



City of Independence Minutes

City Council Meeting
Tuesday, September 23, 2025

1. **Call to Order.** Mayor Schwarzler called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM

2. **Roll Call.** Mayor Schwarzler present.

Present: Councilor Evan Sorce
Councilor Dawn Roden
Councilor Bill Boisvert
Councilor/Council President Kathy Martin-Willis
Councilor Marilyn Morton
Councilor Shannon Corr

Absent:

City Staff Present: Kenna West, City Manager
Myra Russell, City Recorder
Fred Evander, City Planner
Shawn Irvine, Assistant City Manager
Juventino Banuelos, Police Chief

3. **Minutes.**

3.1. **Regular Meeting 08/26/2025.**

Action:

Councilor/Council President Martin-Willis moved to approve minutes as submitted; Councilor Corr seconded.

Roll call vote. Motion 6-0-0

Ayes: Evan Sorce, Dawn Roden, Bill Boisvert, Kathy Martin-Willis, Marilyn Morton, Shannon Corr

Nays: None

Abstentions: None

4. **Visitors/Public Comment.** 1. Anne Scheck, Trammart News: US Constitution week. Questions to communication director have not been answered.

2. Vickie McCubbin, Independence, OR: Has been working on The Wall that Heals event. Thanked Staff and Council for support during the event

3. John Bruning, Independence, OR: Made comments regarding levy not passing and thanked Council for working through hard issues.

5. **Reports/Presentations.**

5.1. **Mayor.**

- Wall that Heals was an honor for the community. It was a gift to our veterans and really brought the community together.
- Thanked Downtown Association for the Hop & Heritage festival this weekend. It highlighted our heritage and agricultural roots.
- Thanked the Fugeman's for donating another bench to our community.

5.2. **Council Liaison Reports.**

5.2.1. **Traffic Safety Commission: Councilor Roden.**

- Had meeting in June. Discussed potentially putting speed monitor signs back out.
- Discussion of discretion police have in pulling over people.

5.2.2. **Historic Preservation Commission: Councilor Morton.**

- The Historic Preservation Commission meetings are well attended by members of that body.
- City Planner Fred Evander provides useful information accompanied by comprehensive maps and timely videos. His guided walks around the city to point out different architectural styles have been very enlightening.
- Mr. Evander does an excellent job of comparing and contrasting past building and construction standards with present neighborhood designs. This information will support future decisions that may need to be made by the Commission.
- The makeup of the Commission itself is well-balanced, bringing both career and homeownership perspectives that are valuable to discussion.

5.2.3. **Planning Commission: Councilor Martin-Willis.**

- Planning has been working on two ongoing projects:
 - Single room occupancy—recent changes in State law. Planner Evander going through and explaining to the commission as they work through it.
 - Mobile vending locations—Pad vs. Pod locations are permitted by the property owner. Commission received community input sharing concerns about food trucks competing with brick-and-mortar restaurants.

5.3. **City Manager.**

- Answered questions from council
 - IT infrastructure issue. Failure of external hard drive. New servers are not within our budgets at this time. Moving some things to the cloud.

- What can we do about Stonehenge? The city does not own it. Met with new owners to share details about zoning, development options, economic development resources and encourage them to move forward.
- What are we doing to do about unhoused individuals at City Hall and Library? We are following the law and leaving them on City property. The police Department has tried to connect them with services and housing, but options are limited.
- Dead trees between 4th and 5th St. on Monmouth St. Privately owned trees, responsibility of the property owner.
- What are savings to the general fund being closed on Fridays. Don't have numbers until we have 1–2-year cycle, but less wear and tear on facilities. Savings in utilities and deferred maintenance.
- Councilor Roden asked how long new owners have owned Stonehenge. Irvine said property sale closed in March or April of this year.

6. Unfinished Business.

- 7. New Business.** Councilor Roden wanted to add 3 items to the agenda. Council rules state anything added to the agenda needs to be run by the Mayor and City Manager before being added, and this wasn't done beforehand. The mayor and City Manager offered to meet with Councilor Roden to add these items to the next meeting.

7.1. Set Public Hearing Date for AX 2025-03, Annexation of Future Surface Water Treatment Plant Property (Evander).

Planner Evander presented the staff report as submitted in the agenda packet. This is a resolution required to schedule a public hearing for annexation of the land for the surface water treatment plant. There was some confusion as to why a resolution was needed to set the date for the public hearing. Evander explained that it was the recommended process by the City Attorney.

Action:

Councilor Corr moved to approve Resolution 25-1639, an initiation to start the annexation and rezone of city-owned land, set a date for a public hearing on the matter for November 25, 2025, and direct staff to provide proper notice for the hearing; Councilor Morton seconded. Discussion: None

Roll call vote. Motion 6-0-0

Ayes: Evan Sorce, Dawn Roden, Bill Boisvert, Kathy Martin-Willis, Marilyn Morton, Shannon Corr

Nays: None

Abstentions: None

7.2. Resolution to apply for technical assistance (Irvine).

Assistant City Manager Irvine presented staff report as submitted in agenda packet. This is a grant to help the city update the economic opportunity analysis for the city which is almost 20 years old. This helps with planning and

recruiting industry to our area. DLCD has technical assistance grant for this that does not require city match of funds. Discussion of cost to city. No cost. The money may not even come to the city, if DLCD consultant does work, they will just be paid by grant.

Action:

Councilor/Council President Martin-Willis moved that the council adopt Resolution 25-1638 authorizing an application for a grant from the Department of Land Conservation and Development; Councilor Sorce seconded.

Discussion: None

Roll call vote. Motion 6-0-0

Ayes: Evan Sorce, Dawn Roden, Bill Boisvert, Kathy Martin-Willis, Marilyn Morton, Shannon Corr

Nays: None

Abstentions: None

7.3. **Independence-Monmouth Trolley IGA (West).**

CM West presented the staff report as submitted in the agenda packet. Introduced CM Roaden from Monmouth to provide more information as Monmouth is the financial fiduciary partner and lead agency for this cooperative project. This is the first step in a 2-part process. Will return with the Public Hearing and Ordinance at a later date. Discussion of who would be on the board. The City gets 3 positions on the Advisory Board and could fill them with council members or community members. City Manager will serve on the operating board. Discussion of one non-voting youth member on the Advisory Board. This is a process between Independence, Monmouth and WOU. Hoping to have everything in place by the beginning of the year. Discussion of joint meeting with both councils and WOU.

Action:

Councilor Morton moved that the Council authorize Mayor Schwarzler and City Manager West to execute the Monmouth-Independence Trolley Intergovernmental Agreement; Councilor Sorce seconded. Discussion: None

Roll call vote. Motion 6-0-0

Ayes: Evan Sorce, Dawn Roden, Bill Boisvert, Kathy Martin-Willis, Marilyn Morton, Shannon Corr

Nays: None

Abstentions: None

7.4. **Memorial Plaque – Gun Club and Hoffman Road Improvements (West).**

CM West presented information as submitted in the agenda packet. This is a request for a memorial plaque for Jamie Boe for his encouragement to complete the Safe Routes to School zone on Hoffman Road and Gun Club Rd. Discussion of funding for this plaque. Public Works has funds for this type of plaque. There is an opportunity to donate towards this as well.

Action:

Councilor Corr moved that the Council authorize city staff to locate and place a memorial plaque in honor of Jamie Boe within the Gun Club and Hoffman Road project area; Councilor/Council President Martin-Willis seconded. Discussion:

None

Roll call vote. Motion 6-0-0

Ayes: Evan Sorce, Dawn Roden, Bill Boisvert, Kathy Martin-Willis, Marilyn Morton, Shannon Corr

Nays: None

Abstentions: None

7.5. **Public Meeting Grievance Process Authority (West).**

CM West presented the staff report as submitted in the agenda packet. State legislature gave a mandate allowing individuals to file public meeting grievances against public agencies. That statute states that the public body must respond within 21 days of receiving the grievance. These grievances are based on fact and law. Bringing it to council each time puts the public body at risk of missing the 21-day response time. Discussion of other options. These grievances must be resolved expeditiously. They go to the ethics commission. They need to be taken very seriously.

Action:

Councilor Sorce moved that the Council authorize the city manager or their designee to respond to public meetings grievances on behalf of the public body; Councilor/Council President Martin-Willis seconded. Discussion: Council asked the motion to be "their" designee instead of "her" designee.

Roll call vote. Motion 6-0-0

Ayes: Evan Sorce, Dawn Roden, Bill Boisvert, Kathy Martin-Willis, Marilyn Morton, Shannon Corr

Nays: None

Abstentions: None

8. **Council Announcements.**

- Councilor Sorce: Rosh Hashanah, Jewish new year. A time of reflection and repentance. Has been reflecting on violence over the last year, specifically recently. Strive to work hard to see humanity in each other and never accept violence as a response.
- Councilor Roden: Healthy debate, no place for violence in the community. Question about adding items to agenda. Meeting set with Mayor and CM West immediately following this meeting.
- Councilor Martin-Willis: The Wall that Heals, proud of community volunteers.
- Councilor Morton: The Hop Festival was very well attended and peaceful. An 81 year old volunteer held up a sign for the Wall that Heals for 5 hours without a break.

9. **General Information.** Items submitted here in the packet are for information only; no action was required by city council.

9.1. **Management Team Notes.**

9.2. **Miscellaneous Correspondence.** Any communications received after publication of the agenda packet, but before 3:00 pm the date of the meeting, will be provided to Council at the meeting and will become a part of the official record.

9.3. **Pending Agenda Calendar.**

10. **Adjournment.** Mayor Schwarzler adjourned the meeting at 7:35 pm.

MAYOR KATE SCHWARZLER

ATTEST:

Myra Russell, City Recorder