



City of Independence Minutes

**City Council Meeting
Tuesday, July 28, 2026**

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

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

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

Absent: Councilor Evan Sorce, excused

City Staff Present: Kenna West, City Manager
Myra Russell, City Recorder
Juventino Banuelos, Police Chief
Patrick Bodily, Library Director
Amy Christensen, Museum Director

3. **Reports/Presentations.**

3.1. **Update on Potential Closure of Library, Museum, and Parks.**

The Mayor recognized the passing of City Councilor Marilyn Morton and honored her nearly 25 years of dedicated service to the City of Independence. The Mayor highlighted her leadership, volunteerism, commitment to preserving local history, and lasting impact on the community, then invited those present to observe a moment of silence in her memory.

Overview

City Manager West presented a draft operational closure checklist to prepare for the possibility that the referendum on the Community Services and Parks fee qualifies for the ballot. The work session focused on contingency planning rather than a decision to close facilities. CM West explained that planning must begin in advance due to legal, contractual, personnel, and operational requirements.

Library Closure

CM West and Library Director Bodily explained that closure of the library is governed by Oregon law and requires a formal statutory process, including public notices, hearings, coordination with the State Library and Chemeketa Cooperative Regional Library Service (CCRLS), and compliance with grant, collection, and asset requirements. Council discussed the timeline for the statutory process and the impact on library services, funding, and state recognition if City support is withdrawn.

Museum Closure

CM West and Museum Director Christensen reviewed the professional standards and logistical requirements involved in closing the Heritage Museum, including collection management, storage, grant obligations, loaned artifacts, and protection of museum assets.

Parks Closure

CM West explained that park closures would require significant planning, including securing facilities, maintaining public safety, protecting infrastructure, coordinating scheduled events, and addressing ongoing maintenance and liability concerns. Council discussed the potential impacts on community events and local businesses, and requested additional information regarding the costs of keeping parks open for scheduled activities.

Financial and Operational Discussion

Council discussed the financial impacts of a successful referendum, including the need for a supplemental budget, limited contingency reserves, and the City's structural budget deficit. CM West explained that the closure planning reflects several years of budget reductions and evaluation of alternatives, and emphasized that the work session was intended to prepare for a potential operational scenario while maintaining transparency with the public. Council also requested additional financial information, clarification on closure timelines, and continued public communication throughout the process.

4. **Adjournment.** Mayor Schwarzler adjourned the work session at 7:43 pm.

MAYOR KATE SCHWARZLER

ATTEST:

Myra Russell, City Recorder