

City of Creswell City Council Meeting

Council Members Present:

- Mayor Smith
- Councilor Costilla, Council President
- Councilor Holt
- Councilor Kent
- Councilor Kremer
- Councilor Morris
- Councilor Dukes

Audience: 9

Press: 0

Staff Present

- City Manager Vincent Martorello
- Finance Director Jim Piper
- Public Works Director Cliff Bellew
- Assistant to City Manager Angela Keppler
- City Recorder Caitlin Born
- Airport Manager Shelley Humble
- Sergeant Alex Speldrich

Opening of the Meeting

Mayor Smith thanked everyone for coming to the City Council Meeting on March 13, 2026, opening the meeting at 6:00 p.m. He asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Forum

The public forum session began with firefighters Amanda Huckins and Stephen Beach representing the Union for South Lane Firefighters L851, which covers Cottage Grove and Creswell areas. They sought support for their upcoming May ballot levy that would increase property tax by \$0.47 per \$1,000 of assessed value. The funding would be used exclusively for staffing purposes to increase coverage across all three shifts. Amanda explained that high call volumes for medical emergencies were reducing their fire coverage capacity, leaving inadequate personnel to respond to house fires

when others were on medical calls. The levy had previously failed, which they attributed to inaccurate information being circulated.

Stephen provided scenarios from Fire Chief regarding potential consequences if the levy fails. He noted that currently only five personnel were on shift - two at Cottage Grove, a division chief, and two in Creswell. If the levy fails, starting July 1, 2026, the district will reduce to operating only one ambulance since their primary obligation is fire service protection, though they staff ambulances for additional revenue and community service.

Mayor's Report

i. Arbor Day Proclamation

Mayor Smith presented the annual Arbor Day proclamation, recounting the holiday's origins when James Sterling Morton proposed to the Nebraska Board of Agriculture in 1872 that a special day be designated for tree planting. He highlighted the environmental and economic benefits of trees, including erosion prevention, energy cost reduction, air purification, oxygen production, and wildlife habitat provision. The mayor emphasized trees' role in increasing property values, enhancing business district vitality, and beautifying the community. He noted that Creswell has maintained its Tree City USA status for 15 consecutive years. Mayor Smith officially proclaimed April 26, 2026, as Arbor Day in Creswell and encouraged citizen participation in the celebration at Harry Holt Park on Sunday, April 26th from 11 AM to 2 PM.

ii. Finance and Administration City Attorney Evaluation Charge Update

Mayor Smith announced a clarification to the 2026 charge for the Finance and Administrative Committee, which now includes reviewing the city attorney evaluation process and timeline. The committee is authorized to assess the effectiveness, efficiency, and transparency of the current evaluation framework. Based on their review, the committee may recommend maintaining the existing process or propose alternative evaluation procedures that improve clarity, consistency, and alignment with City Council oversight. The committee will present their findings and recommendations to the mayor for review and potential adoption.

Correspondence

Mayor Smith presented correspondence from (John Payne) about FEMA regarding the 2026 Preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Map and specific regulatory concerns involving the Silk Creek basin and Hill Creek. No council members raised questions about this correspondence.

Consent Calendar

The consent calendar included approval of three sets of meeting minutes: March 9, 2026 City Council Meeting Minutes, March 16, 2026, City Council Special Meeting Minutes, and March 23, 2026 City Council Work Session Minutes.

Motion: Councilor Kent moved to accept the minutes as presented. Councilor Morris seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously

March 2026 Administrative Report

Finance Expenditures Report

City Manager Martorello presented the finance expenditures report. Councilor Holt inquired about a small item listed as "Country Media" on page 3. City Manager Martorello clarified this was the annual newspaper subscription renewal for Cottage Grove Sentential. Council President Costilla asked about a Taco Bell irrigation payment on the last page, which it was confirmed as a reimbursement for overpayment.

Lane County Sheriff's Report

Sergeant Speldrich reported a significant increase in property crimes for the month, attributing this to two particular nights of major car prowling incidents involving unlocked vehicles. The 24 property crime case numbers included several juvenile vandalism and criminal mischief incidents, now being addressed through juvenile court. Sergeant Speldrich noted that offense-against-state numbers were high, which he characterized as positive since these typically involve self-initiated actions like warrant arrests and drug offenses, indicating proactive law enforcement.

When asked about spring break correlation, Sergeant Speldrich confirmed that vandalism incidents coincided with spring break, involving the same group of local juveniles getting into trouble while staying out late. The incidents occurred primarily on the west side of town. Sergeant Speldrich explained that the car prowling involved local Creswell residents whom they had either contacted or planned to contact.

Councilor Kent commended the staff's flexibility in adjusting schedules to be less predictable following the car prowling incidents. Speldrich explained they implemented randomized scheduling to potentially deter criminal activity.

Councilor Holt asked about community prevention measures, Sergeant Speldrich emphasized locking vehicles, removing valuables from sight, and reporting suspicious activity rather than assuming others would call. He confirmed that residential security camera footage was valuable for prosecution and encouraged residents to check cameras and share relevant footage when incidents occur in their neighborhoods.

Councilor Morris asked when to call 911 versus non-emergency numbers, Sergeant Speldrich advised using non-emergency for non-aggressive incidents, with deputies typically responding promptly when available. And 911 for in progress situations.

City Attorney Report

City Manager Martorello reported that the city attorney accrued 29 hours last month. No council members raised questions about this report.

Code Enforcement Report

City Manager Martorello presented the code enforcement spreadsheet showing open and closed cases with photographs demonstrating progress made during the month. Mayor Smith inquired about signage on the Creswell Market building, noting that some signs had been removed. City Manager Martorello explained that the building exceeded the allowable number of signs and square footage requirements based on building faces and street frontage. Code Enforcement Officer Pierre confirmed.

Building Permit Recap Report

The building permit recap included a comparison spreadsheet. Mayor Smith asked about a commercial structural permit with high job value. Building Permit Technician Keppler indicated she would need to research the specific project in another program and agreed to email details to the council if not available by meeting's end. It was stated that the structural permit was for the Robinett–Hughes Park.

Council Action Items

Resolution 2026-03 A Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Terminate the Intergovernmental Agreement Establishing the System Benefit Fee with Lane County

City Manager Martorello presented the resolution he was instructed to draft for terminating the IGA with Lane County regarding the system benefit fee. He noted that recent communications between the city, Lane County, and Sanipac had been distributed to provide current information before the decision.

Motion: Councilor Kent moved that the City Council approve Resolution 2026-03, a resolution authorizing the City Manager to terminate the intergovernmental agreement establishing the system benefit fee with Lane County. Councilor Costilla seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2026-04 A Resolution Appropriating Expenditures Within the General Fund

Finance Director Piper explained that this resolution amends the fiscal year 2025-26 budget by moving \$50,000 from contingency to administrative expenses for an unforeseen expenditure not included in the original budget.

Motion: Councilor Morris moved that the City Council approve Resolution 2026-04, a resolution appropriating expenditures within the general fund. Councilor Dukes seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2026-05, A Resolution Appropriating Expenditures Within the Sewer Fund

Finance Director Piper presented this resolution to amend the sewer fund budget by moving funds from contingency to materials and services for consulting work by their wastewater facilities plan engineer to assist with meetings.

Motion: Council President Costilla moved that the City Council approve Resolution 2026-05, a resolution appropriating expenditures within the sewer fund. Councilor Kramer seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Awarding City of Creswell's Insurance Agent of Record Contract

Finance Director Piper recommended awarding the contract to Marsh McLennan Agency following an RFP process that yielded one proposal from the same agency but with improved terms. The new agent offered more involvement and reduced fees from percentage commission to a flat fee, saving the city approximately \$4,000 annually or \$20,000 over the five-year contract term. City staff, including the City Manager, Finance Director, Public Works Director, and Airport Manager, evaluated the proposal using a scoring system included in the agenda packet.

Councilor Holt thanked staff for the cost savings effort. Mayor Smith asked if the coverage remained the same. Finance Director confirmed it did, while expecting improved service and responsiveness without overcharges.

Motion: Councilor Morris moved that the City Council authorize City Manager Vincent Martorello to enter into a contract with Marsh McLennan Agency as the city's insurance agent of record for a term not to exceed 5 years. Council President Costilla seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Authorizing a Sole Source Procurement

Finance Director Piper requested authorization for City Manager Martorello to execute contracts for continuing services with Montoya Law LLC, not to exceed \$100,000. He explained this was a sole source procurement based on background information provided in the agenda item summary. The expense would be covered by general fund operating contingency of \$373,625, with additional savings anticipated from other general fund administrative department areas. Finance Director Piper clarified that no transfers from the airport were required since general fund monies are not restricted for specific purposes, unlike dedicated funds such as the public safety fee.

Councilor Kent appreciated having the background and financial considerations included in the official agenda item, noting that this information addressed public interest over recent months.

Motion: Council President Costilla moved that the City Council authorize City Manager Martorello to execute the necessary contract documents to procure the continuing services of Montoya Law LLC, not to exceed \$100,000. Councilor Kent seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Awarding of Contract for Creswell Butte Transmission Main project

Public Works Director Bellew requested approval to contract with Windrose Excavation for constructing the Creswell Butte water main transmission line. This project would replace the original 8-inch asbestos transmission line installed in the 1960s that currently runs cross-country through private properties via easements, creating liability issues for the city. The new 12-inch main would be relocated to public right-of-way, increase fire flows, improve service to the south part of town, and provide better service to reservoirs from the water plant.

Seven proposals were received with Windrose Excavation submitting the low bid of \$1,417,394.83. Public Works Director Bellew noted this contractor had previously completed two successful projects for the city. Funding would come partially from a FEMA hazard mitigation program grant of approximately \$1 million, with the remainder funded by water capital reserve funds. A 15 percent contingency of approximately \$200,000 was recommended for unknown conditions.

The project would begin in early to mid-May with an estimated 120-day completion timeline, finishing before winter. Council President Costilla inquired whether the project would address any DEQ list items, but Public Works Director Bellew clarified this was strictly a water project under Oregon Health Division oversight, not DEQ-related.

Motion: Councilor Kent moved that the City Council approve City Manager Martorello to enter into a contract with Windrose Excavation for construction of the Creswell Butte transmission line for the amount of \$1,417,394.83 with a contingency budget of 15 percent of bid total, i.e., \$200,000, for a total budget of \$1,617,394.83. Councilor Morris seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval or Denial of Creswell Rodeo Temporary Liquor License

City Recorder Born presented the liquor license application for the Creswell Rodeo's Fourth of July event. The application was submitted on April 3rd with all proper documentation. Sergeant Speldrich reviewed and approved the application, noting no issues with the previous year's event. The only change from last year was extending the event by one hour due to the fireworks location change, allowing people to view fireworks from the venue.

City Manager Martorello noted that a public hearing was required before voting on this agenda item. Mayor Smith opened the public hearing at 6:38 p.m. and closed the public hearing at 6:39 p.m. with no public comment.

Motion: Councilor Kent moved that the City Council recommend approval of the liquor license application as presented. Councilor Dukes seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Upcoming Meetings

Mayor Smith directed everyone to review the city website and calendar for upcoming events and meetings to stay informed about city activities and opportunities for participation.

Adjournment

With no further business Mayor Smith adjourned the meeting at 6:43 p.m.

Signature on File

Alonzo Costilla, Council President

Attest:

Signature on File

Caitlin Born, City Recorder