BURNS CITY COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday, December 10, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

Burns City Hall
242 S. Broadway
Burns, Oregon 97720

Mayor Brad Erbe
Council President Jennifer Hoke
Councilor Susan Lowe Councilor Heather Smith
Councilor Chase Patterson Councilor Andrew Roy
Councilor Tod Gahley

COUNCILORS AND CITIZENS ARE WELCOME AND ENCOURAGED TO JOIN THE REGULAR COUNCIL VIA ZOOM.

Members of the public and media wishing to address the council during any public comment period will be able to join the webinar as an "attendee." Attendees will be able to view the Webinar on a desktop, laptop or mobile device such as a smartphone or iPad by using the following link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9020143459Meeting ID: 902 014 3459

I. Call to Order

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Establish Quorum (*Roll Call*)

IV. Public Comments

Members of the public desiring to address the Mayor and Council shall first be recognized by the Presiding Officer and then state their name and address for the record. Unless otherwise designated by the presiding officer, each person shall have up to three minutes to present their comments. City Councilors normally should not directly respond to a public comment during the public comment period. Councilor comments should be held until the Councilor comment period.

V. Agenda Approval and Added Agenda Items (*Discussion/Action*)

Any matters added to the agenda at this time will be discussed during the "New Business" portion of this Agenda or such other time selected by the council.

VI. Consent Agenda (*Discussion/Action*)

Information concerning matters listed on the Consent Agenda has been distributed to each member of the council for reading and studying, is routine, and will be enacted or approved by one motion of the council without separate discussion. If a separate discussion is desired concerning a particular matter listed in the Consent Agenda, that matter may be removed from the Consent Agenda and placed on the regular agenda at the request of any council member.

Regular City Council Meeting November 12, 2025 –

VII. New Business –

1. Harney County Chamber Update – Jessica Hedges
2. Harney County Chamber Board Member Election Approval
3. Nick Planinz – Property Entrance Discrepancy

VIII. Old Business

IX. Resolution/Ordinances (Discussion/Action)

X. City Manager Report (*Discussion/Action*)

XI. Committee Reports (*Discussion*)

1. Cemetery Committee – Councilor Gahley
2. Safety Committee – Councilor Gahley
3. Airport Committee – Councilor Smith
4. R3 – Councilor Smith
5. URA – Mayor Erbe
6. Event Committee – Mayor Erbe
7. Waterways Committee – Councilor Hoke

XII. Councilor Comments (*Discussion/Action*)

XIII. Adjourn

The Burns City Council meetings are available via Zoom and in accordance with ORS 192.610 to 192.690, these meetings conform to guidelines set forth in public meeting law. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this meeting location is accessible to persons with disabilities. This institution is an equal opportunity provider. Discrimination is prohibited by Federal law. A request for an interpreter for the hearing impaired or for other accommodations for persons with disabilities should be made at least 48 hours before the meeting to City Recorder Tiffany Leffler (541) 573-5255 or use the TTY Relay Service at 1-800-735-2900 for appropriate assistance. If a request is made, the city will make a reasonable attempt to honor the request.

Updated Agenda Posted: December 4, 2025, at Burns City Hall, Burns Post Office, Harney County Courthouse, City of Burns Website, and City of Burns Facebook Page.

BURNS CITY COUNCIL
November 12, 2025

The Burns City Council met in regular session on November 12, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. Members present were as follows:

Mayor:	Brad Erbe - Excused
Councilor President:	Jen Hoke
Councilors:	Susan Lowe
	Heather Smith
	Chase Patterson
	Andrew Roy
	Tod Gahley

Also, in attendance were City Manager Brenda Engebretson, Public Works Director Ty Richardson, Fire Chief Scott Williamson, Police Chief Robby Tiller, Officer Emerson Budreau, and City Clerk Tiffany Leffler. Present via Zoom were Jesse Christensen, John Galt and Robert Almanza with HECO Engineering.

SUMMARY

The Burns City Council meeting began with administrative matters including agenda approval and the swearing in of the new Police Chief Robby Tiller, followed by a detailed discussion of a 424-page wastewater facilities plan that will undergo DEQ review. There were concerns addressed about council engagement and communication platforms, while also discussing reviewing various city ordinances including parking regulations and code enforcement. The conversation ended with updates on housing developments, infrastructure projects, and URA financial implications, along with discussions about stormwater fees and flood control measures.

AGENDA APPROVAL AND ADDED ITEMS

Mayor Erbe Removed the Harney Art Show and Sale from New Business and added the Wastewater facility Plan to #1 on New Business.

Councilor Roy made a motion to approve the agenda with the removed and added items. Councilor Hoke seconded the motion. All Ayes. **(6/0)**

CONSENT AGENDA

Regular City Council Meeting Minutes – October 22, 2025 –

Councilor Gahley made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Councilor Roy seconded the motion. All Ayes. **(6/0)**

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Wastewater Facility Plan** – The council received a draft of the Wastewater Facilities Plan, which is 424 pages long. Jesse Christensen with HECO requested that they review the first 86 pages before the next council meeting in December where they can bring any concerns they have. He explained that HECO plans to submit the report to DEQ for review, which could take up to two months, after which they will ask the council to adopt the plan in January.

Robert Almanze with HECO emphasized the importance of reviewing the costs and recommendations in the report.

Jesse Christensen also mentioned that the timeline for infrastructure improvements and financing options was included in the document.

2. **Council Discussion** – Councilor Smith expressed concerns about the low attendance and engagement from the council at recent council meetings including the recent URA Work Session, emphasizing the importance of representing the community effectively. Councilor Smith also discussed the use of Burns Live, a communication platform, and encouraged councilors to use it to share updates and engage with the community. She informed them that Burns Live is a public app with opt-in notifications and explained that councilors have access to a separate app to generate content same as the staff does. She urged them to all participate in that as well as the meetings.

   Mayor Brad Erbe expressed concern about having too many voices on the platform and emphasized that the intent is to provide clear and important information to the community.

3. **Code Enforcement Update** – After speaking with Officer Emerson Budreau, the council agreed to schedule a Work Session to review and potentially revise various city ordinances, including parking regulations and animal control laws. They also touched on code enforcement issues and the need to address derelict properties.

   Officer Emerson Budreau mentioned plans to work with Chief Tiller on the abatement processes.

   The council revisited the concerns about the city's parking and code enforcement ordinances, particularly regarding right-of-way and setback definitions. They were encouraged to email their specific concerns to Police Chief Robby Tiller and Officer Emerson Budreau, who will work with City Manager Brenda Engebretson and City Clerk Tiffany Leffler to review the issues and potentially recommend changes to the council. They also discussed the ongoing debates about permit requirements for commercial vehicles and practicality of a 3-day window for abandoned vehicle removal, with questions raised about whether certain state requirements need to be maintained.

4. **Murals and Ordinances** – John Clemens, a rancher, expressed concerns about the painting and murals on downtown buildings, particularly the potential desecration of historical stonework. He argued the need to protect the town's heritage and historical significance, suggesting that measures be put in place to regulate what can be painted on buildings. The council acknowledged the importance of balancing freedom of expression with preserving historical sites and discussed the possibility of establishing a historical district to address these concerns. They also discussed concerns about political and sexual orientation murals, with some members expressing constitutional and legal uncertainties about restricting such expressions. They agreed to explore legal options and consider holding a workshop to examine potential ordinances, with City Manager Brenda Engebretson tasked to consult legal counsel about the city's authority in Oregon.

5. **Questions to Council** – Patty Hodge raised questions about proposed housing developments, expressing concerns about water and sewer capacity. She requested answers about commercial properties and potential residents for these homes, which she agreed to submit in writing for the next meeting.

   The council addressed her questions about city finances and infrastructure, explaining that they do not yet have an answer regarding whether the estimated $5.30 monthly charge for a loan will

continue after the grant pays it off in 2027, as this decision has not been discussed publicly. They clarified that while the city received a $3 million grant for a new housing development, this funding was specific to that project and could not be used for other infrastructure needs like road repairs. The council encouraged residents to direct specific questions to staff members, when possible, rather than saving them for public meetings.

The council also spoke to the housing development plans for Miller Springs, where the developer will build homes based on demand rather than an immediate large-scale construction, with a 20-year plan for all these homes. They clarified that Oregon's housing shortage means cities cannot automatically reject housing developments, nor do they want to, and developers must be given due process unless the city can prove the system cannot accommodate the development.

6. **Frosty Fest Light Parade** – City Clerk Tiffany Leffler informed the council that the Harney County Chamber would be handling the Christmas parade and lighting contest but were unable to make it to the meeting that evening. She informed them that she was waiting for an update about the ODOT permit as well as insurance verification and she would contact them to find out where things were at with those.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business.

RESOLUTIONS/ORDINANCES

There were no Ordinances or Resolutions.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The meeting covered updates on several community initiatives and events. City Manager Brenda Engebretson shared insights from County Commissioner Patty Doro's Work Sessions on economic development, highlighting discussions on housing projects and the need for employment opportunities.

Chief Williamson with the Airport Committee, reported on maintenance activities, grant applications, and an upcoming Aviation Day event. He also touched on the need to investigate and potentially repair a septic tank issue at the airport.

The meeting also covered several key topics, including the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) and its financial implications. At the last URA meeting Nick Green with Catalyst presented examples of how URA development could significantly increase tax revenue, with one parcel going from $361 annually to $47,000 split between six districts. The group discussed how URA funds could be reinvested in the community, such as new schools or parks, and clarified that the board does not have to wait 30 years to distribute funds.

Additionally, Public Works Director Ty Richardson provided updates on flood control measures, including new fencing, surveys, and culvert replacements. The conversation ended with discussions about stormwater fees and housing developments.

NEXT STEPS

1. Council: Need to review the wastewater facilities plan before the December 10th meeting
2. Jesse/HECO: Send wastewater facilities plan to DEQ for review now but implement any changes from council feedback and update the report for DEQ

4. Council: Adopt the wastewater facility plan in January
5. Council: Email Officer Emerson Budreau with concerns about parking ordinances as well as other ordinances
6. Officer Emerson Budreau and Chief Tiller: Review Council concerns about ordinances and present recommendations back to Council
7. City Manager Brenda Engebretson: Contact legal counsel to determine what authority the city has regarding murals and historical preservation
8. City Staff: Follow up with Frosty Fest organizers regarding ODOT application and insurance
9. City Clerk Tiffany Leffler: Send URA meeting video to all Council members
10. Councilor Hoke: Reach out to Suzanne Settle and Bill Hart to schedule Waterways Committee meeting for first or second week of January

ADJOURN

Mayor Erbe adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Tiffany Leffler, City Clerk

Brad Erbe, Mayor

The Harney County Chamber of Commerce champions a thriving Harney County through business growth and community connections.

2025 Board of Directors

President
Natasha Gunn
Selco Community Credit Union

Vice President
Brad Attig
Foundry Collective

Treasurer
Kevin Pryse
Kevin Pryse, CPA

Secretary
Bridgit Starbuck
The Prickly Pear Saloon & Coffee Bar

Beryl Shea
Harney County Library

Robert Medley
HC School District #3

Mindy Gould
Elkhorn Media

Jeff Mack
Great Basin Fire Extinguisher Service LLC

Jaide Downs
Malheur Field Station

Bob Gomes
Harney District Hospital

November 21, 2025

Re: Board Member Election

Dear Harney County Chamber of Commerce Members,

The Harney County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors is committed to ensuring the organization is guided by strong leadership that represents a variety of industries and perspectives within our community. To maintain a fully operational board during the 2025 year, the Chamber Board appointed several new directors. With their successful election, 2026 will mark the beginning of their official three-year terms.

As required by the Chamber's bylaws, this mailed ballot serves as the official means for membership to confirm the appointments of directors to the Board. Your participation is essential in upholding our governing process and ensuring the continued success of the Chamber.

At this time, we are asking for your support in confirming the following appointments to the Chamber Board of Directors:

- **Bridgit Starbuck, The Prickly Pear Saloon and Coffee Bar**
- **Mindy Gould, Elkhorn Media Group**
- **Jeff Mack, Great Basin Fire Extinguisher Services**
- **Jaide Downs, The Fields Station**
- **Bob Gomes, Harney District Hospital**

Your confirmation strengthens the Chamber's ability to move forward with unified leadership and ensures that our Board reflects the voices of our diverse business community.

Please indicate your support by signing below and returning this letter to the Chamber no later than December 15. You may:

- Drop it off at our office, 484 N Broadway in Burns
- Mail it to the same address
- Or email a signed copy to **director@harneycounty.com**

We greatly appreciate your continued engagement and support of the

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2025 Board of Directors

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Selco Community Credit Union

Vice President
Brad Attig
Foundry Collective

Treasurer
Kevin Pryse
Kevin Pryse, CPA

Secretary
Bridgit Starbuck
The Prickly Pear Saloon & Coffee Bar

Beryl Shea
Harney County Library

Robert Medley
HC School District #3

Mindy Gould
Elkhorn Media

Jeff Mack
Great Basin Fire Extinguisher Service LLC

Jaide Downs
Malheur Field Station

Bob Gomes
Harney District Hospital

Chamber. Together, we are building a strong future for business and community in Harney County.

With gratitude,
Jess Hedges
Executive Director
Harney County Chamber of Commerce

director@harneycounty.com
541-573-3636

Membership Confirmation

I, City of Burns, a member in good standing of the Harney County Chamber of Commerce, confirm and support the appointment of the following individuals to serve three-year terms (2026–2029) on the Harney County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors:

- Bridgit Starbuck
- Mindy Gould
- Jeff Mack
- Jaide Downs
- Bob Gomes

Signature: _____

Date: _____