles, Mayor

Samantha Allen, City Administrator

City of Grass Valley
Regular City Council Meeting Minutes
March 2, 2026, 7:00 PM
Grass Valley Market Annex

Present: Christian Ayles, Mayor; Samantha Allen, City Administrator; Rita Wilson, Council President; Ree Ella von Borstel, Councilmember; Tom Rolfe, Councilmember; Everett Carson, Councilmember.

Absent: Bonne Whitley, Councilmember

Guests Present: Ed Hodges, Curran-McLeod, Engineer via Zoom; Meinrad Kuettel, Sean Orsborn, Leta Ann Reckmann

1.0 Call to Order

Mayor Christian Ayles called the meeting to order at 7:09 PM.

1.1 Pledge of Allegiance

The Council and attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.2 Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Ree Ella to approve the agenda as presented.
Motion seconded by Tom and **passed unanimously.**

2.0 Consent Agenda

2.1 Approval of Minutes

Council reviewed prior meeting minutes.

- **January Minutes:** Approval postponed due to lack of quorum for that meeting.
- **February Minutes:** Council discussed wording related to grant fund tracking. A correction was made to change language indicating "confirmation" of grant tracking to reflect it as a **question or discussion point.**

Motion made by Rita to approve the **February minutes as corrected.**
Seconded by Ree Ella and **passed unanimously.**

2.2 Financial Reports – February 2026

Council reviewed the February financial report.
Discussion included:

- Payroll allocation between General Fund and Water Fund
- Clarification of payroll distribution related to water maintenance work
- Discussion regarding tracking grant funds and how they appear in the ledger
- A question was raised regarding the **WWTF planning expense appearing twice**, due to transfers between accounts

Council agreed further clarification was needed before approving the report.
Financial report approval was tabled pending clarification.

2.3 Maintenance Report – Walter

Walter reported on maintenance activities and provided an update regarding the **City truck purchase.**
Key details:

- 2016 Ford F-250 purchased from a dealership in The Dalles
- Purchase price negotiated to **$30,000**
- Included:

- 24-month / 24,000-mile bumper-to-bumper warranty
- Airbag repair
- Steering wheel control repair
- Dome light repair
- Four-wheel alignment
- Brake pad replacement and rotor resurfacing
- New windshield wipers
- Inspection and service

Council discussed disposing of the **old city truck**. Options discussed included: Auction and Posting locally.

- Minimum sale price suggested around **$5,000**

Council consensus was to attempt selling the vehicle rather than accepting a low trade-in value.

2.4 City Hall Updates

Staff provided updates on:

- **Past-due water accounts:** Late notices continue to prompt payments.
- **Violation notices:** Additional notices are being addressed.
- **Moore property issue:**
  - Plumbing reportedly completed
  - Electrical work pending inspection scheduling

Council expressed concern about the extended timeline for resolving the property compliance issue.

Motion made requiring the property owner to provide:

- Written documentation from a licensed electrician
- Timeline for electrical compliance

Deadline set for **March 30, 2026.**

Motion by Ree Ella, seconded by Rita **passed with one abstention.**

3. Public Comment – Agenda Items

No public comments were presented.

4.0 Old Business

4.1 Curran-McLeod Updates

Engineer **Ed Hodges** provided updates on:

Wastewater Planning Study

- Survey conducted regarding septic systems
- Approximately **89% response rate**
- Findings suggested most residents report functioning systems
- Data will be included in a forthcoming report

Additional planning work underway:

- Environmental review
- Mapping

- Ordinance development
- Funding exploration

Estimated project cost:

- Approximately **$8 million total**
- Possible grant and loan funding sources identified

A **public meeting** will be scheduled to present findings once the report is completed.

Water Master Plan

Ed reported that the Water Master Plan has been completed and submitted to the appropriate state agencies.

Curran-McLeod Engineering Firm Transition

Ed informed Council that **Curran-McLeod will be acquired by MacKay Sposito**, an engineering firm based in Vancouver, Washington.

He stated:

- Staff and services will remain the same
- He will continue serving Grass Valley as the primary contact

Council discussed the required **contract assignment letter** transferring the agreement.

Motion made by Ree Ella to approve the contract assignment. Seconded by Tom.

Vote: **3 in favor, 1 opposed,** Motion **passed.**

4.3 Strategic Plan – Grants

Council discussed strategic planning items including:

- Hiring spring/summer maintenance assistance
- Possible outreach to high school students
- Potential apprenticeship or part-time seasonal position

Staff will develop a job description for review at next meeting.

4.4 Sharp Easement

Council reviewed concerns regarding legal advice previously received on the Sharp Easement matter.

Concerns raised included:

- Legal counsel reportedly issued advice without reviewing the full easement documentation
- Recommendation to hire a surveyor was questioned

Council discussed seeking **new legal counsel** and reviewing attorney options.

No formal action taken during this agenda item.

4.5 Committee Updates

Safety Committee

Issues discussed:

- Illegal parking near stop signs
- Long-term abandoned vehicles
- Possible towing enforcement

Council discussed issuing final notices prior to towing.

Parks Committee

Updates included:

- Playground replacement planning
- Contact with playground equipment supplier
- Potential basketball half-court installation
- Future ADA pathway along the creek
- Exploration of other grants for park improvements

Pavilion Committee

Committee exploring:

- Installation of stage curtains
- Improvements to pavilion functionality

5.0 New Business

5.1 Water Rights Inquiry – Brookfield Renewable

Council reviewed a request from Brookfield regarding water access.

Council determined that the City does **not have sufficient water capacity** to supply the requested amount.

Consensus was to **deny the request.**

5.2 Hiring Policy and Agenda Request Policy

Council reviewed two draft policies.

Public Agenda Request Policy

- Submission deadline adjusted from **5 days to 10 days**

Tom moved to approve the policy as amended. Ree Ella seconded.

Passed unanimously

Hiring Policy

Policy outlines procedures for regular and emergency hires.

Motion by Rita to approve policy, seconded by Ree Ella, **Passed unanimously**

5.3 Council Seat Vacancy / Recognition of Joann

Council discussed recognizing Joann for **40 years of service** on City Council.

Ideas included:

- Commemorative bench
- Recognition related to the Easter event tradition

Council also discussed recruiting candidates to fill the **vacant council seat.**

5.4 Pavilion Rental Rates

Council discussed increasing rental fees for out-of-area commercial users.

Proposal:

- **$500 pavilion rental for out-of-county commercial events**

Motion made by Ree Ella, seconded by Tom and **passed unanimously.**

6. PUBLIC COMMENT – NON-AGENDA ITEMS

A resident provided an update regarding compliance efforts related to previously discussed property concerns.
Council acknowledged improvements and encouraged continued progress.
Other property owner out of compliance is getting ready to move and will have a dumpster coming out soon.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made Tom to adjourn the meeting.
Seconded by Rita and **passed unanimously.**
Meeting adjourned at **9:25 pm**.

Attested:

Christian Ayles, Mayor

Samantha Allen, City Administrator

City of Grass Valley
Regular City Council Meeting Minutes
February 2, 2026, 7:00 PM
Grass Valley Market Annex

Present: Christian Ayles, Mayor; Samantha Allen, City Administrator; Rita Wilson, Council President; Bonne Whitley, Councilmember; Ree Ella von Borstel, Councilmember; Everett Carson, Councilmember.
Absent: Tom Rolfe, Councilmember; Joann Duarte, Councilmember
Guests Present: Joanna Lyons-Antley, Legal Counsel (Sagebrush Legal LLC) via Zoom; Jaime Crawford, City Planner (Bell Design Co) via Zoom; Sean Orsborn, Joe Sharp, Leta Ann Reckmann

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

The City Council of the City of Grass Valley met in regular session on February 2, 2026, at the Grass Valley Market Annex. The meeting was called to order at **7:00 PM**. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2.0 CONSENT AGENDA

May we accept the agenda as written.

Motion By: Ree Ella von Borstel | **Second:** Rita Wilson | **Vote:** All in favor.

2.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JANUARY 2026

Council noted that not enough members present at this meeting had been present at the January meeting to legally approve the minutes.
Action: January minutes were tabled until the next regular meeting.

2.2 FINANCIAL REPORTS –JANUARY 2025

Council reviewed the monthly financial report and current budget status. Discussion included:

- Timing of shared revenue deposits, which may not follow a predictable quarterly schedule
- Overall budget position mid-year
- Confirmation that grant-funded expenses are properly tracked and offset

Council confirmed that an outside auditor is retained annually, but no monthly CPA service is contracted.

Staff handles ongoing financial management.

Motion: Approve January financials as presented.
By: Ree Ella von Borstel | **Second:** Bonne Whitley | **Vote:** All in favor.

2.3 MAINTENANCE REPORT

Walter provided a detailed update on his water system operations this month, including:

- Updating the City's Emergency Response Plan
- Preparation for the upcoming State sanitary survey of the municipal water system
- Explanation of the Direct Responsible Charge (DRC) role and operator protocols
- Ongoing asset management planning efforts

Walter also presented:

- **Garage Door Replacement Quotes**

Two commercial garage doors for the City maintenance building were discussed. Quotes from Gorge Doors and Home Depot were comparable. Council expressed preference for using a local vendor if cost remained similar.
Council emphasized the need for written documentation and a not-to-exceed amount.
Motion : To authorize replacement of two commercial garage doors (one with opener) with a not-to-exceed amount of $5,500, pending written estimate and subject to Council approval for any overage.

By: Ree Ella von Borstel | **Second:** Bonne Whitley | **Vote:** All in favor.
Next:

- **Cost Per Gallon of Water (Electricity Only)**

Walter provided calculations showing the electricity cost to deliver a gallon of water. Council discussed this in context of long-term water rate planning and lawn watering impacts.

2.4 CITY HALL UPDATES

City Administrator provided updates including:

- No new ordinance violation letters issued
- Existing cases showing active compliance progress
- All backflow prevention issues resolved
- Six late water notices to be issued
- One red-tag situation resolved through direct communication
- SIP grant funds to be used for Water Master Plan final invoice
- Wastewater planning invoices are current; additional updates to the wastewater plan at the March meeting with the Engineer.

3.0 PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

None formally recorded.

4.0 OLD BUSINESS

4.1 STRATEGIC PLAN –ONGOING DISCUSSION (CEDS LIST)

Council reviewed the project list to be submitted to the County at their upcoming meeting.
Discussion included:

- Whether to continue advancing wastewater planning or pause
- Importance of keeping wastewater listed due to ongoing consultant work
- Park improvements and grant opportunities
- Combining water infrastructure and meter upgrades under one umbrella priority

Council reached consensus to prioritize:

1. Wastewater infrastructure planning
2. City Park upgrades
3. Water infrastructure improvements (including meters and line upgrades)

Staff directed to submit list accordingly.

4.2 WATER MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Final draft completed. Council discussed previously requested revisions and confirmed the engineer will attend the March meeting for formal review.

4.3 SHARP EASEMENT UPDATE

Mayor announced Executive Session pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(h) to consult legal counsel.
Public was excused.

(No executive session discussion recorded.)

Council returned to open session.

Mayor summarized legal counsel's interpretation:

- Free water service applies only to Joe Sharp's residence and one identified rental residence.
- The easement does not extend free water privileges to additional heirs or properties.
- Development charges (SDCs) may be waived per easement terms, but ongoing water service charges are not waived beyond the specified residences.

Direction: Staff to issue written notice to affected parties requiring standard water service payment moving forward.

Council discussed enforcement procedures if payments are not established.

4.4 126 MILL STREET- PROPERTY COMPLIANCE

Staff reported significant cleanup progress. Council acknowledged visible improvements.

Property owner requested clarification on compliance timeline.

After discussion:

Consensus: Extend compliance deadline to April 1, 2026.

If not in compliance by that date, daily abatement fees may be applied consistent with City code.

Staff directed to conduct a walkthrough and provide written clarification of the remaining required items for the resident.

4.5 MANUFACTURED HOME- 406 LINCOLN

Update included:

- Plumbing completion scheduled
- Skirting installation pending for when plumbing is completed
- Septic system confirmed
- City water service hookup completed
- Electrical connection status unclear

Council discussed potential permitting sequence concerns.

4.6 PARK COMMITTEE UPDATE

Discussion included:

- Interest in installing a basketball hoop or shared court space
- Possible coordination with adjacent property owner
- Liability considerations and fencing
- Surface leveling and trip hazard mitigation on the grassy area
- Grant opportunities for park upgrades

Next Park Committee meeting scheduled for February 11, 2026.

5.0 New Business

5.1 Public Hearing- Wasco Electric Cooperative Fence Variance

Mayor opened public hearing.
No disclosures. No challenges to jurisdiction.
Planner Jaime Crawford presented report regarding retroactive variance for fence height exceeding front yard limitation.
No public testimony received.
Applicant waived seven-day post-hearing response period.
Motion: To approve variance as presented based on findings and staff recommendation.
By: Ree Ella von Borstel | **Second:** Rita Wilson |**Vote**: All in favor.

5.2 AUP Audit Report

Staff reported compliance with audit requirements and payment of $14,500 invoice.
Council requested a list of remaining policy updates to be completed this fiscal year.
Council members took copies of the auditor's reports.

5.3 LOC Budget Training

Council reviewed the virtual training opportunity for staff and council on February 24 and 26.
Cost: $159 per participant. Ree Ella expressed interest in elected official training.
Staff to coordinate registration for councilmembers and possible shared participation with neighboring cities for staff training.

6.0 Public Comment (Non-Agenda Item)

None formally recorded.

7.0 Adjournment

Motion: Adjourn. **By:** Rita Wilson | **Second:** Ree Ella von Borstel | **Vote**: All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at **8:31 PM**.

Attested:

Christian Ayles, Mayor

Samantha Allen, City Administrator

City of Grass Valley
Regular City Council Meeting Minutes
January 5, 2026 7:00 PM
Grass Valley Market Annex

Present: Christian Ayles, Mayor; Samantha Allen, City Administrator; Bonne Whitley, Councilmember; Ree Ella von Borstel, Councilmember; Tom Rolfe, Councilmember; Everett Carson, Councilmember.
Absent: Rita Wilson, Council President; Joann Duarte, Councilmember
Guests Present: Ed Hodges Project Engineer (Curran McLeod Engineering) via Zoom; Amy Phelps Sherman County Planning Director, Michelle Colby (MCEDD) via Zoom, Sean Orsborn, Leta Ann Reckmann

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1.0 CALL TO ORDER

The City Council of the City of Grass Valley met in regular session on January 5, 2026, at the Grass Valley Market Annex. The meeting was called to order at **7:01 PM**. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

1.1 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Council discussed adjusting the agenda to allow scheduled presenters to speak earlier in the meeting.
Motion: Approve November minutes.
By: Ree Ella von Borstel | **Second:** Tom Rolfe | **Vote:** All in favor.

2.0 CONSENT AGENDA

2.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES – REGULAR MEETING, DECEMBER 2025

Motion: Approve November minutes.
By: Tom Rolfe | **Second:** Ree Ella von Borstel | **Vote:** All in favor.

2.2 FINANCIAL REPORTS – DECEMBER 2025

Council discussed the need for additional context and understanding of the City's overall financial picture. Councilmembers agreed that follow-up discussion outside the meeting would be appropriate.
Motion: Approve December financials as presented.
By: Ree Ella von Borstel | **Second:** Bonne Whitley | **Vote:** All in favor.

2.3 MAINTENANCE REPORT

Public Works Director Walter provided a detailed maintenance report, including:

- **City Truck Purchase:** Discussion regarding potential purchase of a used City truck, including purchasing logistics, funding availability, inspection requirements, and considerations between private sellers and dealerships.
- **Maintenance Building Doors:** Discussion regarding replacement of failing overhead doors at the maintenance building, including preliminary cost estimates for commercial-grade doors. Council requested additional quotes and specifications.
- **City Bridges:** Discussion of erosion, damaged guardrails, and deteriorating concrete at several City bridges. Council discussed safety concerns, liability, documentation needs, and the importance of professional evaluation and potential grant funding.
  Council directed staff to continue gathering information and report back with recommendations.

2.4 CITY HALL UPDATES

City Administrator Sam Allen provided updates:

- Status of violation letters and past-due water accounts 5

- No red notices issued
- Partial payments received on some delinquent accounts
- Receipt of DEQ grant funds allowing payment of sewer project planning invoices
- Monitoring of upcoming grant opportunities
- Exploration of online water bill payment options

3.0 PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

3.1 COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS

Resident Comment Regarding Violation Letter

A resident addressed the Council regarding a violation letter he received related to conditions on his property, including multiple vehicles, stored materials, and items located within the City right-of-way. The resident explained personal and financial challenges that have affected his ability to address the issues and stated that he has been making efforts to clean up the property and sell or remove vehicles.

Council members and City staff clarified that City ordinances limit the number of vehicles allowed on a property and prohibit the storage of materials in the City right-of-way. They advised the resident that compliance may include selling, removing, or towing vehicles and maintaining the right-of-way in a clean and orderly condition.

Staff emphasized that the goal is compliance rather than punishment and encouraged the resident to continue working toward correcting the violations. Information was also shared about contacting local scrap and removal services for assistance.

4.0 OLD BUSINESS

4.1 STRATEGIC PLAN –ONGOING DISCUSSION (ANNUAL GRANT PRIORITIES)

Council discussed ongoing strategic planning efforts focused on identifying and prioritizing grant opportunities. Staff reported working with Michelle from MCEDD to track recurring grants, eligibility requirements, and required project lists.

Discussion emphasized:

- The need to remain on the required state and regional project lists to qualify for future funding
- Focusing on a manageable number of priority projects rather than pursuing numerous grants simultaneously.
- Anticipated upcoming (ORPD) park grant opportunities, with timing expected later in the year
- Council interest in assigning a lead Councilmember to attend workshops or trainings related to a grant opportunity.
- Council consensus was to continue refining priority projects and coordinate closely with MCEDD as opportunities arise.

4.2 WATER MASTER PLAN UPDATE – DISCUSSION AND FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

Engineer Ed Hodges, Curran-McLeod, provided an update on both the Water Master Plan and Wastewater Project:

- Water Master Plan: Corrections identified during review have been completed. The final plan will be submitted to the Oregon Health Authority for approval, and a completed copy will be provided to the City.
- Wastewater Project: Progress over the past month included septic system surveys conducted with assistance from Walter (Public Works). Approximately half of the community has been surveyed to date, with remaining surveys scheduled for completion. Preliminary findings indicate a significant number of aging systems, which will help quantify needs for funding agencies.
- Next Steps: A preliminary wastewater report is anticipated by February. Engineering Staff is also working with Business Oregon and other funding agencies to explore funding scenarios. Public meetings will be scheduled following Council review of the draft report.

Council discussed the importance of quantifiable data for grant eligibility and expressed appreciation for progress made by Curran-Mcleod, Inc.

4.3 WASTEWATER PROJECT UPDATE

Covered under Item 4.2.

4.4 BACKFLOW CONNECTIONS – BRIEF UPDATE

Staff reported that all known backflow connections are currently in compliance.

4.5 PARKING VIOLATIONS – UPDATE

Staff reported coordination with the Sherman County Sheriff's Office regarding parking violations in intersections and City right-of-way areas. Notices were reportedly placed on vehicles, and Council observed improved conditions at some locations. Staff agreed to follow up and provide additional updates as needed.

4.6 WASCO ELECTRIC – FENCE ISSUE UPDATE

Staff reported ongoing monitoring and coordination with the city planner. No action was taken.

4.7 MANUFACTURED HOME AT 406 LINCOLN – UPDATE

Staff provided an update regarding the manufactured home located at 406 Lincoln, including recent water service and safety-related actions. Public Works extended a temporary water line onto the property to allow connection during ongoing work; however, the connection was not completed within the expected timeframe, and the excavation was subsequently filled.

Council discussed fencing and safety concerns beneath the structure and noted that the property owner has been notified and provided a compliance deadline. Staff reported that the owner has since indicated they are resuming responsibility for completing required work after a change in expectations with a prospective buyer.

Council expressed concern regarding the length of time the structure has remained out of compliance and emphasized the need for measurable progress. Staff confirmed continued monitoring and follow-up to ensure compliance within the established timeframe.

5.0 New Business

5.1 Speedway Energy Project – Presentation

Speedway Energy Project Presentation & Council Discussion

JP Newman, along with representatives from Brookfield Renewable and Urban Grid Co, provided an overview of the proposed Speedway Energy Project, a large-scale renewable energy development planned for privately owned land northeast and southwest of Grass Valley. The project is expected to include a combination of wind, solar, and battery energy storage facilities, with interconnection to existing BPA transmission lines near Highway 97.

Project representatives explained that construction is anticipated to begin in late 2027 and continue through approximately 2029. The project may involve several hundred workers at peak construction phases, with a smaller permanent workforce of approximately 3–5 employees once operational. Council members expressed concerns regarding the potential impacts of a large temporary workforce on local housing availability, traffic, emergency services, and public safety.

Council members asked about fire prevention and emergency response planning, particularly in light of the City's volunteer fire and EMT resources. Project representatives stated that they are working with local fire officials and landowners to explore options such as on-site water storage, fire breaks, and other mitigation measures. They emphasized that the project will be built to comply with all applicable safety and electrical codes and that collaboration with local emergency services will continue throughout the planning process.

Questions were also raised regarding the long-term financial assurance for decommissioning the project if necessary. Brookfield representatives explained that the project will be backed by letters of credit issued by financial institutions, rather than traditional bonds, to ensure funding would be available for decommissioning if required.

Additional discussion included potential traffic impacts on Highway 97, coordination with ODOT and the Sherman County Roadmaster, and the possibility of future communication by council and staff with elected officials from other communities where similar projects have been constructed.

Project representatives also announced that a public Notice of Intent (NOI) meeting with the Oregon Department of Energy is scheduled for **January 14 at 5:30 PM at the Grass Valley Pavilion**. This meeting will serve as the first formal public introduction of the project as it enters the state permitting process. Community members will have the opportunity to learn more about the project, ask questions, and provide input.

5.2 CEDS Project List – Update

Amy Phelps (Sherman County Planning) and Michelle Colby (MCEDD) explained that Grass Valley's existing CEDS project list includes the following priority items:

- **East Side Water Main Replacement** (due to aging infrastructure)
- **City Park Upgrades / Playground Improvements**
- **Wastewater System / Sewer Development Projects**
- **Municipal Well Improvements / Water Infrastructure**

During the meeting, additional project ideas were discussed for possible inclusion on the updated list:

- **Bridge Maintenance and Repair**
- **Citywide Water Meter Upgrades** (as a future recommendation tied to the Water Master Plan)

MCEDD staff stated they will summarize the updated project list and send it to the City for Council review. The final list is expected to be completed by **early March**.
They also noted that many state and federal infrastructure grants require projects to be listed on the CEDS in order to be eligible for funding.

5.3 Portable City Traffic Signs – Discussion

Council reviewed information regarding portable traffic speed signs and discussed cost, staffing impacts, and effectiveness. The item was tabled pending additional information.

5.4 Request for Full Audit Next Year – Discussion

Council discussed partial versus full audits and expressed consensus to plan for a full audit in FY 2026–2027 following continued process stabilization.

5.5 Rules Regarding Burning During Freezing Weather

Council discussed recent burn pile activity and agreed no policy changes were necessary at this time.

6.0 Public Comment

6.1 Comments on Non-Agenda Items

Public Comment – Flag Program / Volunteer Position
Leta Ann addressed the Council regarding the City's flag program. She shared that she will be moving out of the area and will no longer be able to continue overseeing the flag maintenance and rotation. She emphasized the importance of having a dedicated volunteer to monitor the condition of the flags, ensure timely repairs, and coordinate replacements when needed.
Council discussed the importance of maintaining the flags in good condition and expressed appreciation for Leta Ann's past service and contributions.

7.0 Adjournment

Motion: Adjourn. By: Tom Rolfe | Second: Ree Ella von Borstel | Vote: All in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 9:01 PM.

Attested:

Christian Ayles, Mayor

Samantha Allen, City Administrator