

MINUTES OF THE NEWPORT CITY COUNCIL MEETING ON
August 18, 2025

A meeting of the Newport City Council was held on August 18, 2025, at 6:00 PM in Council Chambers, City Hall, 200 S. Washington Avenue, Newport, Washington, with the following present:

	Keith Campbell	Mayor
	Abby Gribi	City Administrator
	Nickole North	Clerk/Treasurer
Kenneth Smith		Councilmember
Elizabeth Spring		Councilmember
Jami Sears		Councilmember
Mark Zorica		Mayor Pro Tem
Nathan Longly		Councilmember

At 6:00 PM, Mayor Campbell called the meeting to order followed by roll call and the pledge of allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA & MINUTES:

The 2025 Pend Oreille Valley Relay for Life Recap was moved to the next meeting. Councilmember Zorica moved to approve the agenda as amended and the minutes from the August 04, 2025 Council Meeting; Councilmember Longly seconded. Motion carried.

MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Councilmember Longly reminded everyone that school will be starting soon and to watch out for walking children.

Councilmember Zorica complimented South Pend Oreille Fire & Rescue for their quick response to a fire call in the City earlier today. Their response time was less than a minute and 30 seconds.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR COMMENTS:

The City will be switching to Risk Management Service Agency (RMSA) for liability and property insurance later this year and they have invited some of our staff to attend a training on how to identify problem trees. We are already benefiting from this switch.

Road work is still going on. The more they are traveled on the better and sweeping is coming. Last week two TIB grants were submitted totaling around \$280,000. One is to continue to the type of work that is currently being done with TIB funds and the other is for fog seal.

The water rate study has been completed and the findings will be presented to the Council at the second meeting in September.

National Night Out was the first Comprehensive Plan outreach and it went well with good feedback.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:

Nathan Weathers, residing at 507 N. Spokane Avenue, Newport, WA thanked the City for repairing the Splash Park. He asked if there was a way for the City and volunteers to work together, specifically on the chains on the swings in the Newport City Park. He believes he can get some volunteers to install them if the City can provide new chains. City Administrator Gribi will get with him on this. He further stated that there was a pile of gravel from the road project on Larch and Warren and asked if he could remove that or if the City crews need to do it. Administrator Gribi stated that she would have the gravel removed.

Rachel Wright, a homeless person residing in Newport, WA, addressed council, stating she had been homeless for 15 years, declared she was Autistic and suffered multi-personalities disorder and had endured physical and mental injuries. She feels the Family Crisis network abuses their funding and has not helped her. She has been denied disability multiple times and she is unsure why. Mayor Campbell directed her to the county as the Crisis Center is not a City of Newport entity. She then became agitated, verbally abusive and left City Hall.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mandy Walters, Pend Oreille County Library District Director, gave an update on the proposed library. The Architect team was online to answer any questions. The proposed layout was shown to the Council and would be built along State Route 2 on the highway side of the lot. This would leave approximately 1.5 acres to build something else on the back side of the lot at a future date. The design provided a meeting room with a commercial kitchen as well as a community shared space, reading areas, staff area and parking. Administrator Gribi is to get the actual location of the City wells on that lot to the Architects so that they can ensure the building is beyond a 1000' radius of the wells. Councilmember Zorica asked if approach permits had been discussed with Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). A traffic analysis will be completed prior to the actual construction of the building, but the current design would be sharing an entrance to parking and the building through the school parking lot. This Fall there will be public input on the location and design of the proposed library. Their plan is to move forward since there is no objection from the Council on the proposed location and design. Director Walters will be back to present to the Council the next phase of this project at a later date. She stated that the desire is for a community driven space.

Ray Hanson, Newport Rodeo Association President gave a recap on the Newport Rodeo and Rough Stock Rodeo. Rodeo attendance Thursday night increased by around 500. The contestants participating was super full, being around 330 over the three days. Friday night there were around 4,362 tickets sold and Saturday was a sellout with 5,236 tickets sold. The payout for the Newport Rodeo was around \$92,000 and \$40,000 of that was covered by entry fees. The Rough Stock Rodeo was also up in attendance by around 350 with around 102 contestants. Plans for next year is to move the rodeo slack from Saturday morning to Thursday evening to make it safer for the parade entries and to make it easier to navigate trucks and trailers for the contestants. The Newport Rodeo Association has hosted three barrel races this year as well as a circus (which was well

attended) and a fund raiser for the Priest River Animal Rescue. President Hanson thanked SPOFR for being on site and available in the event that they were needed.

Pend Oreille County Commissioner John Gentle attended the meeting at the Council's request to discuss the proposed county wide Emergency Medical Services (EMS) District. He gave his thoughts on this topic both personally and as a County Commissioner representing citizens of the County. He likes to weigh the pros and cons. He feels as an elected official you must represent the people, not your own viewpoint. Personally, he is not in favor of the formation of an EMS District, politically he disagrees with the principles. He stated that if all of the Fire Chiefs were in agreement he would vote in favor of the EMS District and he would support a balloted levy. He feels that currently there is too much work left to be done to support this EMS District formation. However, he does feel that if there has to be an EMS District, a better product will be produced with the current personnel working on it. Administrator Gribi again stated for the record that neither the City of Newport nor SPOFR are in favor of a countywide EMS District. She asked Commissioner Gentle if he would vote to force them into an EMS District. Commissioner Gentle highly encouraged the City of Newport as well as SPOFR to look at the Bylaws and make sure they were covered in case this happens because he is only one vote. Councilmember Zorica feels that the proposed bylaws are vague, and contradictory. He has asked multiple times if this EMS District would become a taxing district with county legislative authority and if so, who will be appointed the subject matter experts. He appreciated Commissioner Gentle's honesty and being up front stating that this would be a creation of a taxing district. Councilmember Zorica stated that he needs to be able to be up front and honest with the citizens that he represents. He also questioned whether it was a good idea for the bylaws to require a unanimous vote and feels this may create a stalemate and get nothing accomplished. Administrator Gribi also spoke of the wasted time of the councilmembers and city staff on this issue. She feels that it is a second layer of government. The commercial issue has been resolved and each fire district can run their own EMS levy should they feel the need, so the Countywide EMS District is not necessary. Councilmember Longly agreed with Administrator Gribi. The EMS District is not needed at this time and the Fire Chiefs are the best ones to run their own levies for their districts. Councilmember Sears said a good vision dies with poor leadership. South Pend Oreille Fire and Rescue Chief Stocking stated that his fire commissioners have not yet had an opportunity to dive deep into the proposed bylaws. He does support the unanimous aspect of the bylaws, however. He agrees with City Administrator Gribi that the towns that have annexed into a fire district should not get dual representation during these EMS District discussions with the Pend Oreille County Commissioners. He also is concerned that the creation of an EMS District would be a government wrench that could jeopardize the progress being made in his fire district. In conclusion, Commissioner Gentle agreed that the creation of this District is premature and he doesn't want to take funds away from fire.

Councilmember Zorica moved to approve Resolution 20250818 adopting the Six-Year Transportation Program for forwarding to the State Highway Commission and Urban Arterial Board for review and comments; Councilmember Sears seconded. Motion carried.

Councilmember Zorica moved to approve Ordinance 2140 creating a municipal code 9.24 regarding curfew and parental responsibilities for juveniles; Councilmember Spring seconded. Motion carried.

BILLS & PAYROLL:

Councilmember Zorica moved to approve the bills and payroll; Councilmember Longly seconded.
Motion carried.

2025 CLAIMS CHECKS 67045-67080	\$272,159.24
2025 CLAIMS EFT 2025 August 2 nd Meeting Run 1-13	\$38,303.01
2025 CLAIMS DIRECT PAY 2025 August 2 nd Meeting Run 1-7	\$4,106.38
PAYROLL EFT 2025 August 1 st PR 1-9; Direct Dep Run 08/05/2025	\$92,903.91

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:43 PM.

Attest:



Nickole North, MMC, CPFA
Clerk/Treasurer

By:



Keith Campbell
Mayor