



# City of Independence Minutes

City Council Meeting  
Tuesday, May 12, 2026

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1. **Call to Order.** Mayor Schwarzler called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM.
2. **Roll Call.** Mayor Schwarzler present.  
  
Present:           Councilor Evan Sorce  
                      Councilor Dawn Roden, via zoom-phone  
                      Councilor Bill Boisvert  
                      Councilor/Council President Kathy Martin-Willis  
                      Councilor Marilyn Morton  
                      Councilor Shannon Corr  
  
Absent:  
  
City Staff           Kenna West, City Manager  
Present:           Myra Russell, City Recorder  
                      Amanda Carey, Finance Director  
                      Fred Evander, City Planner  
                      Shawn Irvine, Assistant City Manager  
                      Juventino Banuelos, Police Chief  
                      Gerald Fisher, Public Works Director
3. **Minutes. Action:**  
Councilor Corr moved to approve the minutes as presented; Councilor/Council President Martin-Willis seconded. Discussion: None.  
Roll call vote. Motion 5-0-0  
      **Ayes:**   Evan Sorce, Bill Boisvert, Kathy Martin-Willis, Marilyn Morton, Shannon Corr  
      **Nays:**   None  
      **Abstentions:**   None
- 3.1. **Regular Meeting 04/14/2026.**
- 3.2. **Work Session 04/28/2026.**
4. **Visitors/Public Comment.** None.
5. **Reports/Presentations.**
  - 5.1. **Mayor.**
    - Thanked the Budget Committee for working on and approving the city and URA budgets. Thanked the community for coming to give

testimony. It will come before council in June for adoption.

- Touch a truck was well attended. Thanks to SEDCOR for organizing and all the other partners that participated. Families and kids had a great time.
- Water treatment plant funding update. The City was already on Rep. Salinas' list, and now they are also on Senator Merkley and Wyden's list for the \$5 million. We're in a good position just need to wait and see how it unfolds.

## **5.2. Council Liaison Reports.**

### **5.2.1. Library Board: Councilor Boisvert.**

- Met on April 27. Discussed the library hotspot policy. The board mentioned that it would be helpful to be able to ask a staff attorney legal questions that arise during policy discussions.
- 2 board positions will open on the Library Board at the end of June.
- The next meeting is a week early due to Memorial Day. The meeting will be held on Monday, May 18.

### **5.2.2. Museum Board: Councilor Morton.**

- The museum board has been operating effectively and have encouraged and supported the work of the Heritage Museum Society in support of the museum.
- Thursday, May 14, at 7PM at Valkyrie there will be MI Story night. Come hear a story, share a story and donate to support the museum.

### **5.2.3. Continuum of Care: Councilor Martin-Willis.**

- MWVCAA Update: Sara Webb from the Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency shared that David's House youth shelter in Monmouth has reopened after renovations and safety upgrades, including building repairs, electrical improvements, and updated facilities. The shelter is gradually increasing occupancy with plans to reach full capacity soon, while also supporting long-term housing transitions and strengthening partnerships with local agencies and the City of Monmouth.
- Environmental Scan Update: Arielle Goranson from Elle Group Consulting reported on the Environmental Scan and Integration Mapping Project focused on improving coordination within the homeless response system across Marion and Polk counties. The project includes interviews, surveys, and focus groups to identify service gaps and opportunities for stronger collaboration, trauma-informed care, and better referral pathways.
- Approval to Hire: Misty Bolger requested and received approval to hire an Administration and Committee Support Specialist and a Grants and

Contract Manager to address increasing operational demands and organizational capacity challenges. Both positions are limited-duration roles with the potential to become permanent as the Alliance expands its administrative and coordination efforts.

- **2026–27 Budget Items:** Misty Bolger presented the proposed FY 2026–27 budget calendar and recommended Budget Committee membership for Board approval. Discussion covered the budget timeline, committee responsibilities, community participation, and ensuring the process complies with statutory and organizational requirements.

### 5.3. **City Manager.**

- Mayor Kate asked a question from the community that came up during the Budget process. Is there a possibility to reduce rates on the water bills? CM West responded that as debt is paid off, the council can consider reducing rates.
- Update on City properties for sale: The city continues to work on the potential sale of the sports park, and there is one proposal so far for the urban renewal properties. Some interest in other properties but no offers yet. More updates as things move forward.
- Had a meeting with ODOT and the Mayor regarding the Center St Bridget project. More info to come at a future council meeting.
- The City building official, Jeff Kennedy, is retiring. The City is working with the state to handle building inspections until the position is replaced.

### 5.4. **Historic Preservation Presentation.**

Planner Evander: Gave a surprise award to Catherine Underwood Bush for her historic home at 710 Monmouth St. The Historic Preservation Commission wanted to award her the Cairnes-Weaver Preservation Award plaque for all her work at 710 Monmouth Street. Underwood Bush was pleasantly surprised and said her boys have done a lot of the work, and it has been a great project.

## 6. **Unfinished Business.** None

## 7. **New Business.**

### 7.1. **Memorandum of Understanding with Central School District 13J: Regarding Enterprise Zone School Support Fee (West).**

Assistant City Manager Irvine explained the need for this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) as discussed at a previous work session. To comply with current state law, the City and Central School District 13J must enter a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding the Enterprise Zone School Support Fee. A copy of the proposed MOU was included in the agenda packet.

Council discussed how to explain tax exemptions to the community at the same time as adding a fee. Irvine explained that it's one tool that the city has to support large trade sector businesses and attract them to our town. It's a national program that bigger businesses expect as part of their relocation or

expansion plans.

**Action:**

Councilor Sorce moved to that the Council authorize the City Manager to sign the attached or substantively similar Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of the City of Independence; Councilor Boisvert 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. **Proposed Resolution #26-1648: Requested approval for a 5-year Enterprise Zone abatement request (Irvine).**

Assistant CM Irvine explained that Oregon Mining and Ag Fabrication has purchased the old Forest River property and is seeking a 5-year property tax abatement on improvements through the City's Enterprise Zone. Erik Andersson from SEDCOR talked about Oregon Mining and Ag Fabrication coming to the community and adding 8 new jobs. The existing building will continue to be charged property taxes, while the 4 and 5-year extended abatement would only be on improvements in machinery and equipment that is purchased. Property taxes resume at the full rate at the end of 5 years. Blake Westling from Oregon Mining and Ag Fabrication introduced himself and explained his business. They look forward to being a part of the community.

Irvine further explained that the company must have a job creation program offering positions at 150% of the county average wage (\$78,000), with verification responsibilities falling on the assessor and employment department rather than the city. The job creation must be sustained for the period of exemption. If they do not comply, they will fall out of the program.

**Action:**

Councilor Morton moved to approve Resolution #26-1648, authorizing a five-year Enterprise Zone tax abatement for Oregon Mining and Ag Fabrication; Councilor Sorce seconded. Discussion: Council welcomed Blake to the community.

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. **Contract Award : Waste Water Treatment Plant Upgrade and 9th St PS Ph 2-3 (Fisher).**

Public Works Director Fisher brought a contract for two projects Council consideration: The contract award for construction of the Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrades and 9th Street Pump Station Phase 2-3 improvements. He

explained the bidding process and the company chosen, which was the lowest responsible bidder, HP Civil, Inc. Fisher explained funding for the projects. The city has a total of about \$5.8 million in grants for the wastewater treatment plant upgrade. That's about 50% of the cost of the plant. And for the 9th Street Palm Station, the city received a \$2 million state grant through Representative Evans. That covers 89% of the Pump Station project. Councilor Sorce suggested sharing the funding information with the community.

**Action:**

Councilor Corr moved to award the construction contract to HP Civil, Inc. in the amount of \$13,070,593.72 and authorize the City Manager to execute the contract and any change orders within the approved budget.; 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

7.4. **Public Hearing: Changes to Standards for Single Room Occupancies and Other Requirements to Address House Bill 3395 (2023) and House Bill 2138 (2025) (Evander).**

Mayor Kate Schwarzler read the hearing script regarding how the meeting would be conducted. State Law Required Statements read.

- Declaration of Conflicts of Interest, Ex-Parte Contact, Bias: None.
- Public Hearing opened at 7:05 pm by Mayor Schwarzler.
- Staff Report as submitted in the agenda packet was reviewed by Planner Evander. The public hearing is for council to consider revisions to the Independence Development Code to address recent changes to Oregon state law related to House Bill 3395 (adopted in 2023) and House Bill 2138 (adopted in 2025). The proposed code revisions incorporate a variety of changes related to single room occupancies to address the bills' requirements. The proposed revisions also include a relatively simple change to allow ground-floor housing units in commercial zones under certain circumstances. Evander recommends approval.
- Discussion: Councilor Sorce asked if there have been any concerns via feedback. Evander said no, we allow things like this in residential zones currently. The city is just aligning with the state requirement. Councilor Martin-Willis asked for clarification on the changes to ground floor housing. Evander read that the requirement is to allow ground floor housing units affordable to households making 60% of the area median income in areas that allow ground floor commercial development and explained that means in a mixed-use pedestrian-friendly zone, we allow a certain proportion of ground floor residences, but the state has said is if you're affordable to 60% of area median income, you could do entirely ground floor residential.
- Further questions from the Council. None.
- Objections or testimony received: None.
- Public Testimony: None
- Discussion: Staff Response to testimony-None

- Hearing closed at 7:14 PM.

7.5. **Proposed Ordinance #1633: Changes to Standards for Single Room Occupancies and Other Requirements to Address House Bill 3395 (2023) and House Bill 2138 (2025) (Evander).**

Planner Evander explained that this is the ordinance to adopt the issues talked about in the previous public hearing.

**Action:**

Councilor Corr moved to I move to read the proposed Ordinance 1633 in full as the text is contained in the Council packet, for the first time.; 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

City Recorder Russell read the title of the ordinance: An Ordinance Addressing Standards for Single Room Occupancies and Other Requirements in House Bill 3395 (2023) and House Bill 2138 (2025).

**Action:**

**2nd Motion:** Councilor Morton moved to read the proposed Ordinance 1633 for the second time by title only.; 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

Recorder Russell read the title of the proposed ordinance: An Ordinance Addressing Standards for Single Room Occupancies and Other Requirements in House Bill 3395 (2023) and House Bill 2138 (2025).

**Action:**

**3rd Motion:** Councilor Sorce moved to adopt the proposed Ordinance 1633; Councilor Boisvert 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

7.6. **Proposed Resolution #26-1652: FY 2025-26 Budget Adjustments (Carey).**

Finance Director Carey explained that a combination of a supplemental budget and appropriations transfers is necessary to provide appropriation authority in several funds and maintain compliance with Oregon Local Budget Law ORS 294.471(3) and ORS 294.463(2). This is to offset \$24,000 in legal fees by a reduction in the general fund contingency and to receive \$10,000.00 in grant funding received by the police department. Chief Banuelos explained that the police department will use the money for their drone program.

**Action:**

Councilor Morton moved that Council approve Resolution No. 26-1652 to

amend the fiscal year 2025-26 Adopted Budget in accordance with the above-noted recommendations; Councilor/Council President Martin-Willis seconded. Discussion: Councilor Roden explained she was voting yes because we need to pay the bill but doesn't agree with the changes in legal fees in the budget. 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 Roden: apologized for not being at the meeting. She's at a track meet. Talmadge did well.
- Councilor Corr: gave a plug for the Library-sponsored chair yoga. It's the second and fourth Tuesday of the month at 11:00 AM, and it's free.
- Councilor Morton: another free event: MI Story Night: Community edition at Valkyrie on Thursday, May 14 at 7PM. Come listen to readers or submit a story of 850 words or less.
- Mayor Schwarzler: there are a few spots left for the Youth Entrepreneur camp, free for middle schoolers conducted by OSU. Also, a Side Hustle summer camp for adults, free. Hosting FailFest at the end of May, sharing stories of starting businesses and what they've learned along the way.
- Councilor Boisvert: gave a plug for Friends of community parks. You can purchase tickets for the Indy Day event, purchase ducks for the Duck Derby, sign up as a sponsor or volunteer online at their website at [friendsofcommunityparks.org](http://friendsofcommunityparks.org).
- Councilor Sorce: TedX talk at WOU on Saturday. Also, a reminder to watch out for local school celebrations as we approach the end of the school year and to stay safe while traveling through our community during these events.

**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 7:32 pm.

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MAYOR KATE SCHWARZLER

ATTEST:

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Myra Russell, City Recorder