

**ASHLAND CITY COUNCIL
BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, December 16, 2025**

6:00 PM Business Meeting

Council Present: Mayor Graham, Councilors Bloom, Dahle, DuQuenne, Hansen, Kaplan, and Sherrell.

Council Absent: None

Staff Present:

Sabrina Cotta	City Manager
Johan Pietila	City Attorney
Jordan Rooklyn	Deputy City Manager

Graham called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

- a. Land Acknowledgement**

Kaplan read the land acknowledgement.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Dahle led the pledge of allegiance.

III. ROLL CALL

IV. MAYOR'S/ CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENT

Graham noted that three important community anchors celebrated significant anniversaries this year: First Presbyterian Church (150 years), Ashland Springs Hotel (100 years), and Oregon Shakespeare Festival (90 years). Graham emphasized that these milestones demonstrate the community's resilience through change and challenges.

Graham also shared information about the Ashland-Sviatohirs'k Aid Project (ASAP) fundraiser, which has been helping Ashland's Ukrainian sister city for approximately 2.5 years. Graham unveiled a framed Ukrainian flag sent from Sviatohirs'k, which had significant historical importance as it had survived attempted removal by Russian forces. The flag will soon be displayed at City Hall.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Minutes of December 1, 2025 – Retreat
- b. Minutes of December 2, 2025 – Business Meeting

Hansen moved to approve the minutes. Bloom seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Sherrell, Dahle, Bloom, DuQuenne, Kaplan, and Hansen – YES. Motion passed.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Approval of Annual OLCC License

Bloom moved to approve the consent agenda. Dahle seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Sherrell, Dahle, Bloom, DuQuenne, Kaplan, and Hansen – YES. Motion passed.

VII. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

VIII. PUBLIC FORUM –

Citizens addressed the Council with concerns about various topics, including spending decisions across departments, questioning procedures during the June 3rd public hearing on the 2025-2027 budget, and the use of glyphosate on public property given Ashland's environmentally friendly status. They also raised issues with the night lawn process for unhoused individuals, particularly the requirement to relocate despite inclement weather, advocating for a more compassionate approach. Additionally, concerns were expressed about the impact of expanding cell towers and 5G antennas on community health, safety, and local governance.

IX. PUBLIC HEARING

- a. First Reading of Ordinance 3275: Amending Chapter 10.68 Public Parks to include provisions for special use permitted activity*

Cotta and Rooklyn presented the ordinance, explaining it would allow for special events in parks through an administrative permit process rather than requiring Parks Commission approval. This change would improve efficiency for event organizers.

Councilors inquired about the fee structures and whether dogs are allowed in Lithia Park. It was confirmed that fees are set by the miscellaneous fee schedule, currently at \$30 per booth, and that dogs are not allowed in many City parks, including Lithia Park, due to wildlife concerns.

Public Hearing Open

No speakers.

Public Hearing Closed

Dahle moved to approve first reading of Ordinance 3275 Amending Chapter 10.68 Public Parks to include provisions for special use permitted activity. Hansen seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Kaplan, Hansen, Sherrell, Bloom, and Dahle – YES. DuQuenne – NO. Motion passed.

X. ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS AND CONTRACTS

- a. Second Reading – Ordinance Language Change (set #1)*

Pietila presented nine ordinances for second reading aimed at either aligning city codes with current practices or eliminating redundant language. There were no changes from the first reading. Graham confirmed with Rooklyn that no speakers signed up to speak about any of the proposed changes.

Dahle moved to approve second reading of Ordinance 3260 An Ordinance Removing 2.29.020(p) to Reduce Redundancy. Sherrell seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Kaplan, Hansen, Sherrell, Bloom, DuQuenne, and Dahle – YES. Motion passed.

Sherrell moved to approve second reading of Ordinance 3262 An Ordinance Updating 2.54.070 to Allow for Electronic Payments of Surplus Property. Kaplan seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Kaplan, Hansen, Sherrell, Bloom, DuQuenne, and Dahle – YES. Motion passed.

Hansen moved to approve second reading of Ordinance 3266 An Ordinance Updating Chapter 6.04 so that Business License Fees are Set by Resolution. Bloom seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Kaplan, Hansen, Sherrell, Bloom, DuQuenne, and Dahle – YES. Motion passed.

Bloom moved to approve second reading of Ordinance 3274 An Ordinance Updating 6.42.030–050 to Reflect Current Tobacco Licensure Standards. Dahle seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Kaplan, Hansen, Sherrell, Bloom, DuQuenne, and Dahle – YES. Motion passed.

Kaplan moved to approve second reading of Ordinance 3277 An Ordinance Updating 14.12.020 so Fees are Set by Resolution. Bloom seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Kaplan, Hansen, Sherrell, Bloom, DuQuenne, and Dahle – YES. Motion passed.

Dahle moved to approve second reading of Ordinance 3278 An Ordinance Updating 14.12.050.d. to Correct for the Proper Agency Name. Hansen seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Kaplan, Hansen, Sherrell, Bloom, DuQuenne, and Dahle – YES. Motion passed.

Sherrell moved to approve second reading of Ordinance 3279 An Ordinance Updating 14.12.060.B.1 so Fees are Set by Resolution. Dahle seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Kaplan, Hansen, Sherrell, Bloom, and Dahle – YES. DuQuenne – NO. Motion passed.

Hansen moved to approve second reading of Ordinance 3280 An Ordinance Updating 14.12.080 to Correct for the Proper ORS Reference. Bloom seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Kaplan, Hansen, Sherrell, Bloom, DuQuenne, and Dahle – YES. Motion passed.

Bloom moved to approve second reading of Ordinance 3281 An Ordinance Updating 14.16.020 to Align with State ORS. DuQuenne seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Kaplan, Hansen, Sherrell, Bloom, DuQuenne, and Dahle – YES. Motion passed.

XI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Citywide Strategic Plan

Cotta reported that the city has signed a contract with SSW Consulting to facilitate the strategic plan process. A kickoff meeting was scheduled for Thursday, and arrangements will be made for meetings between the consultants and councilors. Cotta emphasized that while the strategic plan will align with budget considerations, it is a separate process focused on identifying community priorities for city services.

Council discussion included considerations regarding the scope and nature of the strategic plan. Concern was expressed that the process might be too narrowly focused on municipal operations

rather than including broader community goals. The importance of including diverse voices within the community, particularly from younger residents and families, was discussed. Other considerations included a request for multiple check-ins throughout the process, the need to incorporate budget realities into the planning, and the importance of the plan becoming a "living document" that could be adjusted as circumstances change.

Cotta clarified that the plan would focus on city services but would incorporate community-wide goals and feedback. It was noted that other institutions such as Southern Oregon University and the Ashland School District would be invited to participate but would not be developing a joint strategic plan with the city. It was suggested that council leadership be involved in the project team. Councilors agreed that two to three councilors should participate. Cotta will work with the consultants regarding that suggestion.

XII. NEW BUSINESS

XIII. CITY MANAGER REPORT –

a. Look Ahead

Cotta provided a brief update on the look-ahead calendar, noting that study sessions were scheduled through May 2026. Cotta also warned of expected high winds later in the week and reminded residents to report downed limbs through the City's SeeClickFix app.

XIV. OTHER BUSINESS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS/REPORTS FROM COUNCIL LIAISONS

Graham discussed the upcoming process for council liaison assignments and asked councilors to review the list of committees and provide their preferences. DuQuenne highlighted the need for more committee members and encouraged citizens to consider joining city committees.

Kaplan reported on the Jackson County Continuum of Care, noting uncertainty in federal funding for housing and homelessness initiatives. He mentioned that a strategic communications plan was being developed and that elected officials would soon receive a questionnaire regarding homelessness issues.

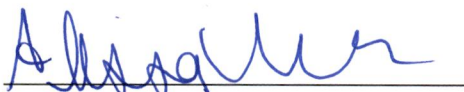
Graham reported on the Public Safety Coordinating Council, acknowledging the good work being done by local social services providers despite funding challenges.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

Bloom moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by DuQuenne

All Ayes. Motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:31 p.m.



City Recorder Alissa Kolodzinski



Mayor Tonya Graham



Better Together

SPEAKER REQUEST FORM

Submit this form to the meeting Secretary prior to the discussion item.

- 1) You will be called forward when it is your turn to speak
- 2) State your name and speak clearly into the microphone
- 3) Limit your comments to the time allotted
- 4) Provide any written materials to the meeting Secretary
- 5) Speakers are solely responsible for the content of their statement

Date:

Dec 18, 2025

Name: (Please Print)

Karen Po H

Ashland Resident:



YES



NO

City: _____

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

Public Forum Topic (Non-agenda Item):

FCC tele com

Please respect the order of proceedings and strictly follow the directions of the presiding officer. Behavior or actions which are loud or disruptive are disrespectful and offenders will be requested to leave.

Disclaimer: By submitting this request to address the Public Body, I agree that I will refrain from the use of any obscene, vulgar, or profane language. I understand that if I do not follow procedure my speaking time may be terminated, and I may be requested to sit down or leave the building.



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Date:

12-17-25

Name: (Please Print)

Vicki Simpson

Ashland Resident:



YES



NO

City:

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

FCC + Telecom (Fed overreach)

Public Forum Topic (Non-agenda Item):



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Attention local elected officials:

The FCC is planning to take away your right to control wireless antennas in your community.



Under the guise of “eliminating barriers to wireless deployments,” the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is proposing new rules that virtually eliminate any authority for local governments to control the deployment of wireless infrastructure in their communities.

You will not be able to object to the construction of wireless towers in residential neighborhoods, at schools, daycare centers, parks, historic districts or any other location where antennas would impact the quality of life for your constituents.

The FCC will only back down if local officials object to this blatant power grab.

Please visit www.25-276.org to learn how you can help preserve reasonable local authority over the deployment of wireless infrastructure.



AND Tell the Senate bit.ly/48Zq1YN



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Date:

12/16/25

Name: (Please Print)

Angelina Mclean

Ashland Resident:



YES



NO

City:

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

Public Forum Topic (Non-agenda Item):

Glyphosate Spraying

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Date:

12-16-25

Name: (Please Print)

Vincent Doyle

Ashland Resident:



YES



NO

City: _____

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

GLYPHOSATE

Public Forum Topic (Non-agenda Item):



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Date:

DEC. 16, 2025

Name: (Please Print)

WILLIAM J. ZENNER

Ashland Resident:

☒ YES ☐ NO City: _____

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

~~GLYSPHATE SPRAYING~~

Public Forum Topic (Non-agenda Item):

GLYSPHATE SPRAYING

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Date:

12/16/25

Name: (Please Print)

Steve Shapiro

Ashland Resident:



YES



NO

City: _____

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

Public Forum Topic (Non-agenda Item):

Spending

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Date:

12/16

Name: (Please Print)

Debbie Neisewander

Ashland Resident:



YES



NO

City: _____

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

Public Forum Topic (Non-agenda Item):

nite lawn

Please respect the order of proceedings and strictly follow the directions of the presiding officer. Behavior or actions which are loud or disruptive are disrespectful and offenders will be requested to leave.

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Date:

12/16/25

Name: (Please Print)

Denise M Overkamp

Ashland Resident:



YES



NO

City: _____

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

Public Forum

Public Forum Topic (Non-agenda Item):

Public Forum - Night Lawn

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Date:

12/16/25

Name: (Please Print)

Thayne Glass

Ashland Resident:

☒ YES ☐ NO City: _____

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

Public Forum

Public Forum Topic (Non-agenda Item):

Public Forum - Night Lawn

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Date:

12/14/1

Name: (Please Print)

[Signature]

Ashland Resident:

☒ YES ☐ NO City: _____

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

Public forum

Public Forum Topic (Non-agenda Item):

Night Council

Please respect the order of proceedings and strictly follow the directions of the presiding officer. Behavior or actions which are loud or disruptive are disrespectful and offenders will be requested to leave.

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Date:

12/16

Name: (Please Print)

SHARON BRYSON

Ashland Resident:



YES



NO

City: _____

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

Public Forum Topic (Non-agenda Item):

Poison

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I stand before you with a heavy heart. The way I see it our town is coming apart at the seams at the helm of this governing body.

The list of deterioration is long. I don't need to bring it to your attention of the ways the management and this council is failing our community but I want to read a recent quote that was written in an Ashland News story regarding Asante and Ashland relationship.

The quote goes like this, "the city is committed to delivering responsive high quality services that promote public safety, environmental stewardship and community well being." end quote. Please speak truth.

This quote brings me to the topic I'm most upset by. The topic is parks approving the use of glyphosate in our neighborhoods. I want an immediate stop to the use of Glyphosate.

The latest information I have is parks commission approved the use of Glyphosate up to four time per year from March through October although the last use was 11/26 not sure what that's about. March will come very soon between now and then alternatives need to be brought forward and practiced with the safety of all involved at the core.

Yes, I understand parks is under its own jurisdiction-to me that seems an easy out for council to look the other way and leads me to believe parks runs our town and has more power than council. That is a sad set of affairs and again the way I see it parks department is the core of the deterioration of Ashland.

The culture of Ashland is dying a slow death. I don't think it needs to be like that. There are smart creative people here that I believe are willing to help but not until city government embarks on open minded approach. No not through surveys, emails, public forum, coffee and conversation or colored dots but through true community dialogue.



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Date:

12/16/25

Name: (Please Print)

PAUL MOZINA

Ashland Resident:

☒

YES

☐

NO

City: _____

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

Public Forum Topic (Non-agenda Item):

2025-2027 Budget

Please respect the order of proceedings and strictly follow the directions of the presiding officer. Behavior or actions which are loud or disruptive are disrespectful and offenders will be requested to leave.

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I asked you all a simple question: Did the Council hold the June 3 public hearing on the 2025-2027 budget document **AS APPROVED** by the citizens budget committee, or, did you hold the hearing on the budget document that **YOU AMENDED** at the May 19 study session?

None of you answered the question. Are you hiding behind an email that the city attorney sent me on July 2, as if that was the definitive answer to any issues I raised?

Here is what city attorney Pietila said in that email: "Per budget law, after the budget committee has approved the budget **and a public hearing was held**, the City Council can make changes to the budget— **that was approved** – when adopting the budget." Pietila correctly summarizes the order of events as explained in ORS 294.453 https://oregon.public.law/statutes/ors_294.453, which requires the public hearing to be on the budget document **AS APPROVED** by the citizens' budget committee. But that is not what you did.

He goes on to explain how you violated that law: "There was no need for a motion to amend the budget because it was already discussed in prior sessions and **included in the budget they were presented to vote on...** Council more than sufficiently discussed the change in previous council sessions, and **right before the public hearing**, so it was clear and transparent, **before** they voted on the adopted budget."

An objective, honest person, examining these statements would conclude that the public hearing was held on the budget document as amended by you, not as approved by the citizens' budget committee, which violates ORS 294.453. But you all are refusing to admit that you made a mistake. You're hiding behind the fallacious reasoning of the city attorney to avoid acknowledging what you did. You're being dishonest and you've violated your oath of office.

