



CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES June 23, 2026

The scheduled meeting of the Ontario City Council was called to order by Mayor Deborah Folden at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 23, 2026, in the Council Chambers of City Hall. Council members present were Deborah Folden, Susann Mills, Michael Braden, Penny Bakefelt, and John Kirby. Ken Hart and Adrianna Contreras were excused.

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

AGENDA

This Agenda was posted Friday, June 19, 2026. Copies of the Agenda are available from the City Hall Customer Service Counter and on the city's website www.ontariooregon.org.

BAKEFELT moved, MILLS seconded, **TO ADOPT THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED**. Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-out; Contreras-out; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion carried 5/0/2.

CONSENT AGENDA

KIRBY moved, BAKEFELT seconded, **TO ADOPT THE CONSENT AGENDA, WHICH CONSISTED OF ADOPTION OF COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF JUNE 9, 2026**. Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-out; Contreras-out; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion carried 5/0/2.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Annah Tubbs, Ontario, stated: I just wanted, in a general, my thoughts and feelings kind of sense. I just wanted to encourage the city to continue discussions around affordable housing, low income, low barrier housing development, transitional housing options, tiny housing communities, and especially daily housing services like the Oasis House. These issues affect many residents and deserve continued community discussion and planning. I also hope the city would consider exploring solutions related to animal welfare infrastructure, as our community does not have a current animal shelter and few animal parks. Consider looking into expanded recycling opportunities, especially for easier use for low-income housing facilities. Some overflow could be diverted with well-placed cardboard recycling bins, particularly in light of recent losses. Some recycling options previously available, as Western Recycling moved out of the area, I personally am having trouble finding a close place to recycle number one and two plastics currently. I would also like to see our parks using less chemicals and have parks and apartments to also be required to give notice when spraying occurs. I encourage the city to keep these additional community needs in mind and when planning our future grants, partnerships, and community development efforts. Thank you.

NEW BUSINESS

Rural Contract Approval

Clint Benson, Fire Chief, presented.

The city and Rural Fire District contractual relationship began in 1959. This critical partnership benefited both city and rural residents by combining resources to provide fire protection services in both response areas. This amended and restated agreement simplified the calculation and provided each entity with financial amounts prior to the upcoming fiscal year budgets. Additionally, this agreement removed the negotiation process related to annual agreement amounts and would allow representatives of both entities to focus on operational and future capital projects. Two members of the City Council, Michael Braden and Susann Mills, two members of the Ontario Rural Fire Protection District Board, Monty Culbertson and Brandon Coley, and two city staff members, Dan Cummings and Clint Benson, worked together to amend the agreement as presented. Calculations of annual payment amounts were based upon the 5-year rolling call volume average (calls into the



Rural Fire District), multiplied by the fire department's actual expenditures in the prior fiscal year, plus the previous calendar year insurance premiums paid by the City of Ontario to insure the district's apparatus.

The current agreement was set to expire on June 30, 2026. A priority recommendation of the joint 2025 Community Risk Assessment/Standard of Cover Study was to improve the partnership between the City of Ontario and Rural Fire District. Negotiations had been positive, and this amended agreement represented a solid partnership focused on providing quality fire protection services for the Ontario community. The new calculation within this agreement was based on the city fire department's actual expenditures. For example, when the fire department's expenditures increased due to additional staffing or other expenditures, this agreement produced a fair share from the Rural District. The annual agreement for FY 26/27 was set at \$253,844, an increase of \$15,344 over the current agreement amount.

Mr. Cummings thanked Councilors Braden and Mills for their participation.

MILLS moved, BAKEFELT seconded, **THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVE THE FIRST AMENDED AND RESTATED AGREEMENT TO PROVIDE FIRE SUPPRESSION AND OTHER SERVICES AND FOR THE MAYOR TO SIGN THE AGREEMENT.** Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-out; Contreras-out; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion carried 5/0/2.

SRV Mutual Aid Contract

Clint Benson, Fire Chief, presented.

Ontario Fire & Rescue was one of the original founding members of the SRV Chiefs Association in 1968. The original purpose of its formation was mutual aid. The SRV Chiefs Association has grown to thirty-eight members and provided an annual academy designed for beginning firefighters and another annual academy for more advanced firefighters. Ontario Fire & Rescue increasingly relied on mutual aid for incidents that exceeded its staffing and equipment capabilities.

Currently, Ontario Fire & Rescue was grandfathered into the 2022 mutual aid agreement. The 2026 agreement was similar in content and did not increase the City of Ontario's responsibilities under the agreement, nor did it decrease the level of aid received from the partnering fire departments. The Snake River Valley Fire Chiefs Association mutual aid agreement was due for renewal. The 2026 agreement included mutual aid with thirty-eight fire departments and would automatically renew after five years unless terminated by any party, or in the event of the need for updated procedures. Ontario Fire & Rescue benefited greatly from the resources offered through the Snake River Valley Fire Chiefs Association.

The mutual aid agreement with the SRV Chiefs supplemented existing staff by providing equipment and labor during emergencies, and did not create a financial strain on the city. Many of the SRV Chiefs Association fire departments had already signed the 2026 SRV Mutual Aid Agreement, including the Ontario Rural Fire Protection District. Ontario Fire & Rescue regularly received and gave mutual aid under the current agreement and had not had any legal issues with the SRV Fire Chiefs Association.

BRADEN moved, KIRBY seconded, **THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVE THE 2026 SNAKE RIVER VALLEY MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT.** Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-out; Contreras-out; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion carried 5/0/2.

Resolution #2026-117: Financial End of Year Clean Up

Kari Ott, Finance Director, presented.

At the time the 2025-2026 budget was approved, there were some items that were unknown. Since these items were now known, a budget resolution was necessary to prevent over-expenditures in various departments.

The following items needed to be adjusted within the budget to prevent over-expenditures of budget appropriations: 1) There were unexpected grants; 2) Building revenues were much higher than budgeted, so an adjustment needed to be made for the 12% state assessment; and 3) TOT revenues were higher than expected.



An additional \$150,000 (grants and TOT) would be appropriated and the remaining budget changes were transfers between items already appropriated. Per Oregon Local Budget Law, the proposed resolution had to be approved on or before June 30, 2026.

Councilor Bakefelt asked why the legal services were so high.

Mr. Cummings stated there had been several employee issues, and a pending Tort case possibility.

KIRBY moved, MILLS seconded, **THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVE RESOLUTION #2026-117: A RESOLUTION TO ADOPT A SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET TO RECOGNIZE UNEXPECTED REVENUES AND TO TRANSFER BUDGETED APPROPRIATIONS FOR UNEXPECTED ITEMS.** Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-out; Contreras-out; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion carried 5/0/2.

PUBLIC HEARING(S)

Resolution #2026-115: City's Election to Receive State Revenues

It being the date advertised for public hearing on the matter stated above, the Hearing was declared open. There were no objections to the city's jurisdiction to hear the action, no abstentions, no ex-parte contact, and no declarations of conflict of interest.

Kari Ott, Finance Director, presented.

The City Council was required to annually approve a formal resolution in order to elect to receive state revenues. The city would be able to receive state revenues that were shared with cities throughout Oregon.

The City of Ontario Budget Committee held Public Hearings on May 26 & 27, 2026, discussing the 2026-2027 budget, which included revenue sharing from the State of Oregon. The City Council was holding a Public Hearing on June 23, 2026, giving the citizens an opportunity to comment on the use of State Revenue Sharing, pursuant to ORS 221.770. The resolution was required to be approved on or before June 30, 2026, and resolutions had to be approved by the City Council.

The Hearing was opened for public testimony. Proponents: None. Opponents: None. There being no Proponent testimony and no Opponent testimony, the Hearing was closed.

BAKEFELT moved, MILLS seconded, **THE CITY COUNCIL ADOPT RESOLUTION #2026-115, A RESOLUTION DECLARING THE CITY'S ELECTION TO RECEIVE STATE REVENUES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027.** Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-out; Contreras-out; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion passed 5/0/2.

Resolution #2026-116: Adopt City of Ontario Annual Budget FY2026-2027

It being the date advertised for public hearing on the matter stated above, the Hearing was declared open. There were no objections to the city's jurisdiction to hear the action, no abstentions, no ex-parte contact, and one declaration of conflict of interest.

Councilor Braden declared a conflict of interest. The nature of the two conflicts that he would not debate, deliberate, or vote on were on the Grant and Building funds. For the Grant fund, he provided contracted directed services, and his wife was an employee of the Building Department.

Kari Ott, Finance Director, presented.

Resolution #2026-116 was a resolution to adopt and appropriate the annual budget for 2026-2027, impose the taxes upon taxable property, and categorize the taxes imposed for the fiscal year 2026-2027.

The City of Ontario Budget Committee held public hearings on May 26 & 27, 2026, and approved the 2026-2027 annual budget. The budget presented had no changes from what was approved by the budget committee.



The required public hearing notice was published in the Argus Observer. The City Council was holding this public hearing on June 23, 2026, giving the citizens an opportunity to comment on the annual budget for 2026-2027.

There were two motions to approve this resolution due to the conflict Councilor Braden disclosed in the budget committee meetings, and restated above. Councilor Braden would not be voting on the Building or Grant Funds.

The Hearing was opened for public testimony. Proponents: None. Opponents: None.

There being no Proponent testimony and no Opponent testimony, the Hearing was closed.

MILLS moved, BAKEFELT seconded, **THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVE THE APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE GRANT AND BUILDING FUNDS IN RESOLUTION #2026-116.** Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-abstain; Hart-out; Contreras-out; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion passed 4/0/2/1.

BAKEFELT moved, KIRBY seconded, **THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVE ALL REMAINING ELEMENTS OF RESOLUTION #2026-116, A RESOLUTION TO ADOPT AND APPROPRIATE THE ANNUAL BUDGET FOR 2026-2027, IMPOSE THE TAXES UPON TAXABLE PROPERTY, AND CATEGORIZE THE TAXES IMPOSED FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027.** Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-out; Contreras-out; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion passed 5/0/2.

Mr. Cummings thanked the Council and the Budget Committee for the great job done on the budget.

Councilor Kirby thanked Mr. Cummings for helping him participate in the meetings via Zoom when unable to attend the meetings in person.

Councilor Mills thanked staff for a great job, and for Ms. Ott for doing such a great job on the budget. They were all to be commended.

Councilor Bakefelt and Mayor Folden also voiced agreement. Everything went smoothly, and it was a very well-prepared budget.

CDBG Final Notice: Design Services for River Intake Project

It being the date advertised for public hearing on the matter stated above, the Hearing was declared open. There were no objections to the city's jurisdiction to hear the action, no abstentions, no ex-parte contact, and no declarations of conflict of interest.

Marshall Pierce, City Engineer, presented.

The city was wrapping up the engineering design phase of the river intake project at the Water Treatment Plant (WTP). This project was funded by Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for \$500,000. As required by HUD, two public notices/hearings were needed per each CDBG project. This was the final notice for the design portion of the river intake project. The first notice was held prior to design. This hearing was for the City Council to obtain citizen views and to respond to questions and comments regarding how this project went.

Mr. Pierce read the public notice into the record:

The City of Ontario is completing the Secondary Water Supply Intake from the Snake River design project funded with Community Development Block Grant funds from the Oregon Business Development Department. The location of the project is Ontario, Oregon. It is estimated that the project has benefited at least 10,044 persons, of whom 57.88% are low to moderate-income.

A public hearing will be held by the City Council at 7:00 pm on June 23, 2026, at 444 SW 4th Street, Ontario, OR 97914. The purpose of the hearing is for the City Council to obtain citizens' views about the project and to take comments about the local government's performance. Written comments are also welcome and must be received by June 22, 2026, at 444 SW 4th Street, Ontario, OR 97914. Both oral and written comments will be reviewed by the City Council.



The location of the hearing is accessible to persons with disabilities. Please let Dan Cummings at (541) 881-3223 know if you need any special accommodations to attend or participate in the hearing.

More information about the Oregon Community Development Block Grant program and the project is available for public review at 444 SW 4th Street, Ontario, OR 97914, during office hours. Advance notice is requested.

The Hearing was opened for public testimony. Proponents: One. Opponents: None.

Proponents: Annah Tubbs, Ontario, stated: *Hi, I'm Annah Tubbs. More questions than anything, I guess. But I do want to say I do support investing in our lower infrastructure, and appreciate the city's efforts to pursue grant funding for needed improvements. I'm definitely interested in learning more about the proposed project, including the total project cost, how much grant funding is being requested, and whether matching funds are required, what specific improvements would be made. It sounded like intake, so, more water being utilized, but I feel like I have little info on that. I speak with many residents that choose filtered or bottled water because they have concerns about taste, odor, or quality of our water. I'd like to better understand whether those concerns are reflected in the city's testing, or whether this project will improve public confidence in our drinking water. I'm also personally interested in learning more about our current water quality challenges, and whether this project addresses any existing concerns. Are there issues related to Arsenic, agriculture, contaminants, treatment byproducts, aging infrastructure, other water quality concerns that this project is intended to improve. Is this primarily just the intake and delivery project, or does this include treatment upgrades. I'd also like to understand whether this project will affect the amount of type of treatment chemicals currently used, and whether the proposed improvements would reduce reliance on treatment chemicals while continuing to provide safe drinking water. That's all, thank you.*

Mr. Cummings asked Mr. Pierce to address some of the questions.

Mr. Pierce stated this was supply only. It had no bearing on treatment, and no bearing on chemicals currently being used. It was just added supply being drawn off the Snake River. The reason for the project was twofold. First, it was for redundancy as there was currently only one intake. If that failed, there was no backup other than wells that were becoming less reliable. Another primary reason was that it added additional supply capacity allowing for projected growth in Ontario, commercial and industrial, primarily.

Ms. Tubbs asked about chemical dependency and getting citizens to be more confident in the infrastructure.

Mr. Pierce stated these improvements were included in the 2021 Water System Master Plan, which could be found on the city's website. All the projects that had been brought forward over the past few years were following that plan. Regarding chemicals, this had no bearing on chemicals. Chemicals were currently being used, and they would continue to do that.

Mr. Pierce stated that with regard to the project cost, the CDBG awarded up to \$2.5M, and as the design had progressed, the anticipated construction costs had increased. It began at \$2.5-\$3M, and now there was a range of between \$4M-\$7M, which exceeded the CDBG allowance, but that had been planned for. Previously in the year, staff had applied for a Safe Drinking Water RLF, of which half was forgivable, so the city would only have to pay the remaining portion.

There being no further Proponent testimony and no Opponent testimony, the Hearing was closed.

NO MOTION REQUIRED

CDBG Initial Notice: Construction Application for River Intake Project

It being the date advertised for public hearing on the matter stated above, the Hearing was declared open. There were no objections to the city's jurisdiction to hear the action, no abstentions, no ex-parte contact, and no declarations of conflict of interest.

Marshall Pierce, City Engineer, presented.



The city was wrapping up the design of the new Secondary River Intake at the Water Treatment Plant (WTP). This design was funded by Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds of \$500,000. Staff were now in a position to apply for the construction phase funds through the same project, up to \$2,000,000. A public hearing/notice was required for this as well.

As required by HUD, two public notices/hearings were needed per each CDBG project. This was the first notice for the construction portion of the river intake project, which a portion would be funded by block grant funds, up to \$2,000,000.

The City of Ontario is eligible to apply for a 2026 Community Development Block Grant from Business Oregon. Community Development Block Grant funds come from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The grants can be used for public facilities, water/wastewater improvements, and housing improvements, primarily for persons with low and moderate incomes.

Approximately \$11 million will be awarded to Oregon non-metropolitan cities and counties in 2026. The maximum grant that a city or county can receive is \$2,500,000.

The City of Ontario is preparing an application for a 2026 Community Development Block Grant from the Business Oregon for Water System Improvements. It is estimated that the proposed project will benefit at least 11,645 persons, of whom 58.10% will be low or moderate-income.

A public hearing will be held by the city council at 7:00 p.m. on June 23, 2026, at 444 SW 4th Street, Ontario, Oregon, 97914. The purpose of this hearing is for the city council to obtain citizen views and to respond to questions and comments about community development and housing needs, especially the needs of low- and moderate-income persons, as well as other needs in the community that might be assisted with a Community Development Block Grant project, and the proposed project.

Written comments are also welcome and must be received by June 22, 2026, at 444 SW 4th Street, Ontario, Oregon, 97914. Both oral and written comments will be considered by the City Council in deciding whether to apply. The location of the hearing is accessible to persons with disabilities. Please contact Dan Cummings at (541) 881-3223 if you will need any special accommodations to attend or participate in the meeting.

More information about Oregon Community Development Block Grants, the proposed project, and records about the City's past use of Community Development Block Grant funds is available for public review at 444 SW 4th Street, Ontario, Oregon, 97914 during regular office hours. Advance notice is requested. If special accommodations are needed, please notify Dan Cummings at (541)881-3223 so that appropriate assistance can be provided.

Permanent involuntary displacement of persons or businesses is not anticipated as a result from the proposed project. If displacement becomes necessary, alternatives will be examined to minimize the displacement and provide required/reasonable benefits to those displaced. Any low- and moderate-income housing that is demolished or converted to another use will be replaced.

The Hearing was opened for public testimony. Proponents: One. Opponents: None.

Proponents: Hannah Tubbs, Ontario, stated: *Hi, Annah Tubbs from Ontario, I just wanted to say that I appreciate the funding towards our water systems, but I do hope that we look at furthering more of that in the future and keep working on that still, and as a reminder of my initial remarks that I do hope that we do look at, because it said in the public notice that we could talk about housing desires and stuff that I still hope that we keep an option open for housing, affordable housing that could be looked at in the area like I spoke about in the beginning with the Oasis House, tiny homes, affordable housing, and things like that. I hope that we do keep an eye on that as well, but I do think this is a good project. Thank you.*

There being no further Proponent testimony and no Opponent testimony, the Hearing was closed.

MILLS moved, BAKEFELT seconded, **T H E C I T Y C O U N C I L A U T H O R I Z E S T A F F T O M O V E F O R W A R D W I T H A P P L Y I N G F O R A C O M M U N I T Y D E V E L O P M E N T B L O C K G R A N T F O R T H E C O N S T R U C T I O N O F T H E S E C O N D A R Y R I V E R I N T A K E P R O J E C T, U P T O \$ 2, 0 0 0, 0 0 0 I N G R A N T A M O U N T.** Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-out; Contreras-out; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion passed 5/0/2.



DEPARTMENT HEAD UPDATESCommunity Development: Quarterly Report

Kari Ott, Finance Director, submitted her report. The Zoom portion of the meeting was dropped, and Ms. Ott was not available to answer any questions directly. The Council was asked to submit any questions or concerns directly to Ms. Ott.

HAND-OUTSMinutes

County Court 05/20/2026, 05/27/2026, 06/03/2026, 6/10/2026

CORRESPONDENCE, COMMENTS, AND EX-OFFICIO REPORTS

Councilor Mills asked Mr. Cummings where the city was at with regard to the flag that was going to be located near the hospital.

Mr. Cummings stated the city budgeted \$50k for it, based on an estimate from a local business; however, only one bid was submitted, and not from a local firm, and it was \$154k. He also met with Idaho Power, and under the current regulations, the location was not approved as it was too close to the power poles. Staff moved to Option B, which was moving it over into Lion's Park. Staff was negotiating with the bidder to get new quotes to install a new pole in the corner of the park, where it had been previously suggested. Some were concerned it might not be as visible as it was now, and that it might be less expensive to use the existing base. That was wrong. Another concern was that there were three large mature trees in that corner, and he thought they might have to remove at least one, if not two, of those trees. After laying out the plan, it was determined no trees would have to be removed, but definitely trimmed back. Staff was waiting on proposals for that. The cost of removing the base at the existing location ranged from \$8k-\$15k. He wondered if the city would be better off investing that money instead of removing, following a conversation with the Fire Chief, and Mr. Pierce came up with a part of it, but it might be great to do a bronze statue of the emergency response group, which was fire and police. He was researching costs to install a brass monument, depicting those entities. He was getting ideas from both police and fire as to what that might look like. There was a plaque there that was dedicated to the gentlemen for the flag, and he would speak with the Sullivan family, who put that up, to see if they wanted to do a new plaque rededicating it to their father, Bob Sullivan, as he was the person who installed it. He had not spoken with anyone there yet, as he wanted to receive the cost first. For the existing base, he thought to maybe get another plaque that would bolt overtop the one that was embedded in the concrete, dedicating it to the emergency responders.

The Council expressed their support of that plan.

ADJOURN

MILLS moved, BAKEFELT seconded, **THE MEETING BE ADJOURNED**. Roll call vote: Mills-yes; Braden-yes; Hart-out; Contreras-out; Kirby-yes; Bakefelt-yes; Folden-yes. Motion carried 5/0/2. Meeting concluded at 6: 46pm.

ACCEPTED:

ATTEST:


Deborah K. Folden, Mayor


Tori Barnett, MMC, City Recorder

