



CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES January 27, 2026

Audio equipment ceased working at 1:13:51 of the meeting. Minutes from that point were taken from written notes by the City Recorder.

The scheduled meeting of the Ontario City Council was called to order by Mayor Deborah Folden at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 27, 2026, in the Council Chambers of City Hall. Council members present were Deborah Folden, Susann Mills, Michael Braden, John Kirby, Ken Hart, Adriana Contreras, and Penny Bakefelt.

Staff present were Dan Cummings, Tori Barnett, Corinna Hysell, Kari Ott, Jason Cooper, Clint Benson, Tatiana Burgess, Al Haun, Marshall Pierce, and Andy Wood.

AGENDA

This Agenda was posted Friday, January 23, 2026. Copies of the Agenda are available from the City Hall Customer Service Counter and on the city's website www.ontariooregon.org.

HART moved, MILLS seconded, **TO ADOPT THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED**. Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-yes; Contreras-yes; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion carried 7/0/0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Tim Cables, Ontario, stated: *Thank you Mayor, and is this on? Can you hear me? Well, I'll project. Mayor, members of the Council, and fellow citizens of Ontario, I was born and raised here. I graduated from high school in 1969. I moved away to the Willamette Valley for seven years, the Oregon Coast for eight years, and then back in 1984, and the Chief tells me that he remembers helping with middle school dances that I helped put on at Blessed Sacrament Church where I worked for 20 years., working with middle school and high school kids. When I first moved back, I got involved in television advertising and what I came to speak about today for a minute is an invitation really for all of you to investigate using the QR code what this MAFA idea is. It's a name that I have simply applied in addition to something that I call pioneer spirit. It's that spirit that allowed us to move from one coast to another by hard-working individuals, working together, things like barn raisings and helping at the hayings and brandings. This is targeted towards civic organizations that are already doing good things and it's an invitation to the community at large to get involved, especially when they take on something of a common concern like Coats for Kids. This year, these organizations, and more, gathered probably close to 250 coats for kids and got them distributed. It's something that they could have done on their own, and would have, and would have done a very good job, it's just that kind of operating out of the month of banner, I know that we raised questions and raised more coats than we probably would have because people did ask questions. They said, oh, Tim, I see by your hat you're in the mafia now. How's that working for ya? I said, well, it's Move America Forward Again, as you can plainly see, and they said, well, what does that mean? Well, it means that you can check out the website and it'll tell you exactly what it means, but generally, it's encouraging people to join organizations that are already doing good things in the community and when there's something of a common cause, like Coats for Kids, it raises public awareness if you make an effort to kind of promote what you're doing and you can do that by wearing a hat or you can give a pocket flyer to somebody. One of my friends said, well, good luck with that. Hope it works for you. I said, well, it's not for me, it's not about me, it's about the kids that need coats. Do you mind donating a coat? He said, well, I'm sorry I asked. I'm not sorry, I'm glad you asked. Will you donate a coat? And I got seven brand new ones for little tots. So, that's what this is about, generally. I'm inviting you to take a look at the website and there's actually a book entitled "The MAFA Springboard Story" because that's what it's about. It's about promotional springboard raising public awareness that there's a project going on and we'd like to invite you to get involved and help out. Thank you.*



PRESENTATION

Ontario Landfill Summary Report

Carrie Rackey, Principal, Stantec Consulting Services, Inc., stated: *I've been working with Dan Cummings on Brownfields issues for a few years and we saw an opportunity to get some funding from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality to investigate the former municipal landfill. DEQ has a program called the Oregon Site Program, and they granted the City of Ontario \$100,000 to investigate a former municipal landfill that's up kind of in the northwestern part of town. So, if go to the next slide, I think you'll see an image of where the site is located. So, when Ontario got the grant, we worked with the DEQ to put together a scope of work to evaluate conditions on this site. And the goal really was to kind of get an idea of what this site is suitable to be reused for. So, \$100k, it gives you a snapshot, so we, it's not a comprehensive investigation, but what we did was, we put together a scope of work that included a few things. So, we did what's called a geophysical survey, where we used ground penetrating radar to kind of map out roughly the boundaries of the waste material. I think if you go to the next slide, you'll see a little bit more of what that looks like. So that hash area there is based on the geophysical survey that we did and some tests pits that we did to kind of ground true what the ground penetrating radar was saying. We dug some test pits in there and evaluated that that's roughly the extent, special extent, of the waste material. And we also excavated some pits with "???" in the waste material to get a better idea of how deep it was and what it was made of. We also did two rounds of sampling of ground water and soil gas. We did one in the dry season, and one in the wet season. It's important to get both because those weather factors can impact both soils vapor and ground water conditions. So, EPA approved that work plan, so we went ahead and moved forward with the work. And what we found was essentially that the site is particularly contaminated. The only, the waste material that we saw in that filled area was largely glass, root fragments, wire, not much, at least it looked like municipal household type waste, but not very buried, really kind of in the dirt material. And when we did the sampling, we did some sampling of shallow soil to see what people would be coming into direct contact with, potentially, if they were using this site, and we did some deeper soil. In one location we saw something that looked like it might be contaminate- related, and then in the soil vapor samples, so if you're not familiar with soil vaporing, landfills generate explosive and sometimes toxic gases, and so you can take samples of the gas that has accumulated in the subsurface soil to evaluate those risks, and that's what we did. We also sampled the ground water to see if there was waster material here that had leached out of the landfill and contaminated the groundwater. And we really didn't see much of that at all. So, nothing in the, we took an 8-point composite of shallow soil, so we took shallow soil from within a couple feet of ground surface across the landfill, and we mixed it up, and sent that to the lab. It's a more cost-effective way than sending in separate samples. If you are taking your samples and you don't see anything unusual, everything looks like the same type of material, then it makes financial sense to do it that way. So that's what we did, and that material didn't exceed and DEQ land use standards. There was a point where each of the samples from this waste material is mounded on this site, so it's not a flat site. So, when we say that it's eight feet below ground surface, it's eight feet from the top of the mound, which might only be at ground surface of the surrounding sort of grade. But we did take a sample at depth because we saw some other materials, some ashy type materials, and we took, we analyzed it and there was an elevated lead concentration there. It's the only place that we saw that. So, what that indicates is that if you were to grade this site and move a significant amount of soil around, or take it off site, you might expose additional areas, so if the property is going to be used for something sensitive, like residential use, where people might be accessing the soil because they live there, then, maybe some additional sampling would be required or recommended. But really, we didn't see much contamination at all. And then in the soil vapor, the same. We looked for both Methane, because it's an explosion hazard and that could be generated if you have a lot of organic material in a landfill, which we really didn't see, and we only saw trace amounts of Methane that don't indicate a risk in explosiveness. And we also analyzed samples from are called volatile organic compounds, which are contaminates that come from disposed chemicals and those kinds, petroleum, and that kind of stuff, and we didn't see anything at all. So that's really a primary concern with landfills, is there gas being generated that's either going to blow up a building that you put onto the site, or accumulate inside a building and cause a risk to human health. So really the takeaway from this is that the site as it is doesn't pose a risk to human health. Being on the site I think what we saw that hazardous in terms of the use of the site, we could have a more detailed conversation of that, but sports fields, athletic fields, would be a suitable use. If you wanted to put a building on the site that was enclosed, I think, like a bathroom or a changing room or something associated with a park or a sports facility, would be fine. Something where people don't live there. If a more sensitive use was proposed for this site, then more sampling would be warranted. It doesn't really lend itself to residential development in this area, but if that was the plan, some additional sampling would be warranted because that's a sensitive property use. As is, from what is a fairly limited, but big glimpse of conditions at the site, we didn't see significant contamination here and it looks like, as it is, it's usable for whatever you want, and then depending on the sophistication of what you want to build on it, there might be more investigation warranted. Be happy to flesh that out with questions, or....*



Councilor Hart asked how large the site was.

Ms. Rackey stated: *Twenty acres. And that's not boundary, it's 20 acres and it's a tax lot, the waste area is half that, roughly.*

Councilor Hart stated the part of the land that was not a former part of the landfill, where it doesn't appear that any testing was done there, because there was no concern. Was that accurate?

Ms. Rackey: *Yes, that's right. If there was an obvious mound adjacent, we do have, I think we can see a little bit on this figure, there are some monetary mounds to the north and south and outside the waste boundary, so we did look at the ground water outside of the waste boundary, largely because we didn't want to punch a hole through the bottom of it and potentially cause a pathway, create a pathway each time we dig deeper into the subsurface, but yeah, because of the geophysical and the test pits indicated that it ends there, to the west, we didn't continue on to the west.*

Councilor Kirby asked what the zoning was.

Mr. Cummings stated it was zoned Public Facility.

Ms. Rackey: *WE did find, though, that load sample that was elevated, that was eight feet below the top of the mound, that exceeds, DEQ has this standard called Clean Fill Standards, so it's not a human health related standard, but what it means is if you want to regrade and you want to move soil around on the site, that's fine, but if you want to take it offsite, if it has exceeds those standards, then it has to go to a landfill, it can't go to a, to a landfill or DEQ approved facility. It can't sort of just go some fill site somewhere, but, like I said, we only had one sample that showed that higher lead concentration, which could just be a complete one off, so if regrading and moving the soil offsite is planned, it would be worth the little bit of cost to stockpile that soil and sample it and then determine where it needs to go.*

Councilor Kirby asked if it was in the 100-year floodplain.

Ms. Burgess stated it was.

Councilor Mills asked how that would affect future buildings, especially if it was residential.

Mr. Cummings stated he did not believe they'd propose any residential on that property. The best use would be for a sports complex. It was in the Parks Master Plan as such.

Ms. Rackey: *I'll just note, too, that the investigation was really focused on contamination and not necessarily geotechnical, so we don't have any, we didn't study the geotechnical, so if something heavy were to be built where the waste is, that would be something you'd want to look into as well.*

Photo Red Light Cameras

Jason Cooper, Police Chief, presented.



Ontario Police Department

- Automated Traffic Enforcement
- Photo Redlight Study

Jason Cooper
Chief of Police



Traffic Study

4 Intersections Selected

- > -East Idaho Avenue / East Lane
- > - East Idaho Avenue / Goodfellow Drive
- > - Oregon Street / Idaho Avenue
- > - SW 4th Avenue / SW 4th Street

> (14) Cameras utilized*

* (2) directions were compromised due to road curvature and obstruction(s).



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Traffic Study



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> Two Components of Traffic Study:

1. Speed Analysis

> Based on the company analysis, the observed traffic speeds at the selected intersection(s) indicate that the volume of potential speed violations would be relatively low.

2. Red light Analysis

> Based on the company analysis, the observed traffic control device compliance at the selected intersection(s) indicate that the volume of potential stop light violations would generate sufficient activity to be self-sustaining.



Fixed Red/Light Safety Camera

Road Safety Camera Program



WHAT IT FEATURES:

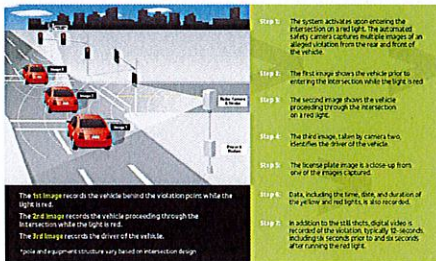


WHY IT MATTERS:

- HIGH ENFORCEMENT RATES
MINIMIZED LIGHT POLLUTION
SUPERIOR RELIABILITY & PERFORMANCE
HIGH DEGREE OF ACCURACY

How it Works: Red/Light Safety Camera | Driver Liability/Face Capture

Mobility Road Safety Camera Program



Financial Impact

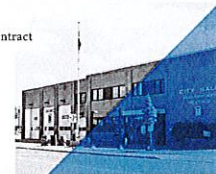


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> 5-year contract with City

- Estimated monthly cost per camera - \$5,250
Estimated Monthly cost for (14) Cameras - \$73,500
Estimated Annual Program Cost - \$882,000
Estimated 5-year Program Cost - \$4,410 Million

> No Equipment or installation costs---included with the contract



Pre-implementation requirements



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- > A. ODOT right of way for applicable traffic light intersections
> Approval process for installation & permits (Unknown cost to city)
> Power source needed (Unknown cost to city)

> B. Non -ODOT right of way for applicable traffic light intersections

- > Construction permits from city
> Power source needed (Unknown cost to city)

> C. Public information campaign to inform local drivers about the use of cameras before citations are actually issued. (30-day grace period)



Additional program requirements



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> Once each biennium, conduct a process and outcome evaluation on the program effectiveness pertaining to traffic safety, degree of public acceptance, and process of administration on the use of cameras.

> By March 1 of each odd-numbered year, each city that operates a camera under this section shall present to the Legislative Assembly the process and outcome evaluation.



Cost/Fine Assessment/Net Projections



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Assumptions*

Presumptive Fine = \$165.00 (Actual \$ 93.50)

Minimum Fine = \$ 135.00 (Actual \$ 64.50)

(*75% of fines collected w/100% C.F.)

Table with columns: Description, State, County Assessment, City, Total. Lists various traffic violations and their associated costs.



Traffic Fine Distribution



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811.265 Fail to obey a traffic control device - Class B Traffic Violation

A person commits the offense of driver failure to obey a traffic control device if the person drives a vehicle and the person does any of the following:
(a) Fails to obey the direction of any traffic control device.
(b) Fails to obey any specific traffic control device described in ORS 811.263/Aggravated driver response to traffic control device in the manner required by that section.

Presumptive Fine = \$265.00

Minimum Fine = \$ 135.00

Table showing fine distribution: State (\$265.00), County Assessment (\$50), City (\$16), Total (\$331.00).

*Fine distribution for traffic fine as implied by Oregon revised statute ORS 811.265 (2)(b)



POLICE Police Staffing & Financial Impact



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> Officer Review of Citation(s) - Per Month

- > Estimated citations issued first 12-18 months - 2,633
- > Estimated review time per violation 1-2 minutes 43.88hrs - 87.76hrs (officer time)
- > Estimated citations issued after 18+ months - 1,756
- > Estimated review time per violation 1-2 minutes 29.26hrs - 58.53hrs (officer time)



POLICE Malheur Justice Court



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Citation(s) - 3 year totals [Malheur Sheriff, Ontario Police, Nyssa Police, Oregon State Police, & Oregon Department of Transportation]

| | |
|------|--|
| 2023 | Total Citation(s) - 8,449 |
| | Total Offense(s) - 9,727 |
| 2024 | Total Citation(s) - 9,465 |
| | Total Offense(s) - 11,839 |
| 2025 | Total Citation(s) - 9,601 |
| | Total Offense(s) - 11,816 |
| 2026 | Total Citation(s) - 41,397 (Projected) |
| | +321% Increase in volume |

- Additional Consideration(s)**
- > Staffing issues to process citations
 - > Efficiency



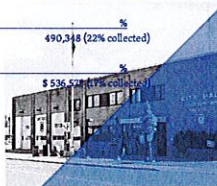
POLICE Malheur Justice Court Impact



12/10/25

> Financial Data-

| | | |
|------|--|----------------------------|
| 2023 | Bail Fine Imposed Court Cost/other Paid Balance | % |
| | \$ 497,441 \$ 135,140 \$ 417,295 \$ 445.00 \$ 91,852 | \$ 325,887 (22% collected) |
| 2024 | Bail Fine Imposed Court Cost/other Paid Balance | % |
| | \$ 774,153 \$ 196,397 \$ 633,062 \$ 310.00 \$ 143,023 \$ | 490,348 (22% collected) |
| 2025 | Bail Fine Imposed Court Cost/other Paid Balance | % |
| | \$ 883,925 \$ 165,865 \$ 636,220 \$ 8,386 \$ 108,031 | \$ 536,548 (22% collected) |



Turnkey Program Services



TOTAL PROGRAM SUPPORT

From installation to paid citation and beyond, we've got you covered.

- > Equipment
- > Installation
- > Management
- > Training
- > Event Processing
- > Citation Printing
- > Citation Mailing
- > Reporting
- > Public Awareness
- > Call Center
- > Court Integration

POLICE Administrative Multi-Step Process



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- Alleged violation is identified/captured through Photo Red Light System vendor.
- The violation goes through a screening process with the vendor. Once verified, the violation is sent to the law enforcement agency for final review.
 - Ensures digital photographs, video of violation, data, and registered owner information is accurate as possible.
- If any of this information does not meet stringent quality control standards, the citation is not issued.
 - Common reasons for not being issued:
 - Driver is not identifiable
 - Driver gender does not match registered owner
 - License plate cannot be determined/verified
 - Photo red light equipment issue
 - Photo alignment
 - Sun glare/obstructions
 - License plate obstruction
- During final review, the officer makes determination to not issue/issue citation. Once approved, their electronic signature is affixed to citation.
- Vendor prints and mails traffic citation, along w/(4) images of the violation incident to registered owner.



POLICE Administrative Multi-Step Process



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- Registered owner is provided with access to vendor portal to view video of the violation if so desired. An explanation letter, rights information (normally found on back of JTC), and access to a Certificate of Innocence/Certificate of Non-liability form to complete if they were not the driver of the vehicle at time of violation.
- Traffic citation will be mailed to the registered owner, or to the driver if identifiable, within 10 business days of the alleged violation.
- The registered owner is given 30 days from the date of the citation is mailed to respond to the citation.
- A rebuttable presumption exists that the registered owner of the vehicle was the driver when the citation was issued and delivered. (ORS 810.046)
- A registered owner of a vehicle may respond by mail to a citation issued within 30 days from the mailing of a citation with a "certificate of innocence" swearing or affirming that the owner was not the driver of the vehicle AND providing a photocopy of the owner's driver's license. The Jurisdiction (Court) that receives the certificate of innocence shall dismiss the citation without requiring a court appearance by the registered owner. The citation may be reassessed, collected, registered owner and only if the jurisdiction verifies that the registered owner appears to have been the driver of the vehicle of the violation.
- If a business or public agency responds to a citation issued, within 30 days from the mailing of the citation, with non liability stating that at the time of the alleged violation



POLICE Administrative Multi-Step Process



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- If a business or public agency responds to a citation issued, within 30 days from the mailing of the citation, a "certificate of non liability" stating that at the time of the alleged violation the vehicle was in the custody and control of an employee or renter/lessee under the terms of a rental agreement/lease, the citation can be dismissed. The business or public agency MUST provide the driver's license number, name /address of the employee, renter or lessee. A citation may then be re-issued to that individual identified in the certificate of non-liability.
- Registration information is determined through Oregon DMV records. It is a requirement of Oregon Law to maintain updated address information with the Dept. of Motor Vehicles.



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Mayor Folden asked if Chief Cooper wouldn't actually prefer a real, live police officer instead of what was being proposed? Wouldn't it be more beneficial?

Chief Cooper stated he would. With traffic violations, and violations in general, there was discretion, and each violation could be viewed differently, taking all circumstances into account. Then there was also that person to person contact with the alleged violator to attempt to rectify and educate the motorist, to try and get compliance that way.

Councilor Kirby stated the 22% collected, was that a figure that was well-used nationwide? Was I-84 part of the figures? Was it locals? Was it truckers who just didn't pay? Was it a combination?

Chief Cooper stated it was a combination. Those numbers provided included the Ontario Police Department, along with Nyssa PD, Malheur County Sheriff's Office, the Oregon State Police, and the Oregon Department of Transportation, being the weighmaster. All those were submitted to the Ontario Justice Court.

Councilor Kirby confirmed Oregon law did not place a lien or something against the vehicle that could be collected at the time it sold.

Chief Cooper stated the court was limited on processes and that was not one of them.

Mr. Cummings stated he thought the collection Chief Cooper was showing was strictly Ontario.

Chief Cooper stated that was correct.

Mr. Cummings stated the amount not collected was only what was owed to the City of Ontario, not anyone else. In 2025, that \$536k, was owed only to the City of Ontario. And the city had not received a good answer as to why the county was not collecting those. He encouraged the Chief to push for a better answer from the county as to why over the past three years, they basically owed the Ontario over a million dollars, which had not been collected. That was a lot of money not being collected, that could be in the city's coffers. It made no sense to put more out there that wouldn't be collected.

Councilor Kirby stated it made no sense to issue a traffic ticket, if no one paid the fine. He wondered if other jurisdictions were having the same issues, and if they were, why shouldn't that be a warrant attached to the title of the vehicle. Then it could be collected on the sale of the vehicle.

Mayor Folden stated her business was collections, and it was very hard to get people to pay their fines. She was unsure as to why, but her collections were way down. Unless she resuspended their license, and put out warrants, it wouldn't change.

Councilor Hart stated the part he was concerned about, according to the study, and he was curious if he agreed, that four intersections in Ontario, this company assumed there were 2,633 red light runners.

Chief Cooper stated that was correct.

Councilor Hart stated so they were just going to shrug and say, oh, that's just Ontario. If the Council authorized another officer, or three more, were they just going to just sit at those lights and get people to stop running red lights in this community? That's the part he was the most concerned about. Once they stopped enforcing laws, people stopped caring and just didn't do anything. This was not about - this was a lot more money than he had expected, and he certainly appreciated the information, but did they just shrug their shoulders and accept it as life, or if they gave three more officers, even with the trouble they were having filling the vacancies now, but would they sit at the lights and make sure people stopped running red lights? This proposal was a possible tool that a lot of other cities in Oregon and Idaho were using because they did not have enough officers. Had anyone in the room received this type of ticket? He had, and he never ran that red light again. And, yes, he paid the fine. But it worked, and it caused him to say he wasn't going to run that red light anymore. The reason to do this was not to make money, it was to try to get people to not run red lights in this community. He didn't know if there were stats, but if just one kid got hit, and everyone was like oh well, this was a safety issue in this community. This study stated that in just four stop lights, 2,600 in one month! He was not willing to just shrug it off and accept it. He wanted to get some ideas from the officers to see if there was some other



things that could be done, and this was really just one tool that could be applied. His overall concern was that they were just kind of accepting it as normal in Ontario that people ran red lights. He was in Fruitland a lot, and didn't see that number, but he did see a lot more cops. He understood that OPD was doing a lot of stuff, and if they were to choose between having more officers to have less people running red lights, that's a good debate they should have. He just saw this as a possible tool to explore, using technology to help offset the fact they couldn't have all the officers they'd like to have.

Chief Cooper agreed, and pointed out that the department was very short-staffed. In the past, when the department had been better staffed, the City of Ontario had dedicated traffic enforcement officers. There was also a motorcycle officer at one time, and he was solely out there enforcing traffic. That was his dedicated assignment. He believed there was a need for that, he agreed they should look at exploring the expansion of staff. When the department was fully staffed and could dedicate those officers to address those issues, they could also take additional complaints from the public, not only at particular intersections that had traffic lights, but others where there might be a concern from a citizen related to speeding in a residential or school area. Currently, they did not have the staffing capacity to address that like they'd like to, but that would enable them to enhance their capabilities to address those issues. He agreed totally it was a public safety issue, and if saved even one life, then it was worth it. He did like the face-to-face integration with the officer and the public to address those issues. The ultimate goal was to get compliance, and to educate the public.

Mayor Folden stated whenever she saw the presence of an officer, she immediately slowed down.

Councilor Mills stated the report stated the estimated annual program cost was \$882k, which did not include equipment or installation. Was that correct?

Chief Cooper that was the cost, but this third-party vendor, regarding the total cost, they included the installation cost for their property. There would be no additional cost to the city initially. Those costs were paying for the equipment and installation. The city would have to bring power and any permits to the intersection through ODOT to get permission to place the equipment at selected intersections.

Councilor Mills stated that versus hiring two or three police officers, was there....

Chief Cooper stated that annually, it would be approximately, according to this vendor, \$882k a year versus that could potentially fund how many officers for the year.

Ms. Ott stated it would be about \$150k per officer, so maybe four.

Councilor Mills stated there would also be the training involved, but she thought it seemed like a large difference between installation versus putting on more police force.

Mr. Cummings stated there were more than four lights. If they were adding to all, it would be the same cost per light. Bang for the buck, a few more officers could cover every one of those, plus side streets. It also had to do with education. They were seriously looking at how to get one, possibly two, officers running traffic all the time, and offering education to the community. There would always be those who didn't care and ran the light anyway, but for the most part, seeing a cop sitting there made people aware.

Councilor Contreras stated of the people who ran the red lights, how many caused accidents?

Chief Cooper stated he did not have the information with him, but it was definitely a large contributing factor to causing a motor vehicle accident.



OLD BUSINESS**Resolution #2026-101: Supplemental Budget for Lions Park Parking and Flagpole**

Kari Ott, Finance Director, presented.

During the January 13, 2026, City Council meeting, the City Council approved the replacement of the flagpole at Lions Park, and to construct additional parking at Lions Park contingent on staff bringing back a resolution with the funding.

The General Fund beginning fund balance came in higher than expected due to various items such as higher property taxes and marijuana taxes. The unexpected additional beginning balance was enough to fund the flagpole and Lions Park parking lot projects. The flagpole was being budgeted at not to exceed \$50,000 and the Lions Park parking lot at a not to exceed amount of \$125,000.

These projects would increase the General Fund beginning balance by \$175,000 and appropriate the projects in the Parks Department of the General Fund.

BAKEFELT moved, MILLS seconded, **THAT THE CITY COUNCIL CITY COUNCIL APPROVE RESOLUTION #2026-101: A SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS TO REPLACE THE FLAGPOLE AT LIONS PARK FOR A NOT TO EXCEED AMOUNT OF \$50,000 AND CONSTRUCT ADDITIONAL PARKING AT LIONS PARK FOR A NOT TO EXCEED AMOUNT OF \$125,000.** Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-yes; Contreras-yes; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion carried 7/0/0.

Resolution #2026-102: Approve Amendments to the Collective Bargaining Agreement between City of Ontario and IAFF Local 3464

Dan Cummings, City Manager, presented.

The existing Collective Bargaining Agreement [CBA] between the City of Ontario [City] and the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) union expired on June 30, 2025. The city team, consisting of City Manager Dan Cummings and Fire Chief Clint Benson, began negotiating with representatives from the IAFF in late May and early June and tentatively agreed on the terms of the amendments to the CBA.

Negotiations went very smoothly with the teams who presented proposed changes by both parties. Due to work conflicts with the city team, negotiations were put on hold until November. Final negotiations were completed in mid-December, and final changes were sent to the City Attorney for contract modifications, then sent to the IAFF attorney for approval and signatures. The Agreement had been approved by the city team staff and by the IAFF and was being presented to City Council for their approval.

The benefits with the CBA would be reactive to July 1, 2025. The agreed-upon pay and benefits fit within the anticipated budget established during the 2025-2026 budget approval.

KIRBY moved, CONTRERAS seconded, **THAT THE CITY COUNCIL TO APPROVE RESOLUTION #2026-102, A RESOLUTION AMENDING THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF ONTARIO AND IAFF LOCAL 3464 AND AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR AND CITY MANGER TO SIGN THE AGREEMENT.** Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-yes; Contreras-yes; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion carried 7/0/0.

NEW BUSINESS**Billing for Vehicle Accidents within City Limits**

Clint Benson, Fire Chief, presented.

The Fire Department responded regularly to motor vehicle accidents, totaling 112 responses in calendar year 2025. ORS 478.310 allowed the city to bill for the cost of these services. Ontario Rural Fire Protection District has used Fire Recovery USA to bill for automobile accidents successfully since 2023. Costs for service continue to rise with income from fees and taxes remaining stagnant. Ontario Fire and Rescue would like to start billing for these responses within the City of Ontario.



In August 2023, the Ontario Rural Fire Protection District passed Resolution #5-2023, which established and implemented a program to charge mitigation rates for services provided by the Ontario Rural Fire Protection District for motor vehicle accidents occurring on transportation routes. Resolution #6-2023 authorized the Director to enter into a contract with Fire Recovery USA. This program has worked well for the District, resulting in revenues of \$12,015 in CY 2023, \$16,371 in CY 2024, and \$3,928 in CY 2025, a total of \$32,314 collected since implementation. Fire Department staff used the Fire Recovery USA online system to enter the vehicle crash report information, along with a copy of the incident report, and then Fire Recovery USA takes care of billing and collections.

Currently, Ontario Fire does not bill for motor vehicle accidents within the City Limits. Additionally, property taxes within the City of Ontario did not cover the cost of fire department operations.

Commitment to providing superior quality service requires funding to support these services. With property taxes not supporting Fire Department operations, it was imperative to explore additional funding sources that would help support the city's commitment to provide superior quality services. Many of the transportation accidents that occurred within the City of Ontario required a Fire Department response, and many of these transportation accidents involved vehicles registered in areas outside the city and state.

The cost of operating the Fire Department continued to rise due to inflation and operational improvements to the services being provided. In calendar year 2025, staff responded to 112 motor vehicle accidents. As a conservative estimate of income that would be generated by billing for motor vehicle accident responded to in the city, if half of those responses were for non-residents, and half of those calls were billable, the estimated annual income from this program would be \$13,132. Financial impacts to the Ontario community members and visitors to Ontario should be minimal. Patron's insurance premiums included costs related to emergency responses. Staff would be billing for monies already paid for by auto insurance holders.

Timing was good to implement this program. Staff was set up with Fire Recovery USA and had used the program in the Rural District since 2023. Cost of goods and services continued to rise, so finding and implementing additional revenue streams was imperative.

ORS 478.310(2)(a)-(b) allows cities to charge for emergency services involving occurrences on a transportation route...*"When a district or city responds to a call for assistance arising from an incident involving an airplane crash or an occurrence on a transportation route within the city or district, the district or city may recover from the person or property receiving the direct fire or safety services as a result of the incident any cost incurred for the following:*

- a. *The contract or reasonable value of the use, including repairs and depreciation, of the apparatus and equipment used in accordance with a state standardized-costs schedule issued by the State Fire Marshal; and*
- b. *Other expenses or costs reasonably incurred in furnishing the assistance, as adopted by the service provider."*

The city could continue not billing for automobile accidents and explore alternative revenue sources; however, staff recommended utilizing Fire Recovery USA to bill for automobile accidents, and other applicable incidents, within the city as allowed by ORS 478.310.

MILLS moved, BAKEFELT seconded, THE COUNCIL APPROVE THE FIRE DEPARTMENT'S USE OF FIRE RECOVERY USA TO BILL FOR MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS AND OTHER APPLICABLE INCIDENTS WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS. Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-yes; Contreras-yes; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion carried 7/0/0.

Lexipol: Fire Department Policies and Procedures Update

Clint Benson, Fire Chief, presented.

The Ontario Fire Department's current Standard Operating Procedures and Policies were antiquated and needed revision. Public safety agencies have had great success using Lexipol. Lexipol was an all-in-one platform for public safety agencies that provided state-specific fire policies and training tools for agencies. The system used daily training briefings to keep firefighters knowledgeable of current policies and procedures and provided regular state and federal updates to ensure the department had policies and procedures in place that met current regulations. Lexipol had been used successfully by the Ontario Police Department for several years and



was a system that had proven valuable statewide in public safety agencies. This action would provide the fire department with an up-to-date policy manual, daily training bulletins for staff, policy updates related to State and Federal regulations and court decisions affecting fire departments, and a web-based platform and mobile app that included Fire Rescue 1 Academy, a state-of-the-art training platform with fire, EMS, and hazmat related training. Fire Rescue 1 Academy also allowed staff training to be documented in a cloud-based system, compared to the current antiquated system, CertRight, running off a CD Rom. Lexipol would greatly enhance the fire department's policies, procedures, and training documentation.

Ontario Fire's current standard operating procedures (SOPs) were written prior to 2014, with minor additions and edits in 2021 and 2022 related to blood-borne pathogens and Oregon OSHA's heat illness prevention plan. The department's SOPs were in PDF format and were emailed to new staff upon hire. The current SOPs needed revisions or rewritten to accommodate current apparatus, such as the new ladder truck Tower 199 and Tender 158, policy memorandums like medical call tiering and training requirements, updates to the City's Employee Manual, and staffing strategies for new positions such as Captain, Engineer, and four-person staffing. Once updated, the SOPs should be reviewed and approved by the city's legal counsel to ensure they met current State and Federal requirements. This was very time-consuming work that should be reviewed and approved by legal counsel on an annual basis. Lexipol's program provided legally sound and up-to-date policies and a cloud-based training records management system.

Public safety funds were available and would be put to good use in revising the Standard Operating Procedures. With the proven value and success that Ontario Police Department has had with Lexipol, it seemed prudent for the fire department to use Lexipol to revise its SOPs and ensure they were legally sound year after year. The current training records management system was CertRight, which was implemented in June 2007 and was operated off of a CD-ROM. With the city's recent overall computer updates, this program was experiencing glitches which were worrisome.

Revising the fire department's Standard Operating Procedures to meet current local, state, and federal regulations showed a commitment to providing superior quality service and allowed staff to act decisively, and to know what was expected of them each day. Using a company like Lexipol ensured these standards would be legally sound, readily available to staff through an app on their phones, and well understood through regular training that was provided through Lexipol's daily briefing trainings. This action also provided efficiency by streamlining the revision process and creating a secure system to track firefighter training.

The initial financial investment for the city was \$15,838.84, which included onboarding and creating a sound policy based on national best practices which would meet current local, state and federal requirements. This cost also included a top-tier training program and a cloud-based training records management system for the firefighters. Beginning July 1, 2026, and each year thereafter, the fire department would budget for the annual \$12,889 cost for ongoing service with Lexipol. This cost was similar to what the Ontario Police Department paid annually for their Standard Operating Procedures and training platform through Lexipol. This investment would ensure that Ontario Fire and Rescue had up-to-date training and high-level standard operating procedures that were updated regularly as changes occurred through court decisions and state and federal mandates related to the fire service. An investment in legally sound standard operating procedures would help prevent future legal expenses that could result from outdated policies.

The timing of this investment was important, as the current Standard Operating Procedures were antiquated and had not been reviewed and approved by legal counsel to ensure they met current requirements. This action would provide the city with a sound, up-to-date policy for fire department operations. Sound policy protected both the city and fire department staff from unnecessary legal costs related to personnel and day-to-day operations. Lexipol also provided daily training based on standard operating procedures and a cloud-based training records management system, which would greatly help with bi-annual training audits conducted by Oregon DPSST.

An alternative to this action was to have the city's legal counsel review the fire department's current Standard Operating Procedures and provide recommendations for edits and additions. Legal review should be completed annually to ensure that the SOPs included local, state and federal regulation changes, as well as case law that affected fire department operations. The fire department could continue exploring the cost of a cloud-based training program to replace its current and fragile CD Rom-based system. Staff's research into similar training platforms, like Vector Solutions, found an annual cost of around \$6,000 for a similar cloud-based training records management system.



MILLS moved, BAKEFELT seconded, THE COUNCIL APPROVE THE USE OF \$15,838.84 FROM THE PUBLIC SAFETY FUND FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LEXIPOL'S POLICY MANUAL AND TRAINING SYSTEM FOR THE FIRE DEPARTMENT. Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-yes; Contreras-yes; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion carried 7/0/0.

Funding Options for New River Intake

Marshall Pierce, City Engineer, presented.

In 2023, the city was awarded a \$500,000 CDBG for the engineering design of the new Secondary River Intake at the Water Treatment Plant. At that time, the city was eligible for up to an additional \$2,000,000 for construction funding. The city selected Consor to perform the engineering design for this project. Since then, the estimated construction costs have increased, and the CDBG program may cease to exist. The project was nearing final design, and the city was now at a crossroads for funding strategy.

The city's Secondary River Intake Project was nearing final design by Consor. The project's estimated construction costs increased over the last two years to potentially \$4,000,000. The city was eligible for an additional \$2,000,000 available through the CDBG program, however, the CDBG program's existence was at risk at both the State of Oregon and the Federal level.

The city has two options for funding this project: One: a combination of CDBG funds, assuming the program was still available and SDW funds, or, Two: all SDW funds. Option 1 would include an application to SDW for \$2,000,000 leaving the remaining \$2,000,000 funded from the CDBG, if it remained. Option 2 would be all \$4,000,000 funded from the SDW, of which up to half might include principal forgiveness.

The city needed to decide before the end of the first week of February as the SDW applications were due in February.

HART moved, CONTRERAS seconded, THAT THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVE THE FUNDING STRATEGY OF PURSUING A COMBINATION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) AND SAFE DRINKING WATER LOAN (SDW) TO FUND THE CITY'S NEW SECONDARY RIVER INTAKE PROJECT AT OUR WATER TREATMENT PLANT (WTP). Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-yes; Contreras-yes; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion carried 7/0/0.

Ducote Consulting Task Order Award: SDW and CDBG Application

Marhsall Pierce, City Engineer, presented.

In 2023, the City was awarded a \$500,000 CDBG for the engineering design of the new Secondary River Intake at its Water Treatment Plant. At that time, the city was eligible for up to an additional \$2,000,000 for construction funding. The city selected Consor to perform the engineering design for this project. Since then, the estimated construction costs have increased, and the CDBG program may cease to exist. The project was nearing final design, and the city needed to obtain additional funds for construction.

The City was in need of additional funding for this project and will need the assistance of Ducote Consulting for the loan and grant Letter of Interest (LOI) and applications. Applying for either of these does not commit to them, however, there are tight application windows that must be met. The Task Order amount was \$7,500, to be funded from the UCF.

There are tight application windows that must be met. SDW applications were due on February 15, 2026, so time was of the essence.

MILLS moved, KIRBY seconded, TO APPROVE OF DUCOTE CONSULTING TASK ORDER IN THE AMOUNT OF \$7,500 TO ASSIST WITH APPLYING FOR A NEW SAFE DRINKING WATER (SDW) LOAN FUND AS WELL AS A NEW COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG), AND AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO SIGN ALL DOCUMENTS. Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-yes; Contreras-yes; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion carried 7/0/0.



DEPARTMENT HEAD UPDATES**Finance: Monthly Report**

Kari Ott, Finance Director, presented.

Ms. Ott noted that the audit was completed, and had been sent to the Secretary of State, so staff could get the auditors prepared for presentation.

DISCUSSION ITEM(S)**Downtown Attraction**

Dan Cummings, City Manager, stated just before he became Pro-tem City Manager, the downtown project had moved to where it had tentatively selected an option from all the different ones presented. The next step was to spend \$70k to get a design of that selection. The Council, at that time, chose not to take any action, and tabled the issue until the city owned the entire park, which would include the section to the west where the gas station was located. The rest of the park was still owned by Riley Hill. The entire two parcels were not owned by the city. It was now back before Council to see what they wanted to do with that park. Also, Revitalize Ontario has now stepped up and would like to become a sponsor of that park, like Kiwanis, Rotary, and Lions do with those respective parks. There were currently some members of Revitalize Ontario in the audience that evening. Also, in the Council packet were the studies, renderings, and other information provided by GGLO and the consultants.

Councilor Braden stated he felt that spending \$70k to push forward gave him sticker shock. The plan from a few years back was \$3.8M. The projects the city had been funding, the streets, the construction, was probably \$6+M of now in implementation of the plan that was currently in place. He was not prepared to approve a phased in plan on this park, yet. They did have Revitalize group that wanted to sponsor the park, and having their buy-in on work that had been down was great. If they would review the plans and offer feedback, the city would know where to proceed. But just giving it full throttle right now, he did not want to do.

Councilor Contreras stated she currently sat on COHORT, a leadership program that the Eastern Oregon Border Board put together, and four team members in the audience currently. There was grant money that they, as a group, would apply for, for a project that would better the community, and their group selected Moore Park. They had applied for \$25k. Can all these entities work together?

Consuelo [no last name provided] stated she was a member of the Leadership Academy with the Eastern Oregon Rural Roots Boarder Board and the reason they had focused on Moore Park was because one of the biggest reasons...she was a downtown business owner, so she saw downtown businesses every day, and they communicated daily. There were about seven businesses currently that were looking to relocate, and were now closing their doors, starting the liquidating process. That showed that the downtown area was struggling. They no longer had the Farmer's Market, which really hurt the downtown businesses. Many other events were moving outside of Moore Park, but Moore Park had a lot of potential, and every one of the members of the program agreed that community pride was lacking in Ontario. Their group all agreed to look at Moore Park. There was the \$25k into the program, and one of the reasons they selected Moore Park was because they knew there was a \$20k match to that fund. So now their project had now expanded. Their group would love to work with Revitalize Ontario, to see what kind of asset they'd be to each other, including the Downtown Association which was beginning to be established. Downtown Ontario was the heartbeat of Ontario, and statistically, visitors and tourists that came into downtown, 70% of them would overall see how Ontario was right now. Every business owner downtown agreed that the downtown area did not look great, but also agreed it could be so much better. They could all do something to make Ontario look beautiful. The standard was not high right now, and community pride was needed.

Councilor Hart reiterated the city also had a Parks Committee, and Councilor Braden was the liaison to that. He didn't have strong feelings about what happened at Moore Park, he just did want something to happen. The city had spent a lot of money. The city had funds, and they might disagree on how on exactly how much, but he felt the city had the funds now to do something. He'd like them to get out of the way of the committees, to give the Council some ideas on what they'd like to do and maybe an estimated cost, and then let the Council determine if it was a yes or a no. He wanted to clarify this, but he'd heard a rumor there was a moratorium on no trees until the tree study was done. Was that true? Moore Park was really lacking trees. If the committee came up with a plan to plant more trees before the study was completed, was that okay?



Mr. Cummings stated they had asked everyone to put it on hold because they didn't want the wrong trees going in the wrong locations, and then the consultant saying they had to be removed. Part of the study would be the type of trees. So, since he was the one who issued the moratorium, if the committee arrived at a plan, and it could be reviewed by the consultant for approval or disapproval, he thought they could go ahead and approve that.

Councilor Braden stated they were currently working with a consultant who was developing a green space master plan. That would be before the Council end of February, early March, to get their goal setting, their input, and to provide a draft of what that plan looked like. They would have a study of the environment, the soils, and what type of trees were to be prioritized about the time frame. There would also be an arborist coming out to do a specific tree inventory that the Department of Forestry was requiring be uploaded to their state database. They wanted to wait for some thaw and some leaves coming out, which would be around last March, early April. They would be doing a tree count. If the committee had some plans, he could take those to the consultant, and make sure it was implemented into the plan and that the arborist was okay with it, and who would give a thumbs up to plant trees that this community wanted.

Councilor Hart encouraged the committee to review the current plan, as it was six years old, but they didn't want to reinvent the wheel. His request would be, because he believed the city had unappropriated funds this year. The city's fiscal year ended in June, but he didn't think the park would be done by June. But, could they set aside some money this year for the park? The city was getting ready to go into the next budget cycle, so did they utilize some funds this year, and also set some funds aside next year for the park? Over those two years, not wanted to lock in a number, say around half a million dollars? He did not know what it would cost, but now was the time when he believed the city had the funds to be able to do something substantial and really show the pride they had in their community. He did not think they should spend \$3.8M, but they did need to get something going.

Comments from the audience asking to see the plan

Mr. Cummings stated he would email out the link.

Councilor Bakefelt stated the city now owned the land, it had been cleared off, and it had grass planted, so it was time to take some action. The downtown businesses were seeking support, and they should have to wait another two years for that help.

Mr. Cummings stated to be clear, during the last budget, the \$70k was reserved for the downtown project, but it had been moved into the downtown beautification which was supposed to be to paint the underpass and things like that. He had been working with UPRR to get permission. It hasn't been spent, but he wanted them to realize that it had been moved from the downtown project and placed elsewhere. Council could move it back into downtown.

Code Enforcement Update

Jason Cooper, Police Chief, presented. He and the City Manager had been in discussions with the City Attorney, who reviewed the abatement portion of the City Code, and felt it was satisfactory as currently written. Staff was ready to move forward at the direction and support of the Council.

Discussion of Governor Kotek Executive Order #26-01 on Homeless

Kristy Woolard stated: *Good evening, Madam Mayor and Council members. So, this is kind of off on a whim, to discuss the Executive Order #26-01 in comparison with the Executive Order #25-1 that was put in place last year with Governor Tina Kotek. So, I think that there's been a little bit of discussion and confusion in regard to if Malheur County did in fact receive any type of executive order funds to assist our homeless population. So, last year, we all had a big meeting. It all took place at the Riverbend Apartments. They asked us to designate a person that was going to be in charge of leading for this homelessness order through the governor's office and we were considered the local, the, I'm sorry, the MAC group and then later on in life, later on down the year, we turned into a local planning group, so it's a combination between Malheur County and Harney County, and the reason for that is because the housing Authority of Malheur and Harney Counties obviously handles both counties, but so doe Community in Action, and Community in Action is our continuum of care provider, and they also manage the homeless management information system, more referred to as HMIS. That is the data inventory where they are doing all of their intake process in order to report that over to the State of Oregon or to the governor's office. So, when we were in this meeting, actually, Mr. Cummings recommended that I would take charge and lead up this MAC group, which I went ahead and di, and then based off of conversations that we've*



had within the county, it was best that probably either the Housing Authority or Community in Action would take reigns of those funds that were going to filter in from Oregon Housing and Community Services because we had to come up with a plan for the county. So, the plan for the county was, if you can see, the goal was emergency shelter which we do have emergency shelter now that's year-round. If you recall, we did come in and we spoke to the Council in regard to that, that we were now opening the shelter up to be a year-round shelter, rather than just a winter shelter. So, our goal was to add 32 low-barrier shelter beds in our balance of state area because we are considered balance of state. We're part of the 26 counties that's balance of state, and we managed to create 32 emergency beds to date in the tiny homes that area now created. We were also granted some funding, I think it was a little over \$700k that the state provided to us in order for Community in Action to actually purchase the land and they also purchased, I believe, two apartments on the side right next to their tiny homes, and they've also just recently installed their bathrooms. I believe they have a bathroom and shower and stuff. Now it's not just a mobile trailer that they used to have. So, we were able to achieve that goal. We were at 100% and then we also did a goal of rehousing at least 34 unsheltered households in the balance of state area, so our area, our goal, was to rehouse 34 either individuals or family households in our area, and we managed to rehouse 70 households to date, which we overly succeeded at 206% for the state, which is what was reported to the governor. So, we received roughly about \$1.2M that assisted 70 households for at least 18 months. Now, what also takes into consideration is not only helping them with their rent, that's also paying utilities, that's also paying to get their clothes washed, that's also paying any type of gas vouchers, that's also paying for the wraparound services that needed to be provided which Community in Action offered that up and they had a community service provider, or providers within their agency that were going in and checking in on these clients. Reason for that is because we wanted to keep them on track and have them rehoused for at least six to 12 months in some type of a temporary housing and then eventually get them off into permanent housing. So, receiving those wraparound services based on whatever risk assessment that they were undergoing with Community in Action and those that were more at risk to revert back to homelessness, those folks were actually housed either within our Malheur project turnkey site or within the Basque House that Community in Action started to rent or within the house in Nyssa called The Sugar House, where we have homelessness / domestic violence victims that are actually residing there as well within our county. So, we were able to offer up those wraparound services. We also had street outreach, so Community in Action also hired a street outreach provider. I think they have two full-time staff personnel. We were able to purchase them a vehicle so they're able to transport people, bring water to the encampment sites, which they also did, you know, they went out to the encampment site here that the city has within their ordinances and then they also went out to, obviously, the flats that's out there by the Loves Truck Stop. So, they did have street outreach coordinators that were going out, offering up services. Now, it's a voluntary thing, though. We can't, I recognize and based off of conversation that I've heard and that I've seen within the county, within this, within Ontario, especially because we're one of the bigger parts of our counties, Ontario, right? Is it, it's optional. It's not a mandatory thing. I cannot force somebody that's experiencing homelessness and say, I'm going to place you in a unit. I cannot force them and say, I'm going to send you to a hospital bed. It's all very volunteer and so when they're ready, they're ready, and if they're not ready, then unfortunately, they're not ready. However, I'm pleased to say that we at least got 70 households off the streets. We have our Project Turnkey that's 17 2-bedroom units. Those were all kids that were facing homelessness. Those were all kids that were living, we had a couple families that they had their kids living in sheds. And we had no idea until we had, you know, schools reach out to us and reach out to Community in Action. We were able to place those kids in a decent, safe, and sanitary home for at least six to twelve months. Eventually, get them a Section 8 voucher or if they didn't need a voucher because they were able to stabilize and get on their feet with full-time jobs and they were able to move out, believe it or not, a lot of the families at Malheur Turnkey were employed. We even hired a couple people to work for the Housing Authority to be our round-the-clock monitors. They're now homeowners. So, that a huge success story. The governor's very impressed with the fact that we had somebody, a family that was homeless and now they are actually homeowners after 12 months of residing in a homeless shelter. So, Executive Order, oh, I might as well add, too, the Housing Authority also did give money to the city, money, funds, to the city to help out with the encampment site in providing, I believe it was trash and bathrooms. Is that correct, Dan? And then we did some dirt work, correct? Towards the very end, I was like spend the money, go get them water, go get them supplies because we were kind of running down to the end of the line where we really needed to expend the funds.

Mr. Cummings stated they've been great with supplementing the money that the city put out there. It's been allowing the city's money to stretch out much longer without having to come and ask for more. She has asked for more, so, hopefully, that can be done. But they've been fantastic help for funding to help keep the services out there that needed to be provided. They're not the best, but it's something. Many of those individuals were ones that want to live out there. There's a need for a facility like that.



Ms. Woolard continued: Correct, so Executive Order #26-01 has extended. We are getting funds into the county. It is kind of repetitive, kind of a rinse and repeat thing. We have to continue to assist those families that are experiencing homelessness. We have to continue to make sure that the lights are paid, that the bills are paid, those wraparound service providers are still able to work. They're still able to provide services, and we're still able to also just create some type of housing for those that are experiencing homelessness. It's been a challenge for us within this county. We have local landlords that, you know, they want to protect their asset, and I completely understand that, And so running a criminal background check, those types of things, have kind of a barrier for these folks that are experiencing homelessness, so that's why we opened up our Malheur Turnkey site for those folks that are experiencing homelessness and then Community in Action rents the Basque House and also rents The Sugar House in Nyssa. I am asking the state, I do have a couple meetings with the state to actually see if we can get anywhere from \$20k to \$25k to grant to the City of Ontario in order to keep operations running as far as providing a bathroom and providing trash and providing maybe other services that may need to be provided at the encampment site. So, water, maybe some food, maybe some snacks, something like that that they might need at the encampment site, that's within the ordinances of Ontario.

Mayor Folden asked if the Basque House was the Kiem house, the Echanis house?

Ms. Woolard: Yes, so that's over here by Rusty's and Plumbing, yeah. So, we are renting those rooms. Okay. So, yeah, that's kind of what's going on. I know that the governor did switch out, there's been some budget cuts, so, you know, last executive order they had money expended out for street outreach. That's where we were able to allocate funds to like the city and allocate funds to some of the street outreach providers to go get supplies, things like that. They've now changed it to just outreach, so that is where that term is changing. We're kind of in mix of needing to speak with Oregon Housing and Community Services to see if that's an allowable expense. Okay. Any questions, concerns?

Mayor Folden stated rehousing 70 households is fantastic. That's really great.

Mr. Cummings stated the new order extended the program that was put in under EO #25-01.

Ms. Woolard: Yeah, and the county is not receiving the dollars. It's going to the Housing Authority. We have better hands on the fiscal monitoring portion of it, and they have been very strict as far as how they are monitoring things fiscally, and as far as like the capacity goes, I know that capacity is an issue, you know, within the county itself, so if you have somebody that's a little bit more well versed as far as fiscal monitoring goes for homelessness housing and any of the Oregon housing community services requirements that they'd like us to meet, your Housing Authority is the best bet or your local Community in Action agency. So, we've been really good and we've been forced to not be siloed and actually work together as a partnership, which has been great. Thank you very much.

Depot Building

Dan Cummings, City Manager, stated: Thank you, Mayor and Council. Recently, I got an updated report from the Basque Club, who is the one that manages the Depot. For some citizens, that may know, the city owns the Depot building. We just lease the ground under it from Union Pacific Railroad, but the city owns it. Years ago, we had a committee that did a lot of restoration on the outside, and a portion of the inside. Then the Basque Club took over that project, and they've done some major remodeling inside. Pretty impressive what they've done in there, and pretty much mainly with the, under the 99-year lease, we have with the Basque Club, part of it is that all rental funds that they get from renting that out, and I'd like to put it out to the community, that's a great place to hold events. It's really nice. If you haven't seen it, you need to go see it. But the money they get from renting there goes back into the building maintenance and stuff, and then the city's supposed to be helping out that, as well. A few months ago, the city voted to, at one time, in that lease, it was a split of the utilities. The Basque Club paid half and the city paid half. To help out the Club, the city took on the full responsibility of the utilities because they'd been paying them for the last 10 or 15 years that I could tell. I'm not sure why, but I couldn't find a formal obligation, so we did put that in formal writing, updated their lease to reflect that. In reviewing their upcoming stuff, upcoming they need to have the AC compressor, and that's estimated at \$3,500, and then the exterior needs painted again. It's been a long time since it was done, and that's \$10,000. Their rental income is projected only at \$2,700 a year. So, if you look at that, it would be about three to four years before they could get the funds paint it. I'm asking the Council, since we own that building, it's our building, that we grant them the \$10,000 so they get that thing painted this spring, and not have it further decay. So again, I know I keep asking for money, Kari keeps giving me that stop it, but right now I think, you know, we've got a huge asset there. We've put a lot of money, the Basque Club has put a lot of time and effort in there. So, in fact, recently, the Council did go there and the Basque Club put on a presentation showing what the works been



done there, and I think the Downtown Association ought to recognize that that facility's there that has a lot of different types of rooms to hold little events and staff. So, it's something you ought to go check out.

Councilor Hart asked if there were any funds in the façade grant?

Mr. Cummings stated he considered that, but that would require changing the boundaries. It would also be the city using its own money to pay for its own building and the money was set up for the downtown businesses to use.

KIRBY moved, HART seconded, **THAT THE CITY COUNCIL AUTHORIZE THE PAYMENT OF \$10,000 FOR THE EXTERIOR PAINT AND PUT IT IN A MEMORIAL IN THE NAME OF GENE BATES, AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE BASQUE CLUB.** Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-yes; Contreras-yes; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion carried 7/0/0.

HAND-OUTS

Minutes

County Court: 12-17-2025, 01-07-2026, 01-12-2026, 01-14-2026

CORRESPONDENCE, COMMENTS, AND EX-OFFICIO REPORTS.

Councilor Bakefelt questioned if it was fire fighter appreciation day? If so, she was proud of the firefighters in Ontario.

Mayor Folden agreed, and thanked them for their protection and devotion.

Councilor Braden stated he forgot to bring a flyer that he was going to share. He and Corinna [Hysell] were working on the tree project that kept getting discussed. There was a public survey that wants to collect information and feedback on community goals and priorities as they worked through the master plan that was shared on the city's Facebook page website with a URL and a QR Code for a direct link over to the survey to be completed to help direct this project.

ADJOURN

BAKEFELT moved, MILLS seconded, **THE MEETING BE ADJOURNED.** Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-yes; Contreras-yes; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion carried 7/0/0.

ACCEPTED:



Deborah K. Folden, Mayor

ATTEST:



Tori Barnett, MMC, City Recorder

