

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
Monday February 23rd, 2026, 5:30 P.M.
City Hall Council Chambers
115 N 3rd Street

The Council of the City of Oregon met Monday February 23rd, 2026, at 5:30 P.M.

The meeting was held at City Hall in the Council Chambers and on Zoom.

Present: Mayor Ken Williams
Council Member Terry Schuster
Council Member Melanie Cozzi
Council Member Tim Krug
Council Member Josiah Flanagan
City Manager Darin DeHaan
City Attorney Paul Chadwick
Chief of Police Matt Kalnins
City Clerk Cheryl Hilton

Also Present: Bill Covell, John Dickson, Tom Pacey, Josh Pickering, and Jordan Plock.

Mayor Ken Williams called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

Mayor Ken Williams started the pledge of allegiance.

Council Members Cozzi, Flanagan, Krug, Schuster, and Mayor Williams answered roll call. A quorum was present.

Presentations

None.

Proclamations, Commendations, Swear In, Etc.

None.

Public Comment

Tom Pacey spoke to the City Council regarding the changes to the downtown planting considerations on the agenda. He thanked everyone for maintaining the downtown plants. He suggested instead of a reduction in green space and covering those areas with concrete to consider planting salt tolerant perennial plants.

Approval of Minutes

Council Member Tim Krug moved to approve February 10th, 2026, minutes, Seconded by Council Member Terry Schuster.

Roll Call: Cozzi, Flanagan, Krug, Schuster, Williams. No Nays.

Approval of Warrants & Payroll

Council Member Josiah Flanagan moved to approve payroll in the amount of \$63,897.08 and the current warrants as listed:

ADR Systems	\$2,785.00
Amazon Capital Services, Inc	\$32.98
Amazon Capital Services, Inc	\$182.47
Ancel Glink, P.C.	\$2,120.00

Blue Cross Blue Shield	\$21,531.13
Bonnell Industries	\$3,600.00
Boss Roofing-Siding Experts	\$3,817.03
Butitta Bros Automotive - Oregon	\$142.50
Caspers Home Inspection LLC	\$1,550.00
CB&S	\$1,683.00
Certified Balance & Scale Corp	\$1,683.00
City of Oregon	\$5,500.00
City of Rockford	\$44.00
Comcast	\$672.15
Comcast	\$1,031.25
ComEd	\$11,312.79
Ecolab	\$316.46
Ehmen	\$535.00
Ehmen	\$1,122.50
Electric Pump	\$2,806.25
Elevator Inspection Service Company LLC	\$175.00
EM Benefits	\$1,822.66
Fehr Graham & Associates, LLC	\$4,750.00
Fischer's	\$633.81
Helm Electric	\$397.00
Helm Electric	\$1,850.00
Highstar Traffic	\$572.75
Hoosier Equipment	\$2,206.47
Illinois Department of Employment Security	\$5,440.00
Illinois Doormasters	\$2,336.64
LAI, LLC	\$2,514.00
MCS	\$145.00
Melanie Cozzi	\$25.00
Merlin & Cindy Hagemann	\$2,939.78
NAPA	\$736.15
Nicor	\$753.75
Polo Cooperative Association	\$2,686.71
Postmaster	\$814.96
Quill	\$173.99
Steve Benesh & Sons	\$1,408.18
Steven Varble Productions	\$405.00
Trestle Holdings, LLC	\$2,500.19
Verdin Company	\$775.00
Verizon	\$714.11
Visa	\$5,359.38
Waste Water Management of Northern Illinois	\$5,000.00
Wiggle LLC	\$5,121.25
Zoro Tools, Inc	\$307.35
	\$115,031.64

Seconded by Council Member Terry Schuster.

Roll Call: Cozzi, Flanagan, Krug, Schuster, Williams. No Nays.

Ordinances

Council Member Melanie Cozzi moved to approve Ordinance 2026-004 authorizing the City of Oregon to Borrow Funds from the Water Pollution Control Loan Program (Wastewater Treatment Plant Headworks Project), Seconded by Council Member Tim Krug.

Discussion: City Manager Darin DeHaan said the city had previously applied for an EPA loan. The city engineers suggested reapplying for the loan in March. This is part of the process of applying for funding consideration. The engineers believe since the plans for the project have been completed, the city is in a better position to receive funding with EPA forgiveness. The ordinance is not approval of the project. Mayor Ken Williams said this is a second run at getting a discount.

Roll Call: Cozzi, Flanagan, Krug, Schuster, Williams. No Nays.

Resolutions

Council Member Josiah Flanagan moved to approve Resolution 2026-04 Disposal of Surplus Property, Seconded by Council Member Melanie Cozzi.

Discussion: The items on this ordinance are police department related. City Manager Darin DeHaan said the Police Department received new tasers, the old ones are no longer needed. There are also a couple of city squad cars on the request for disposal. Public Works Director Bill Covell stated the items on the list will go to auction and the information to bid on items will be available tomorrow on the city website. The tasers will not be included on the auction but sold to other police departments.

Roll Call: Cozzi, Flanagan, Krug, Schuster, Williams. No Nays.

Motions

Council Member Terry Schuster moved to approve the 2026 General Engineering Services Agreement with Fehr Graham and Associates, LLC – estimated services to be \$10,000.00 and authorize the City Manager to sign all documents on behalf of the City of Oregon, Seconded by Council Member Tim Krug.

Discussion: City Manager Darin DeHaan stated the agreement is for general work, similar to a legal retainer.

Roll Call: Cozzi, Flanagan, Krug, Schuster, Williams. No Nays.

Council Member Tim Krug moved to approve 2026 Streets General Maintenance Agreement with Fehr Graham and Associates, LLC – fixed fee of \$53,000.00 and authorize the City Manager to sign all documents on behalf of the City of Oregon (Century Hills Subdivision Project), Seconded by Council Member Melanie Cozzi.

Discussion: Public Works Director Bill Covell said this project will be mill and overlay with three hundred feet of curb work done in the Century Hills Subdivision. Council Member Melanie Cozzi asked if there have been requests for sidewalks in that subdivision. Bill Covell stated not for this subdivision, but he has received requests from the 13th Street area.

Roll Call: Cozzi, Flanagan, Krug, Schuster, Williams. No Nays.

Council Member Josiah Flanagan moved to approve Contract Operations Services Agreement with Fehr Graham & Associates, LLC and authorize the City Manager to sign all documents on behalf of the City of Oregon (Water Department), Seconded by Council Member Terry Schuster.

Discussion: City Manager Darin DeHaan stated an employee needs time off to care for a family member. Fehr Graham holds the required certifications to provide EPA oversight for the city during this time.

Roll Call: Cozzi, Flanagan, Krug, Schuster, Williams. No Nays.

Council Member Josiah Flanagan moved to approve 2026 Membership to Ogle County Economic Development Corporation - \$10,000.00 Membership Fee, Seconded by Council Member Tim Krug.

Discussion: City Manager Darin DeHaan stated the city pledged ARPA funds back in 2016 to support the creation of the corporation. The membership fee would be an annual payment to the corporation. Mayor Ken Williams asked if the county had submitted their portion yet. City Manager Darin DeHaan said they are still negotiating. The county has provided office space and other items for the executive director's position. Executive Director Liz Hiemstra has taken over a few projects the city previously had contracted with Manheim Solutions.

Roll Call: Cozzi, Flanagan, Krug, Schuster, Williams. No Nays.

Council Member Terry Schuster moved to approve the establishment of 250th Commemoration Committee and Appoint Members as provided in the memo from the City Manager, Seconded by Council Member Tim Krug.

Discussion: Mayor Ken Williams said the ad hoc committee is a group of volunteers who will be working together to create and organize events celebrating the 250th anniversary of the United States up until the 4th of July. City Manager Darin DeHaan stated a few organizations have been working on events individually. The creation of the committee will allow them to collaborate on events. They are currently working on a Flag Day event to be held at historical sites.

Roll Call: Cozzi, Flanagan, Krug, Schuster, Williams. No Nays.

Council Member Tim Krug moved to approve the Rock Salt Contract Joint Participant Agreement and authorize Public Works Director Bill Covell and Street Foreman Jordan Plock to enter into contracts to include joint participation agreements on behalf of the City of Oregon with the State of Illinois, Seconded by Council Member Terry Schuster.

Discussion: Public Works Director Bill Covell said the city did not participate in this program last year. Salt was purchased through Morton Salt. Approval of the agreement will allow the city to purchase salt through the State of Illinois for an obligatory amount of salt. There was a time last year when the city was out of salt because companies were behind due to early snowfall.

Roll Call: Cozzi, Flanagan, Krug, Schuster, Williams. No Nays.

Discussion Items

Illinois Housing Development Authority - Community Revitalization Strategy – Scope of Work: City Manager Darin DeHaan said he would like direction on how to deploy the program and solicit volunteers. There is a need for community ambassadors and volunteers. Council Member Terry Schuster recommending reaching out to service organizations. He also asked if part of the

process would include interviews with the homeowners. City Manager Darin DeHaan said yes. Mayor Ken Williams said to reach out to pastors at local churches. Council Member Tim Krug volunteered to be an ambassador.

Downtown Beautification – Suggested Planting Changes: City Manager Darin DaHaan said downtown beautification is paid for out of the economic development fund. Income sources come from gaming, franchise licenses, and sales tax revenue. In the past the city has put eighty-five thousand dollars of gaming revenue into the fund. About thirty-five thousand dollars comes from franchise licenses and twenty-seven thousand dollars comes from sales tax revenue. The cost for downtown beautification this last year was ninety-two thousand nine hundred and fifty-seven dollars, this does include some additional landscaping. The largest part of the expense is for watering. The intent is to lower the cost of watering by about half. He has been working with Bill, Jordan, and Josh on strategy and one of the options is for the public works department to take care of the areas around the welcome signs. They discussed planting hardy perennials instead of high maintenance annuals. AOP also pays for a portion of switching out the flowers by the welcome signs for fall. The city would continue to work with them. Ground plants continue to be the biggest expense for watering and maintenance. They are located by the fire department and by the judicial center parking lot. These areas have a lot of heavy traffic and wind. Mayor Ken Williams stated the soil in these areas need to be reconditioned annually. Snowplows push snow on these areas and there is salt in the snow. City Manager Darin DeHaan stated one of the suggestions is to switch from ground plants to planters. Maintaining the planters would be easier and they would require less watering. Watering for the downtown containers would still be bid out. The city public works department would water and maintain the welcome signs. He said the city gets a lot of recognition for how the downtown looks, but the objective is to lower costs. The City Council also discussed adding stamped brick to the area around the planters. Street Foreman Jordan Plock said the amount of fertilizer needed for the planters is going to be far less than for the ground plants. Council Member Josiah Flanagan said the money saved can be used for other services.

Constellation Emergency Siren Phase Out: City Manager Darin DeHaan said Constellation has been supporting these sirens for multiple counties for years and they are getting away from that. He said what they will do is utilize a system called IPAWS alert system. It can be used locally. Alerts would be made to the public through cell phones. He has also talked with the school. Every community does have the option to keep the sirens, however maintenance and decommission costs would become the responsibility of the municipality. Council Member Terry Schuster stated there would be no alert if the phone is turned off. City Manager Darin DeHaan said they are looking into providing more alerts with the IPAWS system. Chief of Police Matt Kalnins attended a meeting at the Ogle County Sheriff's Department. He stated deactivation of the sirens would not begin for at least another year. There is an approval process to be completed and approved first. He said the approximate cost to decommission would be about \$100,000.00 per siren. He said the county has already implemented the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS). City Manager Darin DeHaan said there are a multitude of ways to be alerted to emergency situations with current technology.

Seal Coat Strategy for FY27/FY28: Public Works Director Bill Covell said the cost for material for slurry seal has increased from \$3.50 to \$4 per square yard to \$7 per square yard. He suggested putting off the project planned for this year until next year to get a volume discount. The project scheduled for this year includes the City Hall parking lot, the street garage parking lot, and Adams Street. Mayor Ken Williams asked the City Council if the project should be postponed or if the project could be accelerated by a year and include streets that were scheduled for next year. He said the city typically spends about 70 to 90 thousand dollars per year on chip seal. Public Works Director Bill Covell said it would cost about one hundred and twenty thousand dollars to do two

years' worth of street slurry seal projects. He will get bids and bring them to the City Council for review and approval.

FY26 Marketing Proposal: City Manager Darin DeHaan said he has secured a grant in the amount of \$32,700.00 as well as a two-year pledged donation from a private donor. He said the new agreement with a5 Branding and Digital will help with downtown businesses since the Chamber of Commerce has suspended operations. The city would need to provide about twenty thousand dollars of economic development funds since the grant is a cost match. Council Member Melanie Cozzi said the marketing company needs more than one day to take photos of Oregon. City Manager Darin DeHaan said the Oregon Park District provided many pictures to a5 for the previous marketing campaign. He asked the City Council to reach out to him with any questions or suggestions related to the proposal. He said he will ask for approval at the next meeting.

Board & Commission Reports

Planning: Next meeting is March 17th at 5:30 p.m.

Sustainability: Next meeting is March 9th at 9 a.m.

Tree Board: Next meeting is March 18th at 5:30 p.m.

250th Commemoration Committee: The Committee will be meeting on March 4th at 5:30 p.m.

Public Art Commission: The committee will be meeting to discuss the welcome signs on March 4th at 4:30 p.m.

Department & Officer Reports

Chief of Police Matt Kalnins: He said two of the four new police squads are on the streets. The 2nd SUV is expected to be delivered this week.

Public Works Director Bill Covell: Weather permitting, leaf pickup will begin on Monday March 2nd. Council Member Terry Schuster said some residents have leaf bags out for collection already. The bagged leaf pickup program does not begin until April.

City Manager Darin DeHaan: He is collecting letters of support for a grant for which he is applying. The grant is for a speed radar trailer.

Council Reports

Mayor Ken Williams: Thanked the volunteers of the 250th Commemoration Committee.

Council Member Terry Schuster moved to adjourn the meeting, Seconded by Council Member Tim Krug.

Roll Call: Cozzi, Flanagan, Krug, Schuster, Williams. No Nays.

Adjourn: 6:37 P.M.

Ken Williams, Mayor

Attest: _____
Cheryl Hilton, City Clerk