

BURNS CITY COUNCIL

April 8, 2026

The Burns City Council met in regular session on April 8, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. Members present were as follows:

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

Also, in attendance were City Manager Brenda Engebretson, Public Works Director Ty Richardson, and City Clerk Tiffany Leffler.

SUMMARY

The Burns City Council meeting on April 8, 2026, focused on procedural updates and public comments. Ryan Curtis raised concerns about difficulties in starting a new business in Burns, specifically regarding the business license application process and requirements as well as the planning process. The council approved several agenda items including road closure permits for Harney Nights and the Skull Gravel Grinder event, construction contracts for water system and paving projects, and a resolution accepting revenue from City County Insurance Services.

AGENDA APPROVAL AND ADDED ITEMS

Mayor Erbe postponed the event permit for the City of Burns Police Chief Robby Tiller to the next meeting. He also added comments from the Mayor to item #1 under new business as well as added an event permit for the Skull Grinder to the Harney County Chamber update and event permit for Harney Nights to new business.

Councilor Patterson made a motion to approve the agenda with changes. Councilor Gahley seconded the motion. All Ayes. (4/0)

CONSENT AGENDA

Regular City Council Meeting Minutes - March 25, 2026 –

Councilor Gahley made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Councilor Patterson seconded the motion. All Ayes. (4/0)

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Comments from Mayor Erbe** – Mayor Erby addressed a recall petition being promoted by Kim Rollins, defending his actions regarding towing company rotations and denying claims about seeking special privileges for his business. He said it contained false information about him requesting to be the sole towing provider for the City of Burns. He stated that he only suggested the city could have its own towing rotation independent of the county sheriff's department, not that Sam's Service should be the sole provider. He also defended the council's meeting practices though they may not always follow Robert's Rules of Order and clarified misconceptions about their roles, particularly regarding the mayor's limited authority outside of council meetings.

2. **Harney County Chamber Update and Event Permit for Harney Nights and Skull Gravel Grinder** – Chamber Director, Jessica Hedges, provided updates on upcoming events and Chamber activities. She announced Community Bike Night, which will feature a bike rodeo, free helmets, bike repairs, and first responder vehicles. She also mentioned the 76th annual Chamber Awards Banquet and the new "Shop Harney" gift card promotion. Additionally, she highlighted new acquisitions for events, including a PA system and event signage to improve safety and awareness. The conversation ended with appreciation for Jessica's ongoing work with the Chamber.

The council discussed two event permits. They approved a road closure application for Harney Nights event on April 16th, which will shut down East A Street between Arrowhead Plaza and U.S. Bank, with coordination made to ensure U.S. Bank's drive-thru remains accessible. They also approved an event application for the Skull Gravel Grinder, including overnight camping permission at Babe Ruth Field, with the event using Triangle Park as the starting and ending point. Both approvals were unanimous with 4-0 votes.

Councilor Patterson made a motion to approve Harney nights with the road closure for East A Street between Arrowhead Plaza and US Bank. Councilor Roy seconded. All Ayes. (4/0)

Councilor Patterson made a motion to approve the Skull Gravel Grinder and overnight camping permit for the Babe Ruth field. Councilor Gahley seconded the motion. All Ayes. (4/0)

3. **Construction Services Contract with Steele Earthworks, LLC for Water System Improvement Project** – Councilor Gailey raised a concern about defining "the city" in the contract, specifically regarding city approval of overages, and requested this be clarified in the legal review process.

Councilor Patterson made a motion to approve the construction services contract with Steele Earthworks, LLC for the Water System Improvement project subject to final city attorney legal revisions and internal review. Councilor Roy seconded the motion. All Ayes. (4/0)

4. **Construction Services Contract with Hueckman Contracting, LLC for Kearney Avenue Project** - Councilor Gailey raised a concern about defining "the city" in the contract, specifically regarding city approval of overages, and requested this be clarified in the legal review process.

Councilor Patterson made a motion to approve the construction services contract with Hueckman Contracting LLC for the Kearney Avenue Project subject to further internal review and revisions and should only be approved by the council subject to city attorney review and revisions. Councilor Roy seconded the motion. All Ayes. (4/0)

5. **Event Permit for City of Burns Police Chief Robby Tiller** - Postponed to the April 22, 2026 meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

1. **Open Council Seat Letters of Interest** - The council discussed the process of reviewing letters of interest for an open council position, with Shane Brockmann being the first and only person during the meeting to present his interest. They informed everyone that they would not be making a decision that evening and would decide whether to move forward at the April 22, 2026 meeting.

Shane Brockmann introduced himself as a Navy veteran (five and a half years of service) and recent resident (over one year) of the City of Burns. He was seeking to become more involved in the community. He informed the council that he had moved to Burns from Kansas and had really fallen in love with the community. He loved the way of life out here. He's a self-sustaining type of person, so it was awesome to be somewhere where that was possible to do as well as encouraged. He felt like he was led to do something more and thought this was a perfect opportunity to become more involved in the community.

RESOLUTIONS/ORDINANCES

1. **Resolution No. 26-821** – A Resolution of the City of Burns, Oregon, accepting certain identified and unanticipated revenues from City Country Insurance Services, in the amount of \$2000.00.

Councilor Patterson made a motion to read Resolution No. 26-821 by title only. Councilor Gahley seconded the motion. All Ayes. **(4/o)**

Councilor Gahley made a motion to approve Resolution No. 26-821. Councilor Patterson seconded the motion. All Ayes. **(4/o)**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ryan Curtis – 31868 Sunset Valley Lane - addressed the City Council regarding difficulties in starting a new business in Burns, specifically mentioning issues with the business license application process and requirements that were not clearly communicated upfront. He noted that problems with the application process, including FEMA flood zone requirements and paving of the exit way requirements, were only discovered after the business license was issued and a lease had been signed. Ryan recommended improving the process by better communicating requirements and steps to applicants before issuing licenses.

Councilor Patterson asked City Clerk/Planning Clerk Tiffany Leffler if she felt there needed to be improvements or changes to the process.

City Clerk/Planning Clerk Tiffany Leffler said she did not think the process needed to be changed but informed the council that all business licenses would now be run by her before they are approved just to make sure they don't need to have land use approval first. This will ensure that this isn't an issue moving forward. She said it was an honest mistake because not many business licenses have to go through the land use process. She also pointed out that she had spoken with the Curtis's on a few different occasions about starting this exact business and they were informed and aware of the fact that they needed to have land use approval prior to starting their business.

Councilor Roy and Mayor Erbe pointed out that getting a business license and land use approval were two different things. That just because they are approved for the business license doesn't mean they don't have additional steps that will need to be taken to open the business.

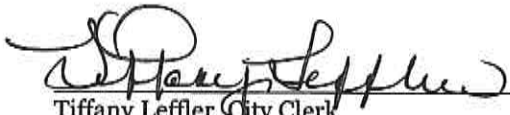
NEXT STEPS

1. City Clerk Tiffany Leffler: Ensure all business license applications come to her for review before approval, especially those requiring planning approval, to prevent issues like those experienced by the Curtis's.

2. City Manager Brenda Engebretson: Continue uploading required documents (including minutes) to Dropbox for the auditors and coordinate with the auditor to complete the audit process.
3. Police Chief Robby Tiller: Bring suggestions for changes to the parking and nuisance ordinances to the Safety Committee and, following discussion, present recommendations to the Council for approval.
4. Councilor Gailey: Investigate differences in business licensing/land use application processes between Burns and Hines and consider bringing suggestions to the city for process improvement.
5. Council: Review Shane Buckmann's letter of interest for the open City Council position at the next meeting and potentially make a motion to fill the position.

ADJOURN

Mayor Erbe adjourned the meeting at 7:09 p.m.


Tiffany Leffler, City Clerk


Brad Erbe, Mayor