

**ASHLAND CITY COUNCIL
BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, March 3, 2026**

I. EXECUTIVE SESSION 5:00 p.m.

To conduct deliberations with persons designated by the governing body to negotiate real property transactions pursuant to ORS 192.660 (2)(e). In attendance were Mayor Graham, Councilors Sherrell, Dahle, Bloom, Kaplan, DuQuenne, and Hansen. Staff present were Sabrina Cotta, Johan Pietila, Alissa Kolodzinski, and Scott Fleury. Representing the media was Emma Maple from the Daily Courier.

II. Business Meeting

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

Council Absent: None

Staff Present:

Sabrina Cotta	City Manager
Johan Pietila	City Attorney
Alissa Kolodzinski	City Recorder
Tom McBartlett	Electric Director
Jordan Rooklyn	Deputy City Manager
Bryn Morrison	Interim Finance Director

Graham called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

- a. Land Acknowledgement**

Hansen read the land acknowledgement.

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Sherrell led the pledge of allegiance.

IV. ROLL CALL

V. MAYOR'S/ CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENT

Graham began with an acknowledgment of the recent tragic accident in the community. She expressed gratitude to first responders and community members supporting affected families.

Graham announced that the "If I Were Mayor" contest deadline is March 13th and encouraged young people to submit their ideas about what they would do as mayors.

Women's History Month Proclamation – the proclamation was read into the record.

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Minutes of the February 2, 2026 – Special Study Session Meeting
b. Minutes of the February 3, 2026 – Business Meeting

Dahle moved to approve the minutes of February 2 and 3, 2026. Bloom seconded the motion.

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

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

VIII. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

a. 2200 Ashland Street Ad Hoc Committee: Progress Update and Direction

Cotta introduced Noah Werthaiser, chair of the 2200 ad hoc committee, to present updates and gather council feedback. Werthaiser stated that all concepts were preliminary and not yet finalized. The committee divided their work into two groups: one focused on site planning and development, the other on services and accountability. The site planning group explored models such as tiny home villages and multi-unit apartments to serve various income levels and developed guidelines with considerations for minimum unit sizes and design compatibility.

Council sought clarification on how housing models aligned with initial recommendations and zoning allowances. No maximum density cap was determined as it would depend on housing type. Discussion clarified separate processes for building / site development, and expectations for contracted services to be provided at the site.

The services and accountability group proposed a "coordinating agency model" with a single master lease and a good neighbor agreement to manage conduct expectations. Self-accountability practices and a draft list of service categories were discussed. Under the coordinating model, the contracted agency would handle all aspects from appointment scheduling to security. Flexibility in setting performance standards was considered important.

The committee's outreach work included planned public meetings and an open house on April 8, 2026 at the 2200 Ashland Street location. Discussion emphasized integrating feedback from upcoming community collaboration into the good neighbor agreement.

IX. PUBLIC FORUM –

Citizens expressed alarm over national reports of law enforcement officials concealing their identities and emphasized the urgency of enacting policies to prohibit such actions, aligning with House Bill 4138. Concern was expressed regarding Ashland Community Hospital's sustainability amid broader systemic challenges. Criticism was also presented regarding missteps in the budget amendment process that allegedly violated legal statutes.

X. RESOLUTIONS

a. Resolution for electric rates

McBartlett was joined by Mike Johnson from Utility Financial Solutions and provided a presentation (see agenda packet). McBartlett explained Resolution 2026-02 sets electric rates for three years, and involves an increase for average residential customers starting just under \$3 and rising to \$3.23 by the third year. Despite these increases, Ashland's rates would remain about 40% less than neighboring utilities. The necessity of rate increases is due to Bonneville's 18% transmission cost and three-year wage hikes, limited deferred maintenance, and recommendations for substantial capital investments

requiring engineering work. Reserves are needed for emergencies and financial health for potential debt financing.

Councilor discussion included Pacific Power's low-income assistance charges compared to Ashland's, future assistance program reviews, and monitoring funding adequacy while remaining supportive. Public comment questioned non-mention of fiscal impacts from rate increase and utility tax funds generating additional revenue for the general fund. Additional Council discussion highlighted Ashland's rate stability, 28% lower total costs than Pacific Power, and efficient energy sourcing. Emphasis was placed on the need for resilient infrastructure investment amidst federal uncertainties with predictions of slower strategic responses from agencies like FEMA.

Kaplan moved to approval of resolution 2026-02 titled "A resolution revising rates for electric service pursuant to Ashland Municipal Code 14.16.030 and repealing resolution 2021-08. Bloom seconded the motion.

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

XI. PUBLIC HEARING

Order of the agenda was rearranged to accommodate speakers.

a. Consideration of the Proposed Sale of 380 Clay Street

Cotta introduced the item and Rooklyn explained the December 2nd council discussion about surplus the property and following the Oregon statute process. The property contains a derelict single-family residence eligible for removal and a large, old Fremont Cottonwood tree. It's zoned R2 for residential use. The city appraised the property at \$250,000.

In response to questions about the tree's history, Rooklyn explained that in 2009, a subdivision application marked the Fremont Cottonwood for preservation. In 2015-16, the city applied for a tree removal permit that was denied by Planning Commission for not meeting hazardous tree or development prevention criteria. The housing authority built 15-17 affordable housing units on the back portion after splitting parcels. A city arborist's recent drive-by assessment found the tree healthy though trimming would maintain health. It was clarified that regardless of future development scenarios, a tree removal permit would be required should there be an interest in removing the tree.

Public Hearing open

Samara Burnett opposed the sale, calling the tree the "Tree of Hope" and stressing community opposition. She mentioned its 250-year history, successful preservation efforts, and its potential to live for 200 more years. She proposed splitting the lot, selling the house, and keeping the tree as a park.

Brian Holly supported saving the "tree of hope," noted its cultural significance per indigenous wisdom, and highlighted strong community interest shown by Nextdoor engagement. He suggested council consent to heritage status and creating a city park.

CeCe Brown backed the prior views stated and recalled past planning commission concerns and promoting its heritage significance.

Alan Sandler addressed rumors regarding his intentions for the property and clarified his interest in purchasing the lot is because of the tree as a major asset. He emphasized his appreciation for the tree and plans either 4-6 low-cost townhouses or 6-7 unit low-rent apartments and assured that precautions for the well would be taken.

Public Hearing closed

Pursuit to AMC 2.04.050 (I)(1):

Dahle moved to extend public hearing agenda items until 9:30 PM. DuQuenne seconded the motion.

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

Councilors discussed the potential for a deed restriction to keep the tree. Pietila expressed concerns about deed restrictions related to living organisms and refrained from providing specific advice without research. After extensive discussion about process and a withdrawn amendment, the following motion was adopted:

Bloom moved to authorize the sale of 380 Clay Street and restrict the proceeds to the capitol fund. Seconded by Dahle.

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

Recess – five minutes

b. First Reading and Public Hearing of Ordinance 3282 Creating Section 2.55 of the Ashland Municipal Code: Disposal of Real Property

Pietila presented the ordinance consolidating relevant portions of chapters 2.71 and 2.21 of the Ashland Municipal Code (AMC) for administrative efficiency and transparency. The ordinance incorporates home rule changes at section 2.55.02 and adds non-exhaustive factor lists for future council guidance. The statute itself provides limited definitions, but previous discussions established framework.

Councilors asked how this ordinance would affect the potential for a sale of city hall. Pietila confirmed it would follow the same process as any other property disposal.

Public Hearing open

No Speakers

Public Hearing closed

Dahle moved to approve First Reading of 3282, an ordinance creating Section 2.55 of the Ashland Municipal Code: Disposal of Real Property and move to second reading at the March 17 meeting. Seconded by Hansen.

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

c. *First Reading and Public Hearing of Ordinance 3295 Amending AMC 14.02 Utility Systems – Customer Accounting Policies*

Pietila explained this ordinance streamlines delinquent account processes, bringing procedures in line with Oregon Administrative Rules requirements while accommodating new billing software. The municipal court judge would handle appeals and delinquency issues noted in quarterly financial updates were addressed while maintaining compliance and operational effectiveness.

Concerns were raised about the notice process, questioning whether the ordinance creates a single-step process compared to the current two-step procedure, and asked about restrictions on terminating service before weekends or holidays.

Morrison clarified that current 7-10 day notice periods remain unchanged, and door hangers would be replaced with official letters sent via customers' preferred communication method. Bills show a past-due status as the first notice, followed by delinquent processing with a 10-day notice for setting up payment arrangements and/or assistance, and Interactive Voice Response (IVR) systems continuing notifications. Weekend/holiday restrictions and cold weather moratorium policies remain. Council discussed effectiveness of staff policies versus council resolutions, noting post-COVID utility billing practice revisions balanced extended payment plans for customers while maintaining fiduciary responsibility.

Public Hearing open

No Speakers

Public Hearing closed

Bloom moved to approve the first reading of Ordinance 3295 and to move it to the second reading at the next scheduled meeting. Seconded by Dahle.

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

d. *Public Hearing and First Reading of the following Ordinance Language Changes:*

1. *3288 AN ORDINANCE CREATING 15.04.270 TO PROHIBIT PERMITS WHEN CODE VIOLATIONS ARE OUTSTANDING*

Pietila explained this ordinance change prevents building permits from being issued when active code compliance issues exist to ensure projects maintain compliance during development and to mitigate situations where properties received new permits despite outstanding code violations.

Councilors asked about the ordinance language related to circumstances like fence permit violations preventing HVAC replacement. Staff confirmed that letter C allows permits when necessary to abate hazardous or unsafe conditions.

Public Hearing open

No Speakers

Public Hearing closed

Bloom moved to approve first reading of Ordinance 3288 An Ordinance Creating 15.04.270 to Prohibit Permits When Code Violations are Outstanding. Seconded by Sherrell.

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

2. 3289 AN ORDINANCE UPDATING 15.36.030 TO CORRECT FOR THE PROPER DEPARTMENT THAT ASSIGNS FRONTAGE

Pietila explained this removes the "Recorder" designation, leaving assignments to appropriate city departments (public works or community development) rather than the City Recorder.

Public Hearing open

No Speakers

Public Hearing closed

Sherrell moved to approve first reading of Ordinance 3289 An Ordinance Updating 15.36.030 to Correct for the Proper Department that Assigns Frontage and move to second reading at the March 17 council meeting. Seconded by Dahle.

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

3. 3290 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING 9.08.170(3) –TO CREATE CERTAIN EXEMPTIONS FOR HEAT PUMPS OR MECHANICAL DEVICES FROM NOISE REGULATION

Pietila explained this creates exemptions for heat pumps and air conditioners not generally manufactured to meet required decibel levels, particularly problematic in areas with close houses or small lots.

Public Hearing open

No Speakers

Public Hearing closed

Dahle moved to approve first reading of Ordinance 3290 An Ordinance Amending 9.08.170(3) to Create Certain Exemptions for Heat Pumps or Mechanical Devices from Noise Regulation and move to second reading at the March 17, 2026 city council meeting. Seconded by DuQuenne.

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

4. 3291 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING 13.16.035 TO REQUIRE PROPERTY OWNERS TO REMOVE OR PRUNE DANGEROUS TREES WITHOUT A PERMIT

Pietila explained this change removes permit requirements when the city directs tree pruning or removal, eliminating situations where the city required actions while also charging permit fees.

Public Hearing open

No Speakers

Public Hearing closed

Hansen moved to approve first reading of 3291 An Ordinance Amending 13.16.035 to Require Property Owners to Remove or Prune Dangerous Trees Without a Permit and move it to second reading during the March 17, 2026 Council Meeting. Seconded by DuQuenne.

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

5. 3292 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 6 TO REFLECT MARIJUANA RETAIL REGULATIONS

Pietila explained this removes "medical" and adds "retailers" throughout the code, updating regulations since the original code implementation. Despite council preference for "cannabis" terminology, the ordinance maintains "marijuana" due to Oregon Liquor Control Commission and State references until official terminology changes.

Public Hearing open

No Speakers

Public Hearing closed

Kaplan moved to approve Ordinance 3292 An Ordinance Amending Chapter 6.5 to Reflect Marijuana Retail Regulations and move to second reading at the next meeting. Seconded by DuQuenne.

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

XII. ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS AND CONTRACTS

Council agreed to consider the items as a group, except for Ordinance 3287 which required separate consideration due to amendments.

a. Second Reading of the following Ordinance Language Changes:

1. 3271 AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING AN OFFICE OF THE CITY RECORDER IN THE CREATION OF AMC 2.28.530
2. 3283 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING AND UPDATING CHAPTER 2.29 – PUBLIC ART
3. 3284 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING AMC 2.54.010 TO ALIGN WITH PROCUREMENT LIMITS
4. 3285 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING AMC 2.62.030 TO PROVIDE FOR A CHAIN OF COMMAND IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY
5. 3286 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING 9.08.120 TO PREVENT PROPERTY OWNERS FROM KEEPING HAZARDOUS OR INFESTED TREES
6. 3293 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING 9.08.170.D.2 TO REFER TO 9.16.070 FOR DOG NUISANCE MATTERS
7. 3294 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING 9.16.070 TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN DAYTIME VERSUS NIGHTTIME DOG NOISE

Bloom moved to approve second reading of the following Ordinances: 3271 an ordinance establishing an office of the city recorder in the creation of AMC 2.28.530, 3283 an ordinance amending and updating chapter 2.29 – public art, 3284 an ordinance amending AMC 2.54.010 to align with procurement limits,

3285 an ordinance amending AMC 2.62.030 to provide for a chain of command in the event of an emergency,
3286 an ordinance amending 9.08.120 to prevent property owners from keeping hazardous or infested trees,
3293 an ordinance amending 9.08.170.d.2 to refer to 9.16.070 for dog nuisance matters,
3294 an ordinance amending 9.16.070 to distinguish between daytime versus nighttime dog noise
Seconded by Hansen.

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

8. 3287 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING AND UPDATING CHAPTER 14.12 – ELECTRIC SYSTEM REGULATIONS, with the adjustment in 14.12.020, as read by staff.

Pietila spoke to the adjustment in section 14.12.020 regarding temporary service fees for new construction. Councilors asked if the temporary fees apply only to new structures versus existing permanent structures, which Pietila confirmed. The ordinance references the electric service manual instead of spelling out requirements, as the manual is updated regularly and provides current requirements.

Dahle moved to approve second reading of Ordinance 3287 Amending Chapter 14.12 Electric System Regulations with the change to section 14.12.020 adding temporary service charges for new construction requiring service drop and meter setting in amounts set by council resolution.
Seconded by Bloom.

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

XIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

XIV. NEW BUSINESS

XV. CITY MANAGER REPORT –

a. Look Ahead

Cotta requested to postpone the scheduled March 16th Budget Committee reconvening with Council to May 4th due to significantly higher than estimated preliminary insurance renewal numbers. She explained the need for a clearer financial picture before difficult mid-budget discussions regarding staffing and service delivery. Councilors did not have concerns with this postponement and confirmed that any increase in health insurance costs would go into effect January 1, 2027.

b. March Report 2026

Cotta outlined upcoming agenda items will include strategic plan update on the public engagement process with consultants via Zoom, wastewater and stormwater rate discussion, multiple second reading ordinances, RVTD levy presentation, and wayfinding sign design choices.

Cotta thanked the Streets Crew for its excellent snow event response and provided a reminder that City Councilor Office Hours are at the Grove with City Manager hours by appointment only. The spring

play guide is available online, and the city received grants for new washers and dryers at Fire Station 2 for firefighter gear cleaning. Cotta also welcomed new Deputy Police Chief John Lorfink who will oversee operations, while Deputy Chief Moulin will handle records and administrative functions.

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

DuQuenne will not be available for her usual office hours on March 5th.

Graham announced attending the next meetings via Zoom while at the National League of Cities Conference, with Council Chair Dahle leading meetings in mid-March.

XVII. ADJOURNMENT

Bloom moved to adjourn. Seconded by DuQuenne

All Ayes. Motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:24 p.m.


City Recorder Alissa Kolodzinski


Mayor Tonya Graham

From: noreply@civicplus.com
To: [Ashland City Recorder](#)
Subject: Online Form Submittal: City Council Public Comment Form
Date: Wednesday, February 11, 2026 10:07:40 AM

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

City Council Public Comment Form

Public Comment

Use this form to submit public comment for City Council meetings. This form must be submitted by **10 a.m.** the day of the meeting to be on the record.

If you wish to speak to the Council in person at a meeting, you must fill out a Speaker Request form available on-site. Do not use this form.

Full Name	Angelina McClean
Meeting Date	2/11/2026
Email Address	[REDACTED]
Are you a City of Ashland resident?	Yes
Indicate if you want to provide written testimony, or if you want to speak via Zoom.	Written
Which agenda item would you like to address?	Public Forum
Comments (Leave this section blank if you are requesting to speak electronically.)	I am emailing ahead of tonight's joint session regarding the spraying glyphosate in the city's medians and am asking the Parks Commission to consider rescinding the waiver allowing spraying of pesticides, namely glyphosate in the medians.

Because the medians are city property and Public Works and the City Manager were involved in these median projects, I am addressing this to council as well. We would like this decision in maintenance to be reviewed and a halt to the spraying in the medians to occur in the meantime.

There are a lot of citizens who do not approve of pesticide use

and would prefer we revisit this maintenance plan and find a safer option. A petition circulating has 424 signatures as of today asking for the halt of the gyphosate use. I know this decision was made with worker safety and efficiency in mind, but I believe that we have better alternatives as well as resources in the valley available to help with this. In light of recent news about toxicity, I believe this is the best path forward.

Here is the petition: <https://c.org/nV4tZtm6SF>

Thank you for your time and your consideration,

Angelina McClean
Ashland

Upload a file or image *Field not completed.*

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [City of Ashland Public Testimony](#)
Subject: Input on Ordinance 3282 on 2/17/26 Agenda
Date: Monday, February 16, 2026 1:13:18 PM

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Mayor and Councilors,

Your last Regular Meeting ended before you were able to consider changes to Ordinance 3282. As you consider adopting changes, please consider the following suggestions for revision of this Ordinance. While your current revision may just be a proposal to add a title and a few phrases, it prompted a closer reading of it and I was left with the following concerns:

2.55.020 1 a. Notice

Requires: publishing a notice of the proposed sale of “any City-owned real property” in a manner consistent with Public meetings & at least once **during the week prior** to the public hearing

Suggestion: Require a minimum of 7 days before the public hearing; this increases trust from citizens that transparency is valued. The current language (“during the week prior”) allows notice on a Saturday before a Tuesday meeting. 2.55.020 1.c. requires a minimum of FIVE days between the day of notice and the public hearing. The two sections should at least be consistent.

Suggestion: Require a two-tiered system tied to value of property being sold, so that citizens are have more notice of the proposed sale of property with significant value or importance without causing extra work or cost for property that’s regularly sold as a matter of course.

2.55.020 1.b. Substance of Notice

Suggestion: 2.55.020 1.c. requires that “an appraisal or other evidence of the market value of the property shall be fully disclosed by the City Council during the public hearing.” That information should be disclosed at least as early as the Council packet for a public hearing, but it’s hard to understand why the Notice wouldn’t also contain that information. If Council believes it necessary to retain that critical information before the actual public hearing, please state that reason during your consideration of the ordinance change on 2/17/26.

2.55.020 c. Public Hearing

“Not earlier than five days after publication of the notice, the public hearing concerning the sale SHALL BE HELD at the time and place stated...”

Suggestion: Consider adding COA an exception in case the notice prompts the presentation of information that changes the decision to sell in the timeframe stated; sales involving real estate can be complicated.

2.55.020 2. City Council Determination

"If the City Council provided guidance in initiating a sale, like selling to the highest bidder, the City **SHALL** follow through with that process. For sales of real property that do not involve the highest bidder, the City Council may consider the valuation factors listed in Section 3 below."

Suggestion: Require staff to rewrite this for clarity: the phrase "like selling to the highest bidder" reads like an example of guidance that restricts the Council's decision making. The second sentence clarifies that there are no other examples of when Council would be required to follow it's "guidance" to staff.

Suggestion: This City Council should discuss the restriction on decision making that this Ordinance places on City Councils.

Suggestion: If City Council chooses to adopt this restriction, require that the City Council's decision to sell to the highest bidder be made in a Regular or Special Meeting, not a Study Session. Study Sessions typically restrict public input. The current language allows Council to give staff "guidance" to sell a piece of property to the highest bidder in a Study Session. That "guidance" then requires Council to sell to highest bidder, making it a legally binding decision regulating the sale of property, NOT 'guidance.'

Further, as written, that "guidance" would have happened outside of a regular meeting and prior to a Public Hearing. Public Hearings are presumed to be an opportunity for citizens to provide input to influence decision makers. If Council guides staff that the decision will be based on the highest bid, there's no need for a Public Hearing. 2.55.020 3. Allows City Councils to "consider public interest and community benefits not reflected in market price." A Public Hearing is an important opportunity for the public to provide information about interest and community benefit. Deciding to sell to highest bidder should be made after the Public Hearing, not before.

Suggestion: If federal, state or local law prohibit a City Council from advertising a sale to the highest bidder but making the ultimate decision based on other factors, please cite that law in this ordinance to explain why that is the only valuation factor that binds Council.

From: noreply@civicplus.com
To: [Ashland City Recorder](#)
Subject: Online Form Submittal: City Council Public Comment Form
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 8:25:29 AM

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

City Council Public Comment Form

Public Comment

Use this form to submit public comment for City Council meetings. This form must be submitted by **10 a.m.** the day of the meeting to be on the record.

If you wish to speak to the Council in person at a meeting, you must fill out a Speaker Request form available on-site. Do not use this form.

Full Name	Lauri Hoagland
Meeting Date	2/17/26
Email Address	[REDACTED]
Are you a City of Ashland resident?	Yes
Indicate if you want to provide written testimony, or if you want to speak via Zoom.	Written
Which agenda item would you like to address?	Public Forum
Comments (Leave this section blank if you are requesting to speak electronically.)	I want to keep the Ashland Community Hospital front and center of council business. The changes that Asante is proposing will have an impact on the health of community members. Given the snowy conditions of today, I would not be able to safely get to Medford in an emergency. We do not need to dumb down our medical services at this time in our history. One fatality that could be prevented is too many! Our country is in the middle of a health care crisis. I believe we can turn this around with good leadership. Oregon is developing a state universal health care plan right now! In the interim we need to prepare for a better moment. Ashland needs to insist on the \$4 million from Asante and place the money in an account where it is available for

hospital services. We CAN NOT let go of this valuable essential service in our rural community!

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [City of Ashland Public Testimony](#)
Cc: [Ashland City Recorder](#); [Bob Kaplan](#); [Tonya Graham](#); [City Managers Office](#)
Subject: Tree of Hope | Sale of 380 Clay Street Property
Date: Tuesday, February 17, 2026 1:40:55 PM
Attachments: [18.4.5.060 Heritage Trees Ashland Land Use Ordinance.webloc](#)

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Hello, City Councilors and Mayor Graham,

I recently emailed you on December 15 and December 31, 2025 about the above-referenced tree and property. I did not hear back from any of you except Bob Kaplan, who invited me to coffee.

At that meeting, I shared with Councilor Kaplan my concerns that the current city council and top city staff knew nothing about the citizen effort to protect this tree, but made a decision to sell it without any of the info. He was glad to learn more of the details, many of which were in my two December emails. Mr. Kaplan reassured me that this sale of surplus property would go forward in the normal manner with all the normal procedures, and that it would come before Council again when citizens could again weigh in.

It appears, however, that this normal process Mr. Kaplan referred to is not happening. Instead, we are hearing that one person in town has made one offer on the property and you are ready to accept it. I truly hope that this is not accurate, as it means that the normal process of putting the property on the market and receiving bids will be skipped and Mr. Kaplan's reassurances will be void.

The lack of memory by the City and breakdown in historical continuity about this Tree is sad. When we originally got active to save the tree, we ended up with over 1,000 signatures on our petitions. That represents about 1/20th of Ashland's total population. When I posted the December 15th email I sent you on Nextdoor, within about a week that post had received over 2,000 views, about 1/10th of Ashland's total population. You've heard a lot about citizens feeling unheard by both the appointed staff whose salaries they pay and the elected officials whose votes they required to gain their office. So it makes me wonder — what percentage of Ashland citizens would it take for all of you to vote the way that percentage wanted? Is it 1/10th? Or 1/20th? What about if it was 1/3rd or 1/2? Or is there no number that would be high enough to sway your opinions and compel you to vote as the citizens hoped you would? If there is no number, it raises serious questions about whether Ashland's government and city staff are operating as a democracy, or more like a monarchy that decides for itself what it will do, regardless of citizen wishes.

When I served on the Tree Commission in the early 2000's, I was proud to be part of a body that created the current AMC code informally referred to as the Tree Ordinance. We spent several years gathering all the disparate tree language from all over AMC, added some new policies based on need, and then took the whole thing to the public. In hearings, there were strong disagreements about some of our proposals, so we removed them. The planning commission also had some issues with language and so that was changed. When it got to Council, they, too, had changes they made. When the dust settled, council had voted 6-0 to vote in favor of a new Tree Ordinance, in other words, new legal language that protected trees and the right of trees to live here in our city.

In that effort, we addressed the concept of Heritage Trees, something many states and cities have as part of their own tree protection efforts. I am attaching a link to that section below. That section says: "Any person may nominate, with the written consent of the property owner, a mature tree for consideration as a Heritage Tree." That means that any councilor, the council as a whole, or city staff could nominate the Tree of Hope as a Heritage Tree, because although it requires permission of the property owner, you are the current property owner and you could grant yourself permission to do

this. Please note that we were wise in this section to include a process to take a tree off the Heritage Tree list if circumstances warranted that.

Given that you are now the second city council since 2020 to take up the issue of selling this property without full knowledge of the citizen effort to protect this tree, it seems like it would be reasonable and honorable for you yourselves to split this property, sell the portion with the biohazard house on it, and protect the tree going forward as a Heritage Tree. A thousand people who signed the petition would be grateful, all the many bird species who use the tree would be thankful, the insects and fungi the tree supports would continue to live, and at least one citizen, me, would be reassured that the City I worked so hard for as a Tree Commissioner still recognizes that a tree is a living being, not a dot on some planning map.

Please do not sell this property tonight to the only person, who has a questionable attitude toward trees based on my observation of him for 30 years, who has made an offer. Split the property, go through the normal process and nominate and declare the Tree of Hope as a Heritage Tree. Please.

Respectfully,

Bryan Holley

P.S. Having examined the recent appraisal, I find it very questionable, done by someone who doesn't even live in Oregon, with comparables that aren't really comparable and if I were you, I certainly wouldn't rely on it as a professional document.

From: noreply@civicplus.com
To: [Ashland City Recorder](#)
Subject: Online Form Submittal: City Council Public Comment Form
Date: Thursday, February 19, 2026 6:19:00 AM

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

City Council Public Comment Form

Public Comment

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If you wish to speak to the Council in person at a meeting, you must fill out a Speaker Request form available on-site. Do not use this form.

Full Name	Alexandra Paul
Meeting Date	next meeting
Email Address	
Are you a City of Ashland resident?	Yes
Indicate if you want to provide written testimony, or if you want to speak via Zoom.	Written
Which agenda item would you like to address?	The cottonwood tree on Clay St
Comments (Leave this section blank if you are requesting to speak electronically.)	Please preserve that beautiful tree, so that no development plan can get rid of it. Thank you.
Upload a file or image	Field not completed.

Email not displaying correctly? [View it in your browser.](#)

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Planning Commission - Public Testimony; Ashland City Recorder](#)
Subject: February 17, 2026 Meeting Written Testimony – Roca Canyon/Transit Triangle
Date: Thursday, February 12, 2026 8:34:46 AM

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

To the Ashland City Council and Planning Commission,

My name is Jacob Kaminker, and I am a resident at [REDACTED]. I am writing regarding the proposed Climate Friendly Area (CFA) implementation and the potential sale of SOU surplus property in the "Roca Canyon" area.

While my property is located above the primary Transit Triangle rezoning, I am directly impacted by the potential loss of the pedestrian shortcut through the university-owned land connecting Roca Street to the Siskiyou/Ashland St. corridor.

I urge the Council and Commission to consider the following:

1. **Preservation of Connectivity:** This shortcut is a primary pedestrian link for uphill residents to reach the Transit Triangle area. Allowing this land to be sold to private developers without a **dedicated public pedestrian easement** directly contradicts the state's Climate Friendly and Equitable Communities (CFEC) mandate to improve walkability and reduce vehicle reliance.
2. **Infrastructure Balance:** As the city removes parking requirements in the Transit Triangle, pedestrian "shortcuts" become critical infrastructure, not optional luxuries. Forcing hilltop residents to take longer, less direct routes via Normal Avenue will increase local vehicle use.
3. **Public Acquisition:** I strongly support the Parks & Recreation Commission's interest in acquiring this land to ensure it remains a permanent natural area and public thoroughfare.

If the city moves forward with the Transit Triangle density, it must protect the existing pedestrian veins that allow residents to access it without a car. Please ensure that any sale or development of the Roca Canyon parcel includes a permanent, recorded public access easement.

Thank you for your time and for protecting our neighborhood's connectivity.

Sincerely,

Jacob Kaminker, [REDACTED], Ashland, OR

From: noreply@civicplus.com
To: [Ashland City Recorder](#)
Subject: Online Form Submittal: City Council Public Comment Form
Date: Monday, February 16, 2026 5:20:20 PM

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

City Council Public Comment Form

Public Comment

Use this form to submit public comment for City Council meetings. This form must be submitted by **10 a.m.** the day of the meeting to be on the record.

If you wish to speak to the Council in person at a meeting, you must fill out a Speaker Request form available on-site. Do not use this form.

Full Name	Angelina McClean
Meeting Date	2/17/2026
Email Address	[REDACTED]
Are you a City of Ashland resident?	Yes
Indicate if you want to provide written testimony, or if you want to speak via Zoom.	Written
Which agenda item would you like to address?	Potential Sale of 380 Clay St Property
Comments (Leave this section blank if you are requesting to speak electronically.)	I am writing in regard to the City considering selling the property at 380 Clay St. As you are all now aware, there is a large, at least a century old Freemont Cottonwood tree on the property. And, hopefully, you are also aware of the over 20 year history that the citizens of Ashland have taken the initiative on to protect this tree, (informally named The Tree of Hope) from damage or removal by developers. Petitions, a documentary, rallies and communications with past Councils and hours of volunteer work, including by a respected and knowledgeable local arborist, all came together to keep this tree protected. It has a plaque in front of it naming it the 2013 Tree of The Year. It is just as valuable historically as a 200 year old building would be, and in addition

provides shelter and habitat to owls and other birds and creatures.

I am concerned that certain people will see this tree as an obstacle to be removed in the name of maximizing development on the property. This tree is valuable and beloved to the citizens of Ashland and deserves continued protection. If the City does decide that it is necessary to sell the property at 380 Clay St, please commit to place restrictions on any sale to protect the tree and its underground roots, at the very least to the drip line. This is not a large plot of land, so it will not solve the city's budget issues or concerns about affordable housing, but we have the opportunity to continue to preserve something of value to Ashlanders, which is history, habitat, and natural spaces. Even one tree makes a difference. Thank you.

Upload a file or image [IMG_0243.jpeg](#)

Email not displaying correctly? [View it in your browser.](#)

From: noreply@civicplus.com
To: [Ashland City Recorder](#)
Subject: Online Form Submittal: City Council Public Comment Form
Date: Saturday, February 28, 2026 10:19:41 PM

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

City Council Public Comment Form

Public Comment

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If you wish to speak to the Council in person at a meeting, you must fill out a Speaker Request form available on-site. Do not use this form.

Full Name	Rich Rohde
Meeting Date	March 3 2026
Email Address	[REDACTED]
Are you a City of Ashland resident?	Yes
Indicate if you want to provide written testimony, or if you want to speak via Zoom.	Written
Which agenda item would you like to address?	XIII A Special Presentation 2200 Ashland St. Ad Hoc Committee
Comments (Leave this section blank if you are requesting to speak electronically.)	Mayor and City Council. I have read the report from the 2200 Ashland St Ad Hoc Committee. The report does seem to leave many of the key issues still open for decisions, but much of the recommendations are heading in the right direction. I do have some questions/ recommendations: 1. I recommend there be a standing committee of unhoused to be able to give advisory recommendations and feedback about program. and 2. I would like to see a clear understanding of the permanent space and program for Emergency Weather Shelter at this site. I don't want to go back to a time when we could not find space for emergency weather (cold, summer heat or smoke). If 2200 is not going to permanently fill that role there should be a clear plan and

provided space now for those emergency times. Thanks for your consideration.

Upload a file or image *Field not completed.*

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From: noreply@civicplus.com
To: [Ashland City Recorder](#)
Subject: Online Form Submittal: City Council Public Comment Form
Date: Monday, March 02, 2026 10:10:33 AM

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

City Council Public Comment Form

Public Comment

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Full Name	Valerie Rogers
Meeting Date	03/03/2026
Email Address	[REDACTED]
Are you a City of Ashland resident?	Yes
Indicate if you want to provide written testimony, or if you want to speak via Zoom.	Written
Which agenda item would you like to address?	Proposed sale of property at 380 Clay St
Comments (Leave this section blank if you are requesting to speak electronically.)	I support selling the property at 380 Clay St, especially for the development of additional housing within the city. I would like to request that the City Council find a mechanism to insure the sale of the property preserves the heritage Fremont Cottonwood tree (aka Tree of Hope) that is growing on the property. Options include partitioning the property so that an area around the tree remains city-owned, or is formally placed into some type of conservation status via easement or other deed restrictions. There are other options as well.

This healthy tree provides many ecological and human services and will be a huge long-lasting amenity to any future housing

development, as well as to the broader neighborhood. In short, it is an irreplaceable asset that must be retained.

Thank you for all you do for our community!

Valerie Rogers

Upload a file or image *Field not completed.*

Email not displaying correctly? [View it in your browser.](#)

From: noreply@civicplus.com
To: [Ashland City Recorder](#)
Subject: Online Form Submittal: City Council Public Comment Form
Date: Tuesday, March 03, 2026 8:04:35 AM

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

City Council Public Comment Form

Public Comment

Use this form to submit public comment for City Council meetings. This form must be submitted by **10 a.m.** the day of the meeting to be on the record.

If you wish to speak to the Council in person at a meeting, you must fill out a Speaker Request form available on-site. Do not use this form.

Full Name	Joseph Lian III
Meeting Date	3/3/2026
Email Address	
Are you a City of Ashland resident?	Yes
Indicate if you want to provide written testimony, or if you want to speak via Zoom.	Written
Which agenda item would you like to address?	
Comments (Leave this section blank if you are requesting to speak electronically.)	The Cottonwood tree at 380 Clay St. I back the proposal to divide the lot at 380 Clay street in order to protect the 250 year old Fremont Cottonwood tree. Creating a small park there would help mitigate the loss of open space caused by the big housing construction project on Clay street. Thank you for your consideration. Sincerely, Joseph Lian
Upload a file or image	Field not completed.

Email not displaying correctly? [View it in your browser.](#)

From: noreply@civicplus.com
To: [Ashland City Recorder](#)
Subject: Online Form Submittal: City Council Public Comment Form
Date: Tuesday, March 03, 2026 9:08:04 AM

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

City Council Public Comment Form

Public Comment

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Full Name	Lizzi
Meeting Date	LoPresti
Email Address	
Are you a City of Ashland resident?	Yes
Indicate if you want to provide written testimony, or if you want to speak via Zoom.	Written
Which agenda item would you like to address?	Protecting the 250 year old tree on Clay Street
Comments (Leave this section blank if you are requesting to speak electronically.)	It has come to my attention that a 250 year old tree on Clay Street needs protection. I want to support making the area that includes this tree into a park so that it will be protected from destruction by an individual that assumes ownership of that property.
Upload a file or image	Field not completed.

Email not displaying correctly? [View it in your browser.](#)

From: noreply@civicplus.com
To: [Ashland City Recorder](#)
Subject: Online Form Submittal: City Council Public Comment Form
Date: Tuesday, March 03, 2026 9:59:39 AM

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

City Council Public Comment Form

Public Comment

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Full Name	Angelina McClean
Meeting Date	3/3/2026
Email Address	[REDACTED]
Are you a City of Ashland resident?	Yes
Indicate if you want to provide written testimony, or if you want to speak via Zoom.	Written
Which agenda item would you like to address?	380 Clay St
Comments (Leave this section blank if you are requesting to speak electronically.)	I am writing in support of the citizen led initiative to ask the city to split the lot on 380 Clay St before selling it, and keeping the parcel with the Freemont Cottonwood tree on it (aka the Tree of Hope). I also support the nomination of this tree to be added to the Heritage Tree List. This tree has a long history in the community, with citizens coming together several times in the past decades to preserve it and keep it safe. It is likely close to 250 years old, and deserves the respect of an elder tree. Because we do not trust developers to do what it takes to keep it safe, I agree with the citizens proposing that the lot be split. Please honor the legacy of this tree and the history of meaning it has within our community and protect it. If you are not aware of

the history of this tree, please take some time to learn about it and visit it in person. It is breathtaking.

Upload a file or image *Field not completed.*

Email not displaying correctly? [View it in your browser.](#)

From: noreply@civicplus.com
To: [Ashland City Recorder](#)
Subject: Online Form Submittal: City Council Public Comment Form
Date: Tuesday, March 03, 2026 9:37:07 AM

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

City Council Public Comment Form

Public Comment

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Full Name	Tara Troutner
Meeting Date	March 3 2026
Email Address	
Are you a City of Ashland resident?	Yes
Indicate if you want to provide written testimony, or if you want to speak via Zoom.	Written
Which agenda item would you like to address?	380 Clay St cottonwood tree
Comments (Leave this section blank if you are requesting to speak electronically.)	Protect the Fremont cottonwood tree at 380 Clay St , Ashland Oregon. Let it remain standing and alive as it has for over 200 years. The City of Ashland Oregon says it honors it's trees, yet it allows new homeowners to cut trees down without a permit, without a thought of history, cooling shade, and all that trees provide. Let this cottonwood set an example of truly honoring the trees of Ashland by protecting it . Thankyou.
Upload a file or image	Field not completed.

Email not displaying correctly? [View it in your browser.](#)



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:

3/3/26

Name: (Please Print)

Debbie Neisewander

Ashland Resident:

☒ YES ☐ NO City: _____

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

Public Forum Topic (Non-agenda Item):

2200

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:

3/3/2026

Name: (Please Print)

Mori D.

Ashland Resident:

☒ YES ☐ NO City: _____

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

~~ICE~~

Public Forum Topic (Non-agenda Item):

ICE

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: 3/4/20

Name: (Please Print)

Jane Reese

Ashland Resident:

☒ YES ☐ NO City: _____

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

Public Forum Topic (Non-agenda Item):

Ice ^{law enforcement} accountability act

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:

3/4/24

Name: (Please Print)

Joetta Cline

Ashland Resident:

☒ YES ☐ NO City: _____

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

Public Forum Topic (Non-agenda Item):

Federal Law Enforcement Accountability

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: **3/3/26**

Name: (Please Print)

Monty Walters

Ashland Resident:

☒ YES ☐ NO City: _____

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

ICE/Vigilantes

Public Forum Topic (Non-Agenda Item):

ICE/Vigilantes

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:

3.3.26

Name: (Please Print)

Eden huz

Ashland Resident:

☒ YES ☐ NO City: _____

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

Public Forum Topic (Non-agenda Item):

Anti - masking ordinance

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: 3/3/26

Name: (Please Print)

(John) Doug Huston

Ashland Resident:

☒ YES ☐ NO City: _____

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

Public Forum Topic (Non-agenda Item):

Anti-masking ordinance

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: 3 Mar 26

Name: (Please Print)

John Manner

Ashland Resident:

☒ YES ☐ NO City: _____

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

Public Forum Topic (Non-agenda Item):

Healthcare

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:

3/3/2026

Name: (Please Print)

SUZANNE HAVEMAN

Ashland Resident:

☒ YES ☐ NO City: _____

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

ASHLAND
PARRMC CLOSURE OF COMMUNITY
HOSPITAL

Public Forum Topic (Non-agenda Item):

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:

~~2/3/2026~~ 2/3/2026

Name: (Please Print)

Mary Mettughe

Ashland Resident:

☒ YES ☐ NO City: _____

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

hospital

Public Forum Topic (Non-agenda Item):

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:

March 3, 2026

Name: (Please Print)

PAUL MOZINA

Ashland Resident:

☒ YES ☐ NO City: _____

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

Public Forum Topic (Non-agenda Item):

2025-2027 Budget misconduct

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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City Administrator (CM), Sabrina Cotta, gave the Council bad advice during the process of approving the 2025-2027 Biennial Budget, which led to the Ashland City Council violating the Oregon Revised Statutes and Ashland Charter.

At the May 19, 2025 Study Session, the Council departed from the published agenda and took up the issue of amending the sources of funding for the childcare grant program. Although City Attorney (CA), Johan Pietila, had warned the Council beforehand via email that using reserve funds for the childcare grant program was not a good idea, this issue was not put on the agenda, and thus, no citizen knew about it or could make a comment on the change.

As the discussion began, Councilor Dahle expressed his concerns about the process:

In addition, too, I think what probably needs to be a redraft of a resolution. That doesn't mean like we have to like go all the way back through 4 [the budget consists of 4 separate resolutions]. I do think that, how would we handle this relative to, if we just, how do we unwind that if Council so chooses to do? How do we unwind the current situation we find ourselves in? And, if, would it be possible, I'm trying to figure out how you work the budget committee into this, maybe you'd have to call them again, I don't know. If Council were to offer an alternate source of funds, instead of the reserve fund, as if we were sitting, its **kind what we shoulda done**, possibly, at the budget committee, or if that had been the [indecipherable word]. What would be the procedure in which we, this Council, if they so choose, would do that?

Dahle suspects there needs to be a formal process for "unwinding" the funding decision made by the budget committee, and he speculates that maybe the CBC (Citizens' Budget Committee) might have to be involved.

The Finance Director at the time, Mariane Berry, responded:

I would say from public budget law that you can do that. That is one of the reasons why we are bringing this to your attention tonight, so that there's enough time for us to have, you know, potentially, that conversation from here at this point. What the CBC has done has added the \$235,000 of childcare grants to the budget, recommended the use of the reserve fund as the way to fund it. But you as Council, it's all under the 10%, so you as

Council can chose how to fund that \$235,000. There are still a number of ways to fund it and that is the deliberation at this point.

The “public budget law” that Berry is referring to is https://oregon.public.law/statutes/ors_294.456, which controls when the governing body needs to go back to the CBC for their approval—the so-called 10%rule. What she fails to mention is https://oregon.public.law/statutes/ors_294.453, which stipulates that a notice of a public meeting is “...required for the purpose of holding a public hearing on the budget document as **approved** by the budget committee.”

Dahle follows up:

What’s our deadline to figure that out? What would staff need in order for that.

Berry responds:

June 3rd is when we are currently looking to adopt the budget. But it just needs to be done by June 30th. So, we’ve got June 19th I think, June 18th or 19th , sorry (DuQuenne chimes in—June 16th).

Dahle

But you couldn’t adopt the budget until that happened, correct? I mean if Council so chose to do that, that would happen prior to adopting it.

Berry

Uh-Hmm [yes]

Yes, the amendments to the childcare grant program under consideration need to be applied before adopting the budget and **AFTER** the public hearing on the budget as approved by the CBC. This is explained in the Oregon Department of Revenue’s “Local Budgeting Manual”

(https://www.oregon.gov/dor/forms/FormsPubs/local-budgeting-manual_504-420.pdf)

Chapter 11—The budget hearing and adopting the budget (page 55)

After the budget committee has approved the budget, the governing body must hold a public hearing on that budget and then adopt the budget.

Budget hearing

One of the most important steps in the budget process is **publishing a summary of the budget that has been approved by the budget committee** and a notice of the budget hearing. For information on how to publish this notice of the budget hearing and financial summary, see “Chapter 9 – Publication Requirements.”

After the “Notice of Budget Hearing” is published, the budget hearing must take place at the time and place published or the hearing must be rescheduled and a new notice published. The governing body conducts the hearing and receives testimony from any person present (ORS 294.453, renumbered from 294.430). It gives consideration to matters discussed at the hearing (ORS 294.456, renumbered from 294.435). Keep careful minutes of the budget hearing proceedings to document your compliance with these requirements.

The budget committee is not required by law to be present at the budget hearing. However, some local governments make it their policy to ask the budget committee to participate.

The hearing must be held on the budget that was approved by the budget committee, even if the governing body intends to modify that version of the budget before adopting it. The published financial summary should also reflect the version of the budget that was approved by the budget committee.

The governing body does not have to adopt the budget at the budget hearing. Formally adopting the budget, making appropriations, and declaring and categorizing the taxes can be done at any regularly scheduled and properly advertised public meeting of the governing body after the budget hearing and before July 1. If the governing body refrains from adopting the budget until June, it allows for adjustments to reflect changes in the resources or expenditures from the amounts estimated earlier.

There is no provision in law for adopting the budget after June 30. Planning ahead and having a budget calendar will help ensure that governing body members do not find themselves operating outside the law.

For information on adopting biennial budgets, see Chapter 14.

Changes to the budget after the budget hearing

Once the budget hearing has been held, the governing body can make changes to the budget that was approved by the budget committee. The governing body must take all available information into consideration when adopting the budget. This information includes the public testimony presented at the budget hearing and any new information affecting the estimates of the upcoming year's resources or expenditures [ORS 294.456(1), renumbered from 294.435(1)]. For example, if a higher beginning fund balance, additional grants or other new resources are available, the additional monies can be added to the applicable fund balances and additional expenditures planned.

The plain language of the statute is unequivocal—the governing body can amend the budget **AFTER** the public hearing and prior to adoption.

After more discussion, CM Cotta summarized the proposed changes to the funding sources of the childcare grant program.

Dahle then asked:

To the Mayor's point, we can see that. And would you need a motion to do that tonight, is that how this works?

Councilor Dahle was correct: a motion and vote were needed, but **AFTER** the public hearing.

Cotta responds:

We just need direction, since we're [sic], and that way we can bring it back as directed tonight with the adoption of the budget.

She doesn't mention that Oregon Budget Law requires the public hearing to be held on the budget **AS APPROVED** by the CBC. Any changes to budget must wait until after the public hearing and the Ashland Charter requires that all action

taken by the Council must be preceded by a public motion and vote. Cotta is declaring her intention to include the amendments to CBC approved budget in the budget document that will be brought before Council for a vote on June 3rd. The Council discussed these changes as a 'done deal' **BEFORE** the public hearing. This is a direct violation of Oregon Revised Statute 294.453 and Oregon's Local Budgeting Manual. And by skirting this requirement, the Council violated two sections of the Ashland Charter:

<https://ashland.municipal.codes/Charter/VIII-6>

Section 6. Proceedings to be Public.

No action by the Council shall have legal effect **unless the motion for the action and the vote** thereon take place at proceedings open to the public.

<https://ashland.municipal.codes/Charter/VIII-9>

Section 9. Vote Required.

Except as this Charter otherwise provides, the concurrence of a majority of the members of the Council present at a Council meeting **shall be necessary to decide any question** before the Council.

The Council's actions, under the leadership and guidance of the CM Cotta and CA Pietila, were violations of the plain language in the Oregon Revised Statutes, Oregon's Local Budgeting Manual and the Ashland Charter. There is **NOTHING** in the Oregon Revised Statutes that relieves the City Council of their obligations under the Charter when budget matters are concerned, or their oath of office to obey the law.

So, if this is all just an innocent mistake, then why won't the Administration and Council just admit it, promise to do better next time, and move on? Could it be the implications of the Charter's declaration that: "No action by the Council shall have legal effect unless the motion for the action and the vote thereon take place at proceedings open to the public." What does that imply for the 2025-2027 Biennial Budget? Is it just the funding decision for the childcare grant program that has "no legal effect"? And what would that imply?



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:

March 3, 2026

Name: (Please Print)

PAUL MOZINA

Ashland Resident:

☒ YES ☐ NO City: _____

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

Resolution for Electric Rates

Public Forum Topic (Non-agenda Item):

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.

Lying By Omission

Why is there no mention under "Fiscal Impacts" of the fact that the increases to the base rate and usage rate, when multiplied by the 25% Electric Users Tax, will result in an additional \$500,000 of revenue going to the general fund annually? The city manager explained this to you at your August 4, 2025 study session.

But she seemed to have forgotten all about this at the December 17 study session when Councilor DuQuenne asked:

"...if this is to pass, this utility hike, it would go towards paying the salary [sic] that was just put in place for our staff. Is that correct?"

Cotta: "So all the revenue that the electric utility generates goes towards the electric utilities. So, in part it would pay for the linemen and the electric staff."

DuQuenne: "Because I do recall, if I'm right, that sometime in August it was mentioned that having the utility, this electric rate go up, it would go towards the raise that our staff just recently received."

Cotta: "So, I think you're recalling some of the numbers that insuring that we keep rates at a rate that insures we can employ the appropriate staff was part of that council communication back in August when the IBW contract came through."

DuQuenne did not press the point, but Cotta did not tell the whole truth when she answered. Yes, all the revenue from the Base Rate and Usage charges does go to the Electric Fund, which does support the salaries of the people who work in the Electric Department. What Cotta failed to mention was that the revenue from the 25% Electric Users Tax goes to the General Fund, which DOES pay the salaries of city employees in the administration -- including Sabrina Cotta's.

None of the other Councilors helped DuQuenne clarify her question, or point out the omission in Cotta's answer. Because of the Electric Users Tax, the increases to the Base Rate and the Usage Rate WILL contribute to funding the salaries of city employees. Why can't you just tell the whole truth to the people when implementing increases like this? You are lying by omission.



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Date: **3 March 2026**
Samarra Burnett

Name: (Please Print)

Ashland Resident:

☒ YES ☐ NO City: _____

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

380 Clay St Property

Public Forum Topic (Non-agenda Item):

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Date: 3/3/26

Name: (Please Print)

Brynn Holley

Ashland Resident:

☒ YES ☐ NO City: _____

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

X1.c 380 Day

Public Forum Topic (Non-agenda Item):

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Date:

Cici Brown

Name: (Please Print)

171 Church St

Ashland Resident:

☒ YES ☐ NO City: Ashland

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

Public Forum Topic (Non-agenda Item):

380 CLAY

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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SPEAKER REQUEST FORM

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Date:

3-3-2024

Name: (Please Print)

ALLAN SANDLER

Ashland Resident:

☒ YES ☐ NO City: _____

Agenda Topic/Item Number:

CLAY STREET

Public Forum Topic (Non-agenda Item):

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1. The city's land acknowledgment which honors indigenous peoples doesn't seem to mesh with our culture's attitudes about trees. I learned from Grandma Aggie, Takelma elder Agnes Baker Pilgrim, that the Takelma word for tree translates into English as 'one-legged' which groups trees as just like us, the two-leggeds and our animal friends, the four-leggeds. So the question is raised as to whether we have reverence for or feel connected with any part of nature *like indigenous peoples do,* in our town. Is anything sacred? Is any tree special?

2. At your December 2 meeting, I did not hear one word about the 20 years of community efforts to save this tree, so on December 16 I sent you my previous letter to council from April 15, 2021 as well as my current remarks. I thank Councilor Kaplan for responding to me and meeting with me. I posted those same emails I sent you on Nextdoor and they both received over 2,000 views and my recent post about nominating the tree as a Heritage Tree has received over 2,600 views. I think a reasonable person would assume by these figures that many Ashlanders treasure this tree and are very interested in what happens to it.

3. I served on the Tree Commission when the development proposal Brandon Goldman mentioned came through for 117 units. We had heard reports of wetlands being on the property and it turned out that state DEQ research verified it and that fact stopped that proposal. Only feet from the

tree, where there is water that has been called a well, which may look like and may have served as a well, is instead just one above-ground expression of the water that flows downhill through the whole property. If you fill the well, which we believe is why the tree has survived for so long, you will kill the tree.

4. At the December meeting a councilor expressed surprise that the tree hadn't keeled over and killed somebody and that the tree is a hazard. These statements were unfortunate and not supported by the facts. The tree has survived windstorms, snowstorms, droughts and heat domes for 250 years and there has never been an accident of any sort at the tree. The most reliable arborist's reports, including a recent one, declare the tree healthy with at least 50 more years of life.
5. Tonight we are asking council to consent to our group being allowed to nominate the Tree of Hope as a Heritage Tree, as such nominations cannot go forward without the consent of the owner. We also suggest that the best way to honor the 20 years of community effort to save the tree is to split the property. Sell the portion with the house and turn the tree half into a new city park. With full park designation, the city would be freed from any public-safety liability.

6. Finally, English poet and mystic William Blake said this:

The tree which moves some to tears of joy is in the eyes of others only a green thing that stands in the way. Please, in your actions, do not think of the Tree of Hope as ‘in the way’ but instead as a source of joy to many Ashland citizens and please find a way to permanently protect it.

If any of you have questions after public testimony, I will do my best to answer them.

Bryan Haley