

MINUTES

CITY COUNCIL MEETING



Date: April 01, 2026
Time: 6:00 pm
Meeting called to order by: Mayor Anderson at 6:00 pm

IN ATTENDANCE

Council: Mayor Witt Anderson, Noah Estes, Lydia Koerner, Charlie Cannon, Ron Wright, Gary Lindemyer

Excused: Brenna Campbell

Staff: City Manager Andrea Rogers, City Recorder Amy Szilagyi, Finance Director Monica Morris

AGENDA CORRECTIONS/ADDITIONS: Council approved revisions to:

- Clarify Lisa Gambee's agenda as Lisa Gambee – Candidate for the Wasco County Commission.
- Add discussion on handling incoming mail and public correspondence.

SUMMARY: The meeting began with a skate park project update, noting recent construction progress, coordination on potential green chair funding, protection of the oak tree, and a planned Union Pacific track donation for a feature. The Council reviewed proposed utility rate increases (8% water, 12% sewer) to address costs and debt, advancing them to a May 6 public hearing, and discussed expediting a solar pavilion project at Mosier Community School to meet federal deadlines. Additional items included public comment procedures, political activity limitations for officials, cancellation of the annual cleanup due to Union Pacific activities, and upcoming budget meetings and the April 18 Main Street Mosier Festival.

OPEN MEETING

Public Comment

- Jayne Elken: Raised concerns regarding trail safety coordination, highway parking issues, train noise/quiet zones, and Earth Day disposal. Staff will follow up.
 - Mayor Anderson: Suggested that Andrea would follow up with Jane on these topics
- Mark Paine: Reported concerns about the Rock Creek Park gate being open, noting issues from last summer including overuse and security problems, and requested information about plans for managing the gate.
 - City Manager Rogers: Acknowledged the gate issues, reported that repairs are underway, and proposed forming a committee to evaluate gate replacement and improve communication with the community regarding associated costs.
- John Worsley: Described challenges with USPS delivery changes affecting non-standard addresses and P.O. Box usage and requested that the City meet with the Postmaster to discuss resident impacts and identify potential improvements.
 - Mayor Anderson: Mayor Anderson stated he would address the issue, including seeking assistance from Senator Merkley's office and USPS leadership, and may contact John for further information.

1. **Consolidated Fee Schedule / Utility Rate Increase:** Finance Director Monica Morris presented the proposed fee schedule and utility rate increases, explaining that although a 10-year rate study recommended 1.5% increases, current operational costs, mandates, contract expenses, and debt obligations necessitated larger adjustments. She recommended increases of 8% for water and 12% for sewer rates, noting they are comparable to regional rates and required to sustain existing services. The Council accepted the report and scheduled a public hearing for May 6 to

consider the proposed increases, and discussed public outreach methods, including utility billing notices and use of community communication channels such as Main Street Mosier.

Councillors Cannon, Estes, and Lindemyer inquired about the drivers of the proposed rate increases, including prior underfunding versus recent costs, future rate trends, regulatory impacts (DEQ and Oregon Health Authority), and effects on low-income residents with potential assistance programs. Finance Director Morris responded that prior 1.5% increases were insufficient to cover contract escalations and, combined with rising operational, regulatory, and TEC-related costs, left the City behind; she noted that some costs are stabilizing, one debt payment will fall off in two years, and she does not expect similar increases annually, though future projections remain uncertain. She added that DEQ is increasing fees by 20–30% and that the proposed increases are intended to cover existing operations, debt service, and compliance, with an estimated \$12.95 monthly increase for a typical residential customer. Mayor Anderson emphasized the importance of continued investment to address prior system issues while acknowledging the impact on residents.

MOTION: Made by Councilor Lindemyer to accept Monica’s report on proposed rate increases and move forward with announcement of the public hearing for the proposed rate increases. Councilor Estes seconded. The motion carried with the following votes.

Ayes: Anderson, Estes, Koerner, Cannon, Wright, Lindemyer | Nays: None | Abstentions: None

2. **Candidate for the Wasco County Commission:** Lisa Gamby, former Wasco County Clerk, discussed her candidacy for commissioner, highlighting her experience with water and wildfire issues across the county. She proposed creating a regional water forum and emphasized the need for coordinated efforts to address water system upgrades, wildfire prevention, and emergency preparedness. Lisa outlined four key areas for wildfire prevention: hardening water systems, reducing fuel, improving emergency communication, and ensuring safe evacuation routes. She also suggested increasing the emergency management budget and exploring shared resources across communities to enhance prevention and suppression efforts.
3. **Mosier Community School Solar Pavillon Project:** Michelle Dawkins provided an update on the U.S. Department of Energy “Renew America’s Schools” grant awarded in 2023 (approximately \$868,000), noting that most funded improvements have been completed, including installation of a new HVAC system with heating, cooling, and air filtration, replacement of remaining windows, addition of insulation, and installation of LED lighting to reduce energy costs. She reported that remaining grant funds will support installation of solar panels, as originally planned, and asbestos removal in the lower level of the building this summer and introduced Brent Foster and Eric Gewirtz to provide further detail on the solar project.

Brent Foster reported that, due to roof structural limitations, solar panels will be installed on a proposed 5,000 square foot outdoor pavilion, with federal funding expiring in July, and requested expedited land use review to meet the deadline; City Manager Rogers confirmed the process could be accelerated. The Council expressed support for the proposed 100-kilowatt solar array and indicated potential willingness to assist with costs if needed. The discussion also noted recent improvements to school ventilation and heating systems that have enhanced student comfort and briefly addressed the effectiveness of the existing school sign previously funded by the City.

4. Mayor Anderson inquired whether Special Projects Coordinator Colleen Coleman would be joining the meeting to present her agenda item, noting her absence. City Manager Rogers responded that the item could be moved if necessary. Mayor Anderson suggested that, since the briefing slides had already been distributed and appeared to contain the relevant information, the Council could instead review them independently and address any questions or comments at the May 6 meeting, pending Council agreement.

APPROVAL OF 02.04.2026 and 02.18.2026 MINUTES: No corrections

MOTION: Councilor Wright moved to approve minutes as written. Councilor Cannon seconded. The motion carried with the following votes.

Ayes: Anderson, Estes, Koerner, Cannon, Wright, Lindemyer | Nays: None | Abstentions: None

5. City Activities Updates/Reports:

- Mayor Anderson and City Manager Rogers outlined procedures for handling public comments: all comments will be presented to Council in accordance with Oregon law, with routine matters addressed by staff and policy or high-concern items forwarded to Council; requests for Council review will be provided directly, and responses may occur at subsequent meetings. The City Recorder will forward comments to Council as received to improve timeliness. Discussion also addressed legal considerations regarding official political statements, with staff recommending consultation with the League of Oregon Cities and legal counsel; Commissioner Hege offered to provide relevant examples from Wasco County and The Dalles.

Meeting Adjourned 7:54 pm

ACTION ITEMS:

City Manager Rogers:

- Follow up with Jayne Elkin and report back to Council as needed.
- Coordinate gate repair and establish a framework for ongoing management of the gate, including forming a committee to evaluate replacement and long-term management options. Invite Mark Paine to participate and potentially lead the process.
- Work to expedite the land use review process for the Mosier Community School solar pavilion project, aiming for a 30-day turnaround.
- Follow up with Jim Witterbottom regarding curbside yard debris removal as a potential city fee-for-service.
- Coordinate with relevant parties to ensure timely and effective public notification of the proposed utility rate increases including information about Mid-Columbia Community Action utility relief programs.

Mayor & Council:

- Discuss how to handle incoming mail/letters to the Council, including setting expectations and addressing topics raised by recent correspondents.
- Consider meeting with the local postmaster to discuss USPS delivery issues affecting residents, as raised by John Worsley. While not explicitly assigned, Witt acknowledged this as a city-level action to consider.
- Reach out to recruit additional community members for the Budget Committee before the April 15th meeting.

Councilor Estes:


- Contact League of Oregon Cities (specifically Robin Klein) to research legal/ethical boundaries for the city council taking political positions or responding to requests for political statements, and report back.

Finance Director Morris:

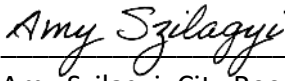
- Send out the proposed budget to the Budget Committee and post it on the website ahead of the April 15th meeting.

City Recorder Szilagyi:

- Implement sending public comments to council members via email as they are received.
- Notify the public that the City will not hold a city cleanup this year due to Union Pacific and skate park activity.
- Create a placeholder for a second meeting in June related to RFPs for engineering and planning consultants.

Signature: 
Witt Anderson (May 7, 2026 21:56:26 CDT)

Email: witt.anderson@cityofmosier.gov
Witt Anderson, Mayor


Amy Szilagyi, City Recorder

Approved by City Council on May 06, 2026

04.01.26 Minutes

Final Audit Report

2026-05-08

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