

CITY OF MERRILL
REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
301 E SECOND STREET MERRILL, OREGON 97633
Wednesday, August 13, 2025 6:00 P.M.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

Mayor Guthrie called the Wednesday, August 13, 2025 Business Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Roll call was taken with the following members of Council and others being present: Councilor Johnson, Councilor Gatliff (absent), Councilor Baley (absent), Councilor McCollam, Mayor Guthrie and City Recorder Hernandez.

FLAG SALUTE:

The Flag Salute immediately followed with Mayor Guthrie taking the lead.

MAYOR STATEMENT:

Mayor Guthrie asked that everyone please turn cell phones on silence. All meetings are recorded. When addressing the City Council, please speak clearly and state your name.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mayor Guthrie stated the public is invited to provide their comments and opinions to the City Council at this time on issues of concern. Non-emergency issues brought up in this form will not be considered tonight other than in this preliminary discussion, but if found warranted, may be considered at a future meeting of the city council. Public comment is limited to five minutes per person.

Paul and Shelly Northcutt addressed the City Council regarding the formation of a coalition to resolve the improvement of the Civic Center recreational field for Pop Warner Football. Paul Northcutt recognizes the improvement of the football field is a Park District issue. The field is used annually, especially for the Klamath Basin Potato Festival; however, within the past decade, the field has deteriorated into disarray. Pop Warner Football partners with Merrill Lion's Club for the usage of the field with empty promises for field improvement; therefore, Paul Northcutt would like to create a coalition for field improvement, facility improvement, and the like for regular usage. Paul Northcutt can seek donations; however, without the buy in from the Park District and the local community the efforts are futile. Paul Northcutt discussed the need and shortage of locations. The field would need to be reshaped with a crown, eliminate the squirrel problem, reseed the field, install a scoreboard, install new goal posts, water and mow the field, upgrade stands, parking, and entrance gates. Lost River High School used to play at the Civic Center, but when conditions worsened, the team began playing the Lost River, which is when Pop Warner was approached to play the Klamath Basin Potato Festival. Paul Northcutt reiterated the hard work and dedication to reform the field with the increased benefit of tourism. Public Works Director Matthews stated the varmint holes were filled during the Lost River Bluegrass Festival, but within a few days, the holes were back. Public Works Director Matthews offered support on behalf of the City of Merrill. Paul Northcutt detailed the method to reshape the field. Mayor Guthrie suggested calling Andy, a trapper for the federal and state government. Councilor Johnson has access to a machine to eliminate the gophers at no cost. Discussion ensued regarding varmint elimination. Jarrod with Kingsly Field also desires to update the field for the children as well. Councilor Johnson inquired about partnering. Paul Northcutt declined due to competition for locations. Paul Northcutt discussed issues between the Merrill Lion's Club, Merrill Park District, and Merrill Park District Employee(s). Shelly Northcutt discussed the issue regarding the multiple entrances to the field, and Pop Warner spectators have been directed not to park at the Civic Center. Public Works Director Matthews volunteered to coordinate parking with Mrs. Waldrip. Shelly Northcutt discussed volunteers and their roles. Discussion regarding entry fees, vendors, donations, etc. ensued. Top priority is to reshape the field and then provide lightning. Public Works Director Matthews stated the lighting should be sufficient. A new light was installed recently. Mayor Guthrie will call Andy and Paul and Shelly Northcutt thanked the City Council.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Meeting Minutes:

1. Approve July 09, 2025 Regular Business Meeting Minutes

Councilor Johnson made a motion to approve the July 09, 2025 Regular Business Meeting Minutes. Councilor McCollam 2nd the motion. The motion passed 3-0 in favor.

Phone Poll Ratification:

Approve Brake Repair, Southern Oregon Service, for Ford F-150 (~\$600.00): (Councilor Gatliff, Councilor Johnson, Councilor McCollam, Councilor Baley) Approved 4-0 in favor.

Approve 2nd Pump for Lift Station (~\$700.00): (Councilor McCollam, Councilor Johnson, Councilor Gatliff) Approved 3-0, 1 No Vote.

Business Licenses:

- Refuge Church Rental (225 Monroe Street)
- Pure Fresh Farms
- Jason Perkins Construction LLC
- Bennet Firearms LLC

Councilor Johnson made a motion to approve the Annual Business Licenses. Councilor McCollam 2nd the motion. The motion passed 3-0 in favor.

Accounts Payable:

3. July 2025 Account Payables
4. July 2025 Water Transfer

Councilor Johnson made a motion to approve the Accounts Payables and Water Transfer. Councilor McCollam 2nd the motion. The motion passed 3-0 in favor.

STAFF REPORTS:

Police:

- Report: Sergeant Hetherwick read submitted report as follows: 10 traffic stops with 2 citations for speed. Recovered a missing juvenile during traffic stop. Recovered a stolen Union Pacific Service Truck that was stolen from Klamath Falls and abandoned in a hay field at Fugate and Lower Klamath Lake Road. Sergeant Hetherwick contacted Union Pacific whom arrived to recover the vehicle. Numerous animal complaints have been received regarding 2 large dogs at 301 E Front Street. The owners were contacted, and the dogs retrieved. Sergeant Hetherwick responded to a Suspicious Activity complaint regarding a tent in a driveway. Upon contact, Sergeant Hetherwick removed the tent. Responded to a Missing Person Report at 100 Court Drive after an argument. The Missing Person returned home. An unhoused person was relocated from the Civic Center to Klamath Falls, Oregon. Another unhoused person has been disrupting businesses by camping and littering beer cans. Assisted Malin Police Department with a hit and run, which was out of jurisdiction. Responded to unauthorized campers on private property behind Martin's Food Center. Sergeant Hetherwick contacted Klamath County Sheriff's Office after the last background check on contingent employment offer failed. A Mutual Offer of Understanding (MOU) was drafted for 20 hours per month at \$96.74, which equates to ~\$1,920.00 per month. The City of Merrill is paying ~\$2,000.00 per month in retirement for one employee alone, for comparison purposes. City Recorder Hernandez recommended changes to the verbiage in (3) paragraph two, paragraph (4), and clarification in paragraph (9). Sergeant Hetherwick will address the changes with Sheriff Mitchell; thereafter, a phone poll will be directed to the City Council.

Public Works:

- Report: Public Works Director Matthews read submitted report as follows: Checked lifts; well level of 66' with pump running; completed and mailed Discharge Monitoring Report; hung pink tags and turned off services; performed 12 locates; cleaned restrooms; cleaned tules from lagoon; chopped lagoon; sprayed weeds; replaced meter box on Front Street; fixed one sewer plug; rebuilt Willow Street Dry Well flooded and damaged circuitry (replaced with ¼ HP float pumps); purchased new sprayer; polled City Council for ¾ HP pump; set-up for Lost River Bluegrass Festival; Reynold's Ag worked on Bobcat Fuel Pump; Utility Worker Taylor replaced urinal in City Hall Men's Room.

City Recorder:

- Report: City Recorder Hernandez read submitted report as follows: SF 5500 submission; Request for Coverage Submission; Annual Housing Population submission and master file; continue backroom re-organization and records destruction; CIS Employment Law Training; Torte Claim; Duncan Family Farms Permission Letter; and Right-a-Way Applications. The City of Merrill is experiencing RX Domain issues.

Emails can be sent but not received. The City attempted to recover the domain; however, the City of Merrill was not used during the set-up. The City of Merrill hired a broker without success. And other administrative duties.

Lawyer:

- Report: City Recorder Hernandez followed up with City Attorney Ratliff as directed. City Attorney Ratliff will follow up with a letter after 90 days of court date. Ordinance Water Rate Equalization was emailed and reviewed.

Code Enforcement:

- Report: Code Enforcement Officer Perry read submitted report as follows: 39 of 49 notices to date, 20 remains open, 4 abatements resent, and 2 third notices. Code Enforcement Officer Perry received 0 verbal complaint, 07 resident contact by phone or email, 02 resident call for help/extensions, 06 resident contact via door hanger, checked on abatements, checked City Hall after rental and clean-up, connected with Sergeant Hetherwick for updates, prepared Code Enforcement Reports, issued abatement notices and compliance rechecks.

Planning:

- Report: Planning Commission Reviewed Ordinance 2067 Code of Ordinances Chapter 153; Chapter 155; Zoning Work with the decision to repeal the Ordinance to its original version.
- File #02-2025 4110-00200-01703 Merrill Tract, Lot 9 General Review Application: Tabled.
- File #16-2025 Line Vacate General Review Application and Preliminary Map 36-25 for Tax Lots 4110-001CC-01500 and 4110-001CC-01400; Replat of Lots 3 and 4, Block 14, Town of Merrill: Planning Commission recommended File #LP 16-2025 Line Vacate General Review Application and Preliminary Map 36-25 for Tax Lots 4110-001CC-01500 and 4110-001CC-01400 be approved. Councilor Johnson made a motion to approve File #16-2025 Line Vacate General Review Application and Preliminary Map 36-25 for Tax Lots 4110-001CC-01500 and 4110-001CC-01400. Councilor McCollam 2nd the motion. The motion passed 3-0 in favor.
- File #17-2025 Land Partition General Review Application & Preliminary Map 38-25 for Tax Lot 4110-001CC-05700; Replat of Lots 3 and 4, Block 29, Town of Merrill (Post Office & Retail Store): Planning Commission recommended File # LP 17-2025 Land Partition General Review Application & Preliminary Map 38-25 for Tax Lot 4110-001CC-05700; Replat of Lots 3 and 4, Block 29, Town of Merrill (Post Office & Retail Store) be approved with conditional approval upon Klamath County inspection of Joint Fire Rated Wall. Councilor Johnson made a motion to approve to approve File #17-2025 Land Partition General Review Application & Preliminary Map 38-25 for Tax Lot 4110-001CC-05700; Replat of Lots 3 and 4, Block 29, Town of Merrill (Post Office & Retail Store) with conditions. Councilor McCollam 2nd the motion. The motion passed 3-0 in favor.

LOST RIVER ARTS AND CULTURAL ALLIANCE:

- Report: Public Works Director Matthews reported on the success of the Lost River Bluegrass Festival and discussed the profit and loss of the event.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Employee Black-Out Date(s) Policy: Tabled.
- RV Dumping and Water Fill-Up Station: Public Works Director Matthews discussed the installation of an RV Dumping and Water Fill-Up Station at the location of Elm Street and Third Street. Discussion regarding pricing ensued. City Council consensus was to implement donations for the usage fee.
- CIS Request for Coverage Rate Increase Directives:
- Waste Management 2025 Rate Adjustment: City Council reviewed the 2025 Rate Adjustment. Councilor Johnson made a motion to approve the 2025 Rate Adjustment. Councilor McCollam 2nd the motion. The motion passed 3-0 in favor.
- Approve Water Tank Cleaning Bid: Three bids were submitted to the City Council for the 3-5 year water tank cleaning as follows: Rubicon \$3,550.00, LiquiVision \$4,807.60, and Integrated Underwater Services \$5,966.00. Councilor Johnson made a motion to approve the Rubicon Bid to clean the water tank for \$3,550.00.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Discuss Implementation of Begin and End Dates for Fireworks: Fireworks are regulated by the Oregon State Fire Marshal. Fireworks are defined as a low-explosive pyrotechnic device. Legal fireworks in the State of Oregon include but are not limited to novelty devices, wheels, flitter sparklers, fountains, smoke devices, and ground spinners. The legal sale of retail fireworks in Oregon is from June 23rd to July 6th. There is no regulation pertaining to when consumer legal fireworks may be used. Please be courteous to your neighbors and friends. There are restrictions as to where fireworks can be used, such as beaches and federal lands. Always check with local jurisdictions. Illegal fireworks include but are not limited to sky lanterns, missiles, rockets, firecrackers, cherry bombs, M-80's, Roman candles, and bottle rockets. Contact local law enforcement to report illegal fireworks. The consensus of the City Council was to not implement additional regulations. Law enforcement already enforces problematic fireworks, which are listed as illegal within the State of Oregon.

ORDINANCES:

RESOLUTIONS:

- Resolution 2025-973 Adopt the Revised Job Description of Marshal: Tabled.
- Resolution 2025-974 Adopt the Revised Job Description of Officer: Tabled.
- Resolution 2025-975 Adopt the Revised Job Description of Sergeant: Tabled.
- Resolution 2025-976 Adopt the Revised Job Description of Reserve Officer: Tabled.
- Resolution 2025-978 Transfer Funds to Comply with Budget Law Requirements: Resolution 2025-978 Transfer Funds to Comply with Budget Law Requirements was read into the record by title. Councilor Johnson made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-978 Transfer Funds to Comply with Budget Law Requirements. Councilor McCollam 2nd the motion. The motion passed 3-0 in favor.

OTHER-FUTURE AGENDAS:

- Update Tow Policy

PUBLIC COMMENT:

The public is invited to provide their comment and opinion to the City Council at this time on issues of their concern. Non-emergency issues brought up in this forum will not be considered tonight other than in this preliminary discussion, but if found to be warranted, may be considered at a future meeting of the City Council. Public comment is limited to 5 minutes per person.

No public comment followed.

ADJOURN MEETING:

Councilor Johnson made a motion to adjourn the August 13, 2025 Meeting. Councilor McCollam 2nd the motion. With all in favor, the meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeanne Johnson 10-9-25
Terry Guthrie – Mayor
Date

Rayna Hernandez 10-8-25
Rayna Hernandez – City Recorder
Date

Folder A 08-13-2025-18-37-10